

Core Strategy

13 Delivering Suitable and Sufficient Housing Key Issue Paper

Options for Consideration Consultation
4th October – 24th December 2010



Prepared by Christchurch Borough Council and
East Dorset District Council as part of the Local Development Framework

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1	Introduction	2
2	Baseline	3
3	Identification of Issues	26
4	Formation of Options	31
5	Options	76

1 Introduction

1.1 Delivering Suitable and Sufficient Housing background paper has been prepared as part of the Local Development Framework to inform the development of a spatial strategy for Christchurch and East Dorset which will be set out in the Core Strategy. This paper is one of a number of thematic background papers which address distinct spatial issues affecting Christchurch and East Dorset. These issues have been identified from National and local policy documents, stakeholder and local community engagement, local policy, local development framework evidence base and the Community Plans of Christchurch and East Dorset. This document sets out the process of how a housing strategy for Christchurch and East Dorset has been refined toward the development of a preferred strategy following Issues and Options work undertaken for the Core Strategy in spring 2008. This paper sets out the critical issues, problems and challenges to be considered in establishing a housing strategy for the plan area. The development of a preferred key strategy to address these issues has been informed by the following:

- National and local policy
- Objectives of other relevant plans and programmes (National to local)
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Core Strategy Issues and Options Stakeholder Engagement
- Evidence studies undertaken by the Council and key stakeholders.

1.2 The formulation of a preferred key strategy provides the context for the preparation of housing policies. There is also a very significant ‘action planning’ element to the strategy which includes an implementation framework for the delivery of infrastructure and realisation of strategic objectives. Detail of the proposed implementation framework is included within this paper. The Core Strategy will also identify the broad distribution across the districts of where new development could potentially take place up to 2026, taking into account evidence from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (Strategic Housing Land Assessment) and outcomes of the urban extensions’ master planning exercises. This will inform the spatial strategy in terms of options for the broad location and level of housing development.

1.3 Housing is a national priority, the launch of the Housing Green Paper (Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable) in July 2007 set out the Government’s plans to ensure that 3 million new homes are built by 2020. There is a commitment to increasing housing supply where it is most needed, ensuring a greater supply of affordable housing, building homes more quickly and greener housing. This is set within the context of the principle objective of creating sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

1.4 The drive for the delivery of new homes is set within national policy. However, there are issues to be decided at the local level such as where housing is to be provided, type of housing, density of development and design considerations.

1.5 Issues relating to affordable housing are contained within a separate Affordable Housing Key Issues Paper.

2 Baseline

Sustainability Appraisal Baseline Information

2.1 The Christchurch and East Dorset Scoping Report assesses broad environmental, social and economic characteristics of the plan area and how these are changing in the long term. This baseline information forms a part of the identification of key issues to be addressed by the Local Development Framework. Key sustainability issues of relevance to this background paper include:

2.2 Environmental Baseline and Considerations

2.3 Climate Change / Biodiversity

2.4 Climate change is likely to increase hazards from fluvial and coastal flooding and increase the problem of low flow rivers during the summer. These changes would narrow the choices of sites for new housing.

2.5 Air Quality / Pollution

2.6 There are no Air Quality Management Areas in Christchurch and East Dorset, therefore there are no particular problem areas identified where air quality needs to be improved. East Dorset submitted a progress report to Defra in 2008 which concluded that the air quality within East Dorset continues to meet the air quality objectives for all the pollutant parameters (Air Quality Issues Briefing Note, 30.10.08). Similarly a progress report submitted by Christchurch also concluded that air quality objectives are being met (CBC Air Quality Progress Report 2007, NETCEN).

2.7 Future housing development on new or redevelopment of existing housing sites will need to consider the impact on air quality from any increase in road traffic. Focusing new homes in locations near to services, facilities, public transport and jobs can reduce the need to travel. The impact of the construction of new homes on air pollution is another issue. One of the categories of environmental impact of new housing to be assessed in the Code for Sustainable Homes is energy and CO2 emissions.

2.8 Locating new housing in areas close to facilities, public transport, services and jobs can reduce the need to travel and the level of harmful emissions. The Core Strategy will need to ensure that future housing development does not cause harm in relation to air, noise and light pollution.

2.9 Habitats

2.10 All of the Core Strategy will be subject to a Habitat Regulations Assessment which will determine the impact of the broad location of housing development across the area. Most housing provision is expected to be located within the existing urban area therefore there should be no direct adverse impacts on protected designated sites although there is potential for adverse impacts from visitor pressure and from increased levels of emissions. None of the existing or proposed development areas within East Dorset are at significant risk of flooding. Therefore the impact of flood risk in East Dorset does not pose a significant issue for habitats. In Christchurch and East Dorset there is an embargo on housing development on sites which lie within 400m of Special Protection Areas or Special Areas of Conservation designated heathland (Dorset Heathlands Interim Planning Framework 2006-2009). The joint Heathlands Development Plan Document will explore options for heathland mitigation. The Core Strategy may allocate a Suitable Alternative Natural

Greenspace for the urban extension and identify the need for high quality open space within the site. The proposed urban extension site in Christchurch and the new neighbourhoods in East Dorset will be subject to a Habitat Regulations Assessment. An ecological survey was undertaken for the Christchurch Area of Search and Land Use Consultants will undertake a Habitat Regulations Assessment of the development options for the urban extension as part of the overall Habitat Regulations Assessment undertaken for the Core Strategy. The Code for Sustainable Homes assesses the impact of new housing on ecology. Relevant issues include the ecological value of the site, ecological enhancement, protection of ecological features, change in ecological value of the site and the building footprint.

2.11 Water / Flood risk

2.12 The location of future housing development will be severely constrained by flood risk. There will be areas which cannot be developed for housing and areas which will require mitigation measures to reduce flood risk. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 identifies a significant amount of land in Christchurch located within areas of projected flood risk. Within East Dorset there are areas of Wimborne, Verwood, Sturminster Marshall and West Moors which are subject to flood risk. The Christchurch Strategic Flood Risk Assessment level 2 has provided more detailed evidence on the extent of flood risk affecting the Borough and the extent to which it can be mitigated. It has identified areas within zone 3a (high risk 1 in 100 years for river flooding / 200 years for tidal flooding). The areas at most risk and therefore subject to constraint for housing development are broadly within the town centre, Christchurch Quay, Bridge St, Purewell, east of Stanpit (Riverslea estate), south edge of Stanpit, south of Mudeford and an area within West Christchurch (River Way/Cross Way).

2.13 Resisting development in flood risk areas reduces the risks from climate change, but could result in greater pressure for development in areas unaffected by flood risk.

2.14 Renewable Energy and Green House Gas Emissions

2.15 Greenhouse gases can be released by natural sources or released by mankind and include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone. These extra emissions resulting from the activities of people and businesses are increasing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, contributing to the causes of climate change.

2.16 Ensuring the construction of new housing is as energy efficient as possible is important to protect scarce resources and reduce greenhouse emissions.

2.17 Countryside

2.18 The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report identifies key sustainability issues concerning the impact of urban influences on the countryside and maintaining the separate identity of settlements. In promoting sustainable development the priority is to accommodate new housing provision on brownfield sites to minimise the impact on the countryside and encroachment into the Green Belt. The majority of housing in Christchurch is built on previously developed land – an average of 92% in the past 4 years (source: Annual Monitoring Report 2008/9). However, a significant element of this has made use of garden land. In East Dorset the proportion is roughly 93% again with a significant proportion affecting garden land (source: Annual Monitoring Report 2008/9). For Christchurch, the majority of housing development up to 2026 is still envisaged to take place within the urban area (2,850 in urban area, 600

in an urban extension. In East Dorset the same applies, although the likely proportion will be determined through public consultation. The Core Strategy has a role in protecting Green Belt boundaries other than where there is a need for development to meet local need, keeping the land open, nature conservation and providing an aspect of protection to much of the countryside areas.

2.19 Landscape

2.20 There are significant areas of landscape importance within the plan area which include Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, River Avon Site of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Great Landscape Value, Special Character Areas and areas of historic value.

2.21 The Core Strategy must address the need to maintain and enhance the local character and environment of the area while meeting changing needs and demands. In this respect, new housing development should seek to avoid adverse impacts on landscape character.

2.22 Historic and Urban Environment

2.23 There are 12 Conservation Areas in Christchurch and 19 in East Dorset and a large number of listed buildings in both areas. East Dorset has identified 'Special Character Areas' in its Local Plan. The Christchurch Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance Nov 2003 identifies special character areas within the Borough. The pressure for sites for housing within the urban areas has a potential impact on the historic environment and any areas of special character. The Core Strategy will need to examine and address this issue. The impact of higher density development is particularly relevant.

2.24 Energy / Resource Use / Waste and Recycling

2.25 The impact of new housing on demands for energy provision is an important issue. Energy efficiency, minimising waste and promoting recycling and composting all assist in tackling the issue of diminishing supply, increasing expense and polluting effect of non-renewable energy sources. The location of new housing near to services, facilities, public transport and jobs can reduce the need to travel. The construction and design of new housing should promote the use of renewable materials and sources of energy. Building new homes that are energy efficient is an issue addressed in the Code for Sustainable Homes in the energy and CO2 emissions category (dwelling emission rate, lighting, low or zero carbon technologies, cycle storage) the materials category (responsible sourcing of materials) and waste category (waste storage, composting).

2.26 Social Baseline and Considerations

2.27 Population

2.28 Population is increasing slowly but incrementally in the area due to in-migration. The age structure of the population shows a significantly above average representation of retired people. This has implications for accommodation needs of the area.

2.29 The proportion over retirement age is 34% in Christchurch and 32% in East Dorset compared with 29% in Dorset as a whole and just 19% nationally. (Source: ONS Mid Year Population Estimates 2008) The table below shows that the age profile for Christchurch and East Dorset is characterised by a high proportion of those above working age.

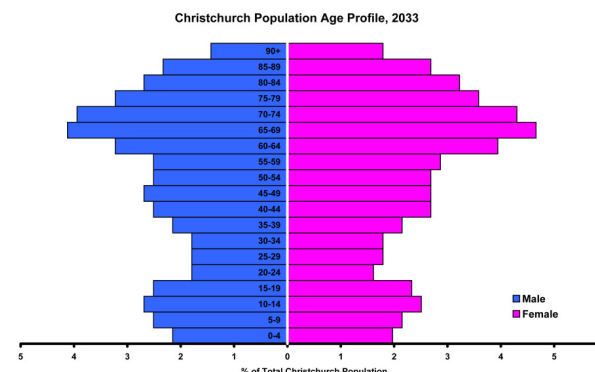
	Below Working Age	Working Age	Above Working Age
Christchurch	15.8%	50.1%	34.1%
East Dorset	16.5%	52.0%	31.5%
Dorset	17.0%	54.4%	28.6%
South West	17.7%	59.8%	22.5%
England & Wales	18.8%	62.0%	19.2%

Table 2.1

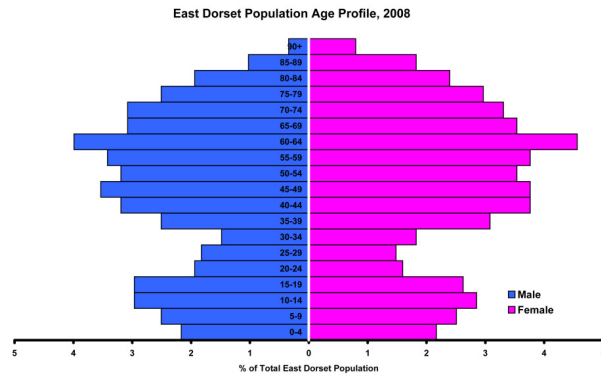
2.30 Older people are expected to account for an increasing proportion of the population in the future with the percentage of Christchurch and East Dorset residents aged 65 or more expected to reach 38% in 2031 and 35% in Dorset. At the same time the working age population (16 – 64) is predicted to drop to 47% of the total in Christchurch and 48% in East Dorset (Source: Christchurch and East Dorset Economy & Labour Profiles).



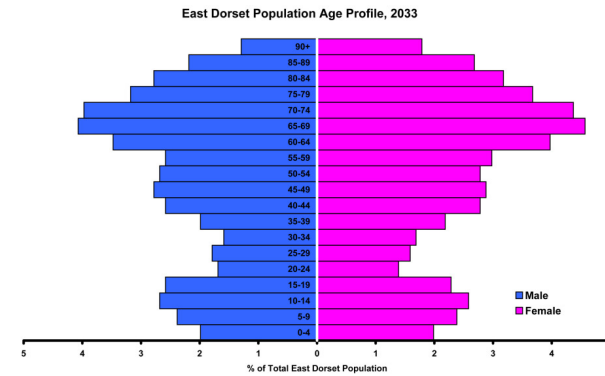
Picture 1 Christchurch Age Profile 2008: ONS 2008 Mid-Year Population Estimates



Picture 2 Christchurch Age Profile 2033: ONS Sub-national Population Projections - 2008 based



Picture 3 East Dorset Age Profile 2008: ONS 2008 Mid-Year Population Estimates



Picture 4 East Dorset Age Profile 2033: ONS Sub-national Population Projections - 2008 based

Table 2.2

2.31 The 2001 Census results indicated that the average household size was 2.15 for Christchurch and 2.32 in East Dorset.

2.32 The Christchurch and East Dorset Reports for the Survey of Housing Need and Demand 2008 estimated the average household size to be 2.1 in Christchurch and 2.3 in East Dorset, which is below the most recent national estimates of around 2.4 persons per household.

2.33 The following table shows the impact of low births, high deaths and in-migration on the East Dorset and Christchurch population.

East Dorset 1995 to 2005	
4,400	Population increase
7,374	Live Births
11,183	Deaths
-3,809	Net difference
8,209 (9.7% of population)	Net in-migration

Table 2.3

Christchurch 1995 to 2005	
2,800	Population increase
4,143	Live Births
7,553	Deaths
-3,410	Net difference
6,210 (13.8% of population)	Net in-migration

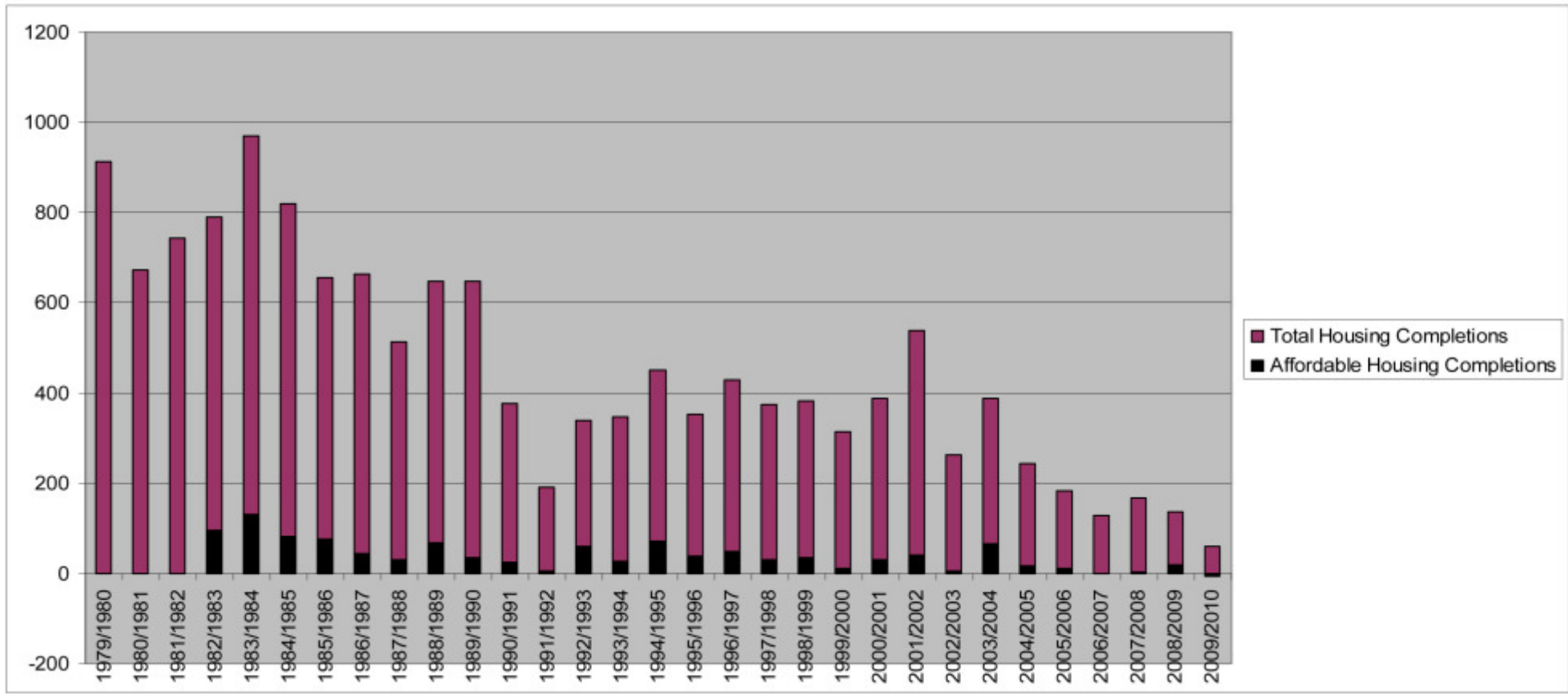
Table 2.4

2.34 The Core Strategy should address the issue of appropriate size and types of housing to be delivered, taking into account evidence in the Housing Needs Survey on likely profile of households requiring market housing and the Balanced Housing Market analysis.

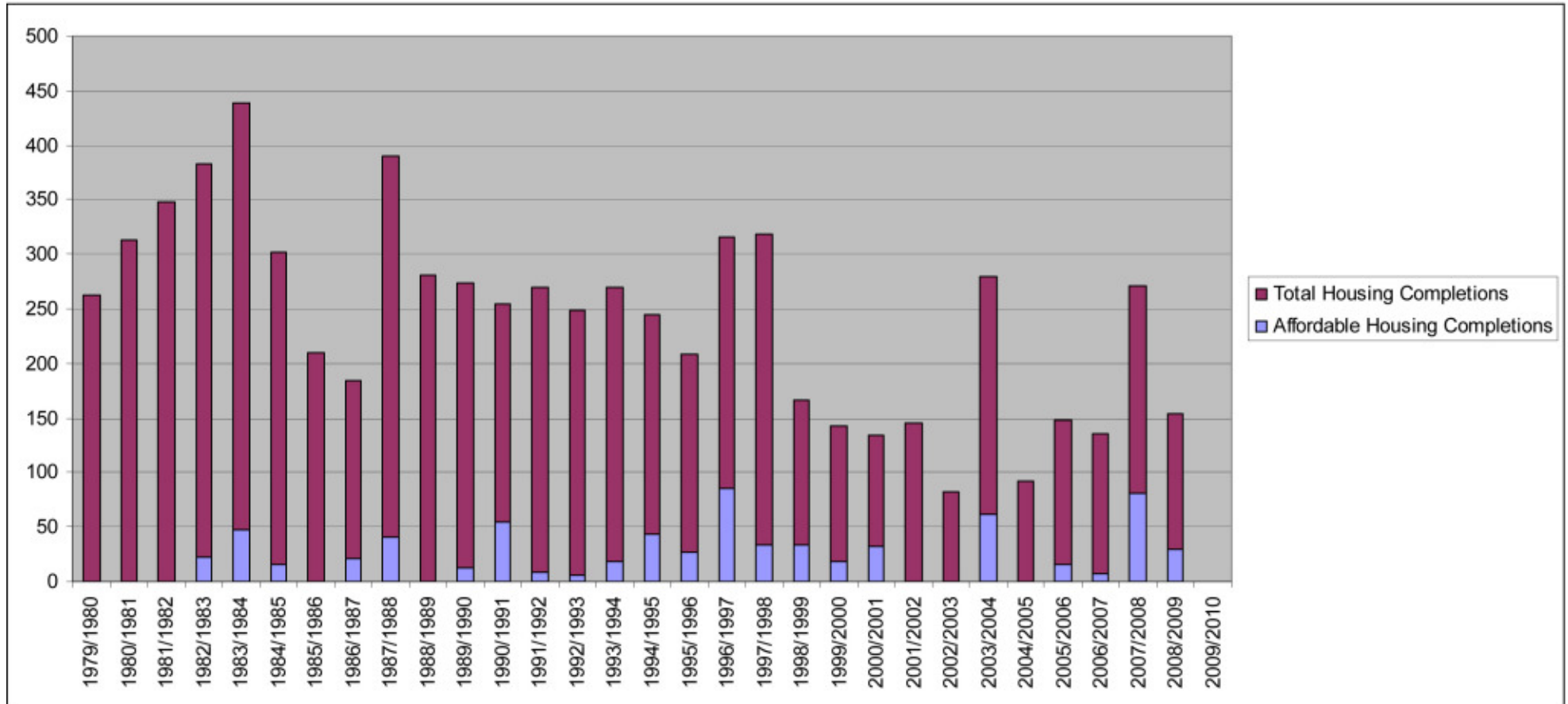
2.35 Housing

2.36 The profile of existing housing stock is heavily weighted towards detached properties, however in recent years more flats have been built. The majority of homes are owner-occupied with a small proportion of private rented and social housing. There is a significant problem of affordability of housing, which is examined in detail in the Affordable Housing Background Paper. The key issue that the Core Strategy should address is to ensure a sufficient supply and appropriate size, type and tenure of new housing to meet the needs of the community.

2.37 The following graphs show the historic delivery of new housing within the two districts:



Picture 5 East Dorset Total and Affordable Housing Completions 1979 - 2009 (Source: DCC Residential Monitoring)



Picture 6 Christchurch Total and Affordable Housing Completions 1979 - 2009 (Source: DCC Residential Monitoring)

2.38 As the supply of new housing is constrained by environmental considerations including flood risk and also the Green Belt, the majority of housing in Christchurch and East Dorset will need to be found within the urban area. The Core Strategy will need to consider the impact of development pressure on the urban area and whether certain areas need to be protected from redevelopment. Due to the rate of new flats built in recent years the Core Strategy will also need to consider whether there is a need to protect certain areas for family homes. The Core Strategy should also provide for the needs of gypsy & travellers.

2.39 Health

2.40 The Housing Needs Survey contains information on households in Christchurch and East Dorset with different types of special needs (related to people who have specific needs, such as those associated with a disability). Special needs households are more likely to contain older people and are 4 times as likely to live in unsuitable housing as non-special needs households. It identifies measures needed for special needs households to improve their present accommodation. With regard to future housing, the Core Strategy should address the issue of suitability of housing to cater for people with special needs. Lifetime Homes Standards aim to provide accessible and adaptable accommodation for everyone, from young families to older people and individuals with a temporary or permanent physical impairment. Size of rooms may have a beneficial impact on health as the provision of decent living space within a property results in improved living conditions. This principle applies to the suitable provision of external space. The provision of pitches of appropriate size is also important for the health and wellbeing of gypsies and travellers. Insufficient provision of affordable housing can have an impact upon health and wellbeing when people are obliged to live in cramped or unsuitable accommodation. This issue is addressed in detail in the Affordable Housing paper.

2.41 Social Inclusion and Deprivation

2.42 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 is useful for comparing the Super Output Areas for their overall score to identify those areas with higher levels of deprivation. This shows that all the Super Output Areas within Somerford are the most deprived in Christchurch and there are areas of deprivation in Heatherlands, Ferndown, Leigh Park, Wimborne and Three Legged Cross in East Dorset. The Index of Multiple Deprivation includes the indicator 'barriers to housing and services' which measures an area's housing overcrowding, homeless applications and difficulties of accessibility to owner occupation as well as other aspects of accessibility. It is not helpful to compare the Super Output Area's relative scores for this indicator, as all the rural areas have a high score due to their inaccessibility to services. Of more use is the ward level data in the Dorset Survey of Housing Need and Demand. This gives ward levels of overcrowding, households in unsuitable housing, special needs households and households in housing need. This shows that the Grange ward in Christchurch has the highest proportion of households within all those categories. The ward of Three Cross and Potterne has the highest level of future need and overcrowding in East Dorset as well as the highest level of households living in unsuitable accommodation. The highest proportion of special needs households are within Ferndown Links. Gypsies and travellers are a socially excluded minority. Evidence on their needs is contained in the Dorset Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment. The shortfall of authorised sites for gypsies and travellers needs addressing if we are to improve social inclusion.

2.43 Crime

2.44 There is a need for the design and planning process of new housing development to incorporate measures to prevent crime and minimise fear of crime. Developers can be required to have regard to national guidance in Secured by Design. This issue is relevant to all new development and is considered in the Core Strategy in the Community Issues and Design and Landscape Key Issues Papers.

2.45 Education

2.46 It is important that there are sufficient education facilities for the increase in population resulting from new housing development, in particular the proposed urban extension sites. School catchment areas can affect the price of market housing and increase the demand for family housing as families are known to move home so that their children can attend popular schools. The Community Issues paper will identify future educational requirements in relation to the impact of new housing development. The location of gypsy and traveller sites needs to take into account access to schools.

2.47 Economic Baseline and Considerations

2.48 Economy

2.49 Projected growth in the local economy over the next 20 years will increase demand for appropriately skilled labour and sufficient housing of the right type to meet the needs of the local workforce. The issue of key worker housing is discussed in the Affordable Housing Key Issues Paper.

2.50 Shopping

2.51 There is a requirement for additional retail floorspace which will be a competing land use for delivering sufficient housing. Projected retail floorspace requirements for the plan area are set out in the joint retail study and considered in the Town, Village and Neighbourhood Centre Key Issue Paper.

2.52 Transport

2.53 Baseline information indicates that there is high car dependency and serious congestion problems in key locations as discussed in the Transport Key Issues Paper. The main traffic congestion hotspots are at the B3073 in the vicinity of the airport and Parley Cross, Blackwater junction, the A31 running east west across East Dorset, A35 between Bournemouth and Christchurch, particularly at the Barrack Road and Castle Lane East junction, Ferndown town centre and Longham, Christchurch town centre – principally Stony Lane Roundabout / Fountain roundabout and Fairmile. Christchurch is well served by public transport within the urban area providing good access to residential development. East Dorset is poorly served by public transport and has no rail service.

2.54 The location of new housing close to existing services, facilities and public transport will assist in reducing reliance on the private car and reducing congestion on the highway network.

2.55 In supporting projected housing growth there are specific highways improvements that are necessary to enable development to come forward. The South East Dorset Multi Modal Study will identify specific transport infrastructure improvements required to accommodate new development.

Core Strategic Messages

- Flood risk is a particularly significant issue for Christchurch in the location of future housing development. In East Dorset there are areas of flood risk in Wimborne, Sturminster Marshall, West Moors and Verwood, but they do not have a significant impact on the delivery of housing. Resisting development in flood risk areas reduces the risk from climate change but could result in greater pressure for development in areas unaffected by flood risk.
- There are a number of sensitive habitats in Christchurch and East Dorset and future housing should avoid / minimise any adverse impacts.
- The priority is to accommodate new housing provision on brownfield sites to minimise the impact on the countryside and encroachment into the Green Belt.
- However pressure for housing sites within the urban areas has a potential impact on the historic environment and any areas of special character.
- New housing development should seek to avoid adverse impacts on landscape character and countryside – this is particularly relevant to the Options relating to the urban extension in Christchurch and the new neighbourhoods in East Dorset.
- New residential development should ensure that it is as energy efficient as possible in its construction and design.

- Christchurch and East Dorset have a high proportion of retired people. Projections show that older people are expected to account for an increasing proportion of the population in the future. This has implications for the type of housing required.
- The profile of existing housing stock is heavily weighted towards detached properties, particularly in East Dorset. However in recent years more flats have been built.
- Special needs households are more likely to contain older people and are 4 times more likely to live in unsuitable housing as non-special needs households.
- The provision of sufficient and suitable pitches is important to the health and well-being of gypsies and travellers.
- Certain parts of the area have higher levels of deprivation, in particular Somerford within Christchurch and Heatherlands in Ferndown, East Dorset.
- The location of new housing close to existing services, facilities and public transport will help to reduce reliance on the private car and reduce congestion on the highway network.

Policy Background

2.56 The following section sets out the current planning policy context from a national to local level which provides the context for the formulation of policies in the Core Strategy and other Local Development Documents related to housing.

National Planning Policy
<p>Sustainable Communities Plan (ODPM Feb 2003)</p> <p>Sustainable Communities: Homes for All (ODPM 2005)</p> <p>Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity (ODPM 2005)</p>
<p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is vital to link housing to socially inclusive places where there are jobs, services and transport links. • Greater choice in housing: increased emphasis on home ownership and first time buyer initiatives. • Aims to give people more of a say in the way housing estates are run, tackle disadvantage and increase prosperity. Housing is a key cross-cutting issue.
Core Strategic Messages

Although the emphasis is on extending home ownership to more households, there is a need for alternative tenures to cater for those who cannot afford to buy. This has implications when developing policy for locations for housing and in particular affordable housing to ensure there is sufficient choice in tenures of housing.

Table 2.5

<p>National Planning Policy</p> <p>The Housing Green Paper (July 2007): Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable</p> <p>CLG Housing and Planning: The crucial role of the new local performance framework (2008)</p>
<p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision of everyone having access to a decent home at a price they can afford in a place they want to live and work. • 3 million new homes by 2020. New housing still considered to be in short supply. • Options to increase low cost home ownership and more long term and affordable mortgage products. • Target to ensure every new home built from 2016 onwards is carbon-zero. • Priority to develop on brownfield sites maintaining existing target of 60%. • Govt intend to consult on measures to speed up delivery of new homes. • New National Indicator set includes a number of performance indicators relating to housing supply • NI 154 Net additional homes provided, • NI 155 Affordable homes delivered, • NI 159 Supply of ready to deliver homes • Negotiation of Local Area Agreements allows local authorities and partners to prioritise and address housing delivery through targets that are tailored to a 3 year timescale.
<p>Core Strategic Messages</p> <p>The major house building programme, performance indicators and Local Area Agreements indicate the national drive to improve and speed up the delivery of affordable housing. A Local Area Agreements has been negotiated between the Dorset Strategic Partnership and GOSW for the period 2008 - 2011 (agreed by Government in July 2008). Housing and affordable housing targets are included. These are County-wide targets but the performance of Christchurch and East Dorset will affect whether or not it is met and funding awarded. The Core Strategy has to ensure there is sufficient supply of housing delivered to meet the targets.</p>

Table 2.6

National Planning Policy
PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development (2005) PPS 3 Housing (Nov 2006)
<p>Analysis</p> <p>Local Authorities should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the provision of sufficient good quality new homes including an appropriate mix of housing and adequate levels of affordable housing • Promote the efficient use of land through higher density, mixed-use development. • High quality and inclusive design should create well-mixed and integrated developments which avoid segregation. • Achieve a step-change in housing delivery through a new more responsive approach to land supply at local level. • Identify and maintain a rolling five-year supply of deliverable land for housing. Also identify further supply for years 6-10 and where possible years 11 – 15. • Ensure housing developments are in suitable locations, with good range of community facilities and good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. • Give special consideration to the housing needs of children, including gardens, play areas and green spaces. • Ensure that larger homes are built alongside flats and smaller properties • Plan for the full range of market housing – a variety of high quality housing.
<p>Core Strategic Messages</p> <p>The Government's drive for a step-change in delivery of housing (market and affordable) is a key message, hence the emphasis on identifying sufficient supply of housing to meet needs. The need to deliver an appropriate mix of housing of good design is stressed and this will need to be addressed in Core Strategy policy.</p>

Table 2.7

National Planning Policy
PPG2 Green Belts (1995)
<p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

- New housing is not an appropriate use within the Green Belt, but there are exceptions for limited affordable housing for local need or limited infilling of existing villages if there are adopted Local Plan policies setting out the policy direction on these issues.
- Safeguarded land can be identified which may be required to serve development needs in the longer term.
- Strict control needed for re-use of buildings in Green Belts for residential purposes.

Core Strategic Messages

The Core Strategy will have to accord with general Green Belt policy which prohibits new housing in the Green Belt, although the issue of exceptions for limited affordable housing in small rural communities needs to be addressed in view of the need for affordable housing. If the need for housing requires the provision of urban extensions this will involve the rolling back of the Green Belt in these locations. Specific boundary amendments are to be determined in the Core Strategy.

Table 2.8

National Planning Policy

PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (December 2009)

Analysis

- Removal of “need” test and replacement with a revised “impact” test.
- Encourages residential or offices development as appropriate uses above ground floor retail, leisure or other facilities in town centres
- Advocates facilitation of new working practices such as live/work or the use of residential properties for home working
- For sites allocated for economic uses – if there is no reasonable prospect of implementation within the plan period, the allocation should not be retained and wider economic uses or alternative uses such as housing should be actively considered.
- Locate most new development in or on the edge of existing settlements where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together.
- Re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations and for some types of buildings.

Core Strategic Messages

Residential uses are an important element in town centre schemes, particularly above ground floor retail and other town centre uses. The Core Strategy will be looking at which areas are suitable for higher density housing and town centres have been identified as appropriate areas in view of their accessible locations which accords with wider aims of sustainability. Recognises that new ways of working such as live/work or use of residential properties for

home working have an impact on spatial planning which should be considered when planning for economic development. This issue has been explored in the Sustainable Economic Growth Key Issues Paper. The Employment Land Review will address the issue of whether sites allocated for employment use are still required or whether they can be released for alternative uses.

Table 2.9

National Planning Policy
PPS 9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (2005)
<p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-use of previously developed land for new development makes a major contribution to sustainable development by reducing the amount of countryside and undeveloped land that needs to be used, but where sites have significant biodiversity or geological interest, this should be retained or incorporated to the development. • Development proposals provide many opportunities for building in beneficial biodiversity or geological features as part of good design
<p>Core Strategic Messages</p> <p>The importance of using previously developed land for new development and ensuring the retention of biodiversity within developments is stressed. This will be addressed in the promotion of sustainable locations for new housing and Core Strategy policies relating to design and landscape.</p>

Table 2.10

National Planning Policy
PPG13 Transport (2001)
<p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing should be accommodated principally within existing urban areas. Higher density development should be located in areas which are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. • In rural areas, local services centres should be the focal point for housing, transport and provision of other services. • Housing development should be located in close proximity to jobs, shops and public transport services. • To promote more sustainable residential environments the inefficient use of land should be avoided (less than 30dph). • Development which makes more efficient use of land (30-50dph) in accessible locations is encouraged.

Core Strategic Messages

The Core Strategy will need to ensure that housing is located in accessible locations. Higher densities can be achieved in areas well served by public transport and other essential amenities. Any density policy will need to take account of this advice.

Table 2.11

National Planning Policy

PPS 22 Renewable Energy (2004)

PPS 23 Planning & Pollution Control (2004)

PPS 25 Development and Flood Risk (2006)

PPS: Planning and Climate Change: Supplement to PPS1 (2007)

Analysis

- Local Development Plan Documents may include policies that require a percentage of the energy to be used in new residential, commercial or industrial developments to come from on-site renewable energy developments.
- Small scale renewable energy schemes can be incorporated into new developments and some existing buildings. Examples of schemes include solar panels, biomass heating, small scale wind turbines and combined heat and power schemes.
- Pollution issues should be taken into account when considering new development – the impact on the quality of air, water and land.
- A balanced approach is required which addresses the risk of pollution whilst recognising the benefits of recycling previously developed land.
- The flood risk implications of development proposals must be assessed through the development plan process.
- A sequential approach must be adopted for new housing development, avoiding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.
- Where possible effective flood risk mitigation packages should be assembled to help to ensure key sites are brought forward for new development.
- Climate change considerations should be integrated into all spatial planning concerns.
- New development should be planned to minimise future vulnerability in a changing climate

Core Strategic Messages

The Core Strategy will determine broad locations for housing development which will be informed by the Level 1 and 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessments. There will be policies for sustainable development, energy and water efficiency, renewable and low carbon energy, flood risk and coastal erosion. The Core Strategy will recognise the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change in locating new development away from areas of highest risk and incorporating design measures which ensure resilience to the consequences of more extreme weather and climatic conditions.

Table 2.12

National Planning Policy
Circular 01/2006: Planning for Gypsy & Traveller caravan sites
Circular 04/2007: Planning for Travelling Showpeople
CLG Designing Gypsy & Traveller Site: Good Practice Guidance 2008
Analysis
The Circulars and Good Practice Guidance give guidance on the type of criteria to be included in a policy for gypsies and travellers in a Core Strategy. The sites will be allocated in a joint Dorset Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

Table 2.13

National Planning Policy
CLG Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH): Setting the standard in sustainability for new homes, 2008
CLG Code for Sustainable Homes: Technical Guide October 2008
CLG Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods, A national strategy for housing in an ageing society 2008
Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Code for Sustainable Homes is voluntary for privately built housing, but since May 2008 all new homes are required to have a Code rating in the Home Information Pack. • Code for Sustainable Homes measures the sustainability of a new home against 9 categories of environmental impact

- The impact on energy and CO2 emissions is assessed (looking at dwelling emission rates, building fabric, lighting etc) and pollution (global warming potential of insulants and NOx emissions).
- Of particular relevance is the need to provide adequate space for drying / home office / cycle storage in the energy and CO² emissions category and the provision of adequate private space in the health and well-being category.
- A mandatory element of assessment is the management of surface water runoff from developments.
- Lifetime Homes Standards provide accessible and adaptable accommodation for everyone, from young families to older people and individuals with a temporary or permanent physical impairment.
- All new housing with public funding will be built to Lifetime Homes standard by 2011.
- Regulation for private housing in England to be built to the Lifetime Homes standard may be brought in from 2013, the decision on this being dependent on the Government's review of progress in 2010.
- Meeting the Lifetime Homes requirements currently gives 4 credits within the 'Health and Well-being' section of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Core Strategic Messages

The recommendations for these standards should be taken into account when considering Issue HO2 which asks which issues are important if we are to have policies to control the size of housing. The Code for Sustainable Homes supports the government target that all new homes should be carbon neutral from 2016.

Table 2.14

Local Policy
Borough of Christchurch Local Plan 2001
<p>Analysis</p> <p>Policy H1 Provides for an increase of 2,000 net dwellings between 1994 and 2011. This target has already been met as a total of 2437 units have been completed between 1994 and 2009.</p> <p>Policies H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7 allocate various small sites for housing. Some of these sites have been completed, accounting for 100 units in total. Of the 4 outstanding sites, 3 have planning permissions which have not yet been implemented. There is only one site where there has not been any progress – a small site allocated for 4 units.</p> <p>Policy H8 Requires at least 30% affordable housing on sites of 15 or more dwellings and sets out criteria for its provision.</p> <p>This will be replaced by a revised policy with a lower threshold and seeking a higher proportion of provision, referring to the results of viability testing.</p>

Policy H9 Seeks to protect the special character and amenity of the Chewton Farm estate area

The Borough Character Assessment includes this area within a Special Character Area. The Design and Landscape Key Issues Paper sets out the intention to review the Special Character Area designations and if necessary update them through Supplementary Planning Documents.

Policy H11 Resists the loss of residential accommodation in the town centre area.

This issue will be dealt with in the Town Centres Key Issues Paper.

Policy H12 Sets out criteria for residential infill development and redevelopment

This issue will be dealt with in the Design and Landscape Key Issues Paper.

Policy H13 Sets out criteria for replacement dwellings in the Green Belt

Policy H14 Sets out criteria for extensions to existing dwellings in the Green Belt.

These issues may be too detailed for inclusion in a Core Strategy. Saved Local Plan policies and National planning policy guidance on Green Belt will provide the necessary policy.

Policy H16 Requires design of new development to take into account need for security and crime prevention.

This issue will be addressed in the Design and Landscape paper

Policy H17 Sets out criteria for proposals for gypsy & traveller sites.

The Core Strategy will contain a criteria policy for the location of gypsy and traveller sites.

Policy H18 Seeks to control development of new residential caravans or mobile homes or extensions of such sites.

Too detailed to include in Core Strategy. The saved Local Plan policy will provide the necessary policy guidance for this issue until the appropriate Supplementary Planning Document is progressed.

Policy EI 1 Policies for the protection of employment land in Christchurch, but not in East Dorset Local Plan.

This issue will be addressed in the Sustainable Economic Growth Key Issues Paper.

Core Strategic Messages

The detail contained in some of the ‘development management’ housing policies may not be appropriate for a Core Strategy nor the small size of many of the housing allocation sites. As well as the issues identified above the Core Strategy policy will address issues such as the type and size of housing which are not covered in the Local Plan and will deal with strategic allocations.

The Core Strategy will need to ensure the availability of sufficient land to meet housing and employment requirements informed by the strategic housing land availability assessment and the employment land review.

Table 2.15

Local Policy
East Dorset District Local Plan (2002)
<p>Analysis</p> <p>Policy HSUP1 requires the provision of 4,400 new dwellings to be built between 1994 and 2011.</p> <p>Policy HSUP2 phases development so that brown field sites and affordable housing are given priority.</p> <p>Policy HSUP3 safeguards six sites from development until a review of the Local Plan.</p> <p>This is part considered within the Green Belt Key Issues Paper.</p> <p>Policy HODEV1 sets out where housing development is acceptable in the District i.e. within the urban areas and Village Infill Envelopes.</p> <p>Policy HODEV2 provides detailed criteria to assess the suitability of housing development within the urban areas and Village Infill Envelopes.</p> <p>Policy HODEV3 provides criteria for the development of elderly persons’ accommodation, rest and nursing homes.</p> <p>Policy HODEV4 sets out criteria for the extension of existing dwellings.</p> <p>Policy HODEV5 sets out criteria for the provision of affordable housing. This issue is considered in the Affordable Housing Key Issues Paper.</p> <p>Policy HODEV6 sets out what is required to deliver exceptions sites for affordable housing. This issue is considered in the Affordable Housing Key Issues Paper.</p> <p>Policy HODEV7 identifies land at Mannington Park as a gypsy caravan site.</p>

Policy HODEV8 sets out criteria for the consideration of new gypsy and caravan sites.

Policy FWP1 allocated 60 dwellings at Green Worlds, Ferndown.

Policy WIMCO1 allocated 15 dwellings at Victoria Road/Old Road, Wimborne.

Policy WIMCO4 allocates 60 dwellings at Brook Road, Wimborne.

Policy V1 allocates 111 dwellings at Aggis Farm, Verwood.

This site is now compromised by its proximity to protected heathlands, meaning that only a small area could now be developed.

Policy V2 allocates 70 dwellings at Hainault Farm, Verwood. This site is now compromised by its proximity to protected heathlands.

Policy V6 identifies a mixed use development opportunity which could include residential.

Policy CHASE5 allocates a small site for housing in Gussage St Michael. This area is now partially compromised by an identified flood risk.

Policy CHASE6 identifies 0.8 hectares of land for residential development in Sixpenny Handley.

Policy CHASE7 identifies 0.5 hectares of land for residential development in Sixpenny Handley.

Core Strategic Messages

The detail contained in some of the 'development management' housing policies may not be appropriate for a Core Strategy nor the small size of many of the housing allocation sites. As well as the issues identified above the Core Strategy policy will address issues such as the type and size of housing which are not covered in the Local Plan and will deal with strategic allocations.

The Core Strategy will need to ensure the availability of sufficient land to meet housing and employment requirements informed by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and the Employment Land Review.

Table 2.16

Local Policy

Christchurch Borough Council Corporate Plan 2008-2012

East Dorset District Council Interim Corporate Plan 2009-10
<p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality and availability of housing. • Improve the condition of private sector stock
<p>Core Strategic Messages</p> <p>Increasing the supply of high quality sustainable housing is a key priority for both authorities. Other themes include appropriate type of housing and sustainable construction.</p>

Table 2.17

Local Policy
<p>Christchurch Community Plan 2007-2010</p> <p>East Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy 2008</p> <p>Shaping our Future: The Community Strategy for Dorset 2007 - 2016</p>
<p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing is identified as a priority in all the community plans. • East Dorset’s community plan identifies a key issue of balancing development pressures with the need to protect sites of environmental importance. • Encourage the development of a sufficient number and type of housing within the partnership area which allows the area to flourish. • Housing must be appropriate and meet the needs of those who need support and care to stay in their homes. • Increased investment to deliver new schemes, also in appropriate physical and social infrastructure linked to new developments. • Housing development should incorporate sustainable building materials, energy and use of resources leading to zero carbon development. • New buildings to use where possible local builders and architects to support the local economy
<p>Core Strategic Messages</p> <p>Increasing the supply of high quality sustainable housing is a key priority for both authorities.</p>

Table 2.18

Christchurch Community Plan 2007 – 2010. Issues raised during the Borough-wide consultation 2006

Affordable Housing & Development Action Group (affordable housing issues are identified in Affordable Housing background paper)

Key messages for Core Strategy

- Too many flats being built, particularly in Highcliffe.
- Loss of family housing for flat development
- Need more housing for younger generation/families
- Construction of too many retirement properties resulting in imbalance of the population
- Concern about over-development and increased density of new developments
- Need tighter control over design of new housing
- Inadequate parking provision in new housing

Table 2.19

2.57 Core Strategic Messages

2.58 The Core Strategy needs to address the following issues drawn from the policy documents:-

- Ensure a sufficient supply of market and affordable housing and gypsy and traveller pitches to meet national and local targets and evidence of need and demand.
- Deliver an appropriate mix of house sizes and tenures of good design in accessible locations close to existing services, facilities and public transport.
- Locations where higher density housing can be achieved most successfully need to be identified. Areas that are well served by public transport and other essential amenities have been identified as appropriate areas, which accords with the wider aims of sustainability.
- The location and design of new housing must take into account the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change and the Government's target for all new homes to be carbon neutral by 2016 through sustainable construction, provision of renewable energy and increased accessibility to essential amenities by modes of transport other than the car.
- A sequential approach for new housing should be adopted, avoiding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.
- The Code for Sustainable Homes is an important tool to assess the way a house is constructed and its ongoing environmental impact in order to reduce carbon emissions and create homes that are more sustainable.
-
- The Lifetime Homes standards are particularly relevant to Christchurch and East Dorset in view of the increase forecast in the proportion of elderly people in the future. Application of the Lifetime Homes standards will enable more older people to live in homes that are suited to their needs as well enabling more flexibility for people at all stages of their lives.

3 Identification of Issues

3.1 This section will consider the validity of the questions posed in the Issues and Options consultation and how appropriate they were, based on responses and other issues identified by key stakeholders and members of the public. In addition, this section will set out any issues that have been identified from new evidence arising since the Issues and Options engagement. This will then form a consolidated list of issues for the development of preferred options in Section 4.

3.2 Issues and Options Consultation Response

3.3 In March 2008 the Councils conducted a six week Issues & Options consultation exercise on the Core Strategy. The document discussed the key planning issues relating to housing and suggested a range of options to tackle each issue. Responses were sought to a questionnaire document. During this consultation period a Housing Focus Group was held on 7.4.08 which was attended by planning consultants and housing associations.

3.4 Original Issues raised through Issues & Options consultation

3.5 Issues raised through Issues and Options consultation (through responses to the questionnaire and discussion at the Housing Focus Group) and the evidence base include:-

3.6 Issue HO1: Should we have a policy which specifies which mix of dwelling sizes and types should be built, even if this might restrict market choice?

- This issue is considered important in national policy and in evidence base studies. Research has identified shortfalls in particular sizes or tenures of properties and the demand from different household types. There are conflicting messages from the responses to consultation. Policies specifying a housing mix are not popular, but there is a view from the community that the housing mix of recent new developments is unbalanced. The key issue is how best to ensure that there is an appropriate housing mix built which best meets the identified needs of developments. This continues to be a valid issue which will be addressed in the Core Strategy options document and is found under Issue 1 below.

3.7 Issue HO2: If we are to have policies seeking to control the size of housing, what issues are important?

- This issue is considered important in national policy and evidence base studies. Evidence and consultation support the number of bedrooms as an important indicator when considering the size of housing. This therefore continues to be a valid issue that will be considered in the Core Strategy options document.
- PPS3: Housing paragraph 17 requires that the needs of children are taken into account in providing for gardens. Paragraph 18 also allows for the setting of design standards which could impact on the size of accommodation. Evidence on the benefits of standards for the size of rooms has been produced for the Mayor of London and is applicable throughout the Country. There was a strong response to this as an issue. It is therefore considered appropriate to put forward preferred options for the size of rooms and amenity space. It is found under Issue 2 below.

3.8 Issue HO3: What factors should be taken into account when setting targets for the density of housing development?

- This issue is identified as important in national policy, evidence base studies and in consultation, both the questionnaire responses and Housing Focus Group. Concern relating to over-development and increased density of new developments was a key issue identified during consultation on the Community Plan. It continues to be a valid issue which will be addressed in the Core Strategy options document and is found under Issue 3 below.

3.9 Issue HO4: Should we protect certain areas from increased redevelopment and infilling for any reason?

- This issue is not identified explicitly in national policy, although Councils are now allowed to control the issue of ‘garden grabbing’. National policy does not advocate protection policies, but instead recommends careful attention to be paid to design to avoid adverse effects of infilling and redevelopment on character and appearance of areas. However, there are existing Local Plan policies protecting special character areas. The Christchurch Character Assessment identifies a number of Special Character Areas. The results of consultation show that this is an issue that respondents feel strongly about and several areas are suggested for protection from development – low density areas and areas of family housing. However this has to be balanced with national guidance, evidence on identified housing needs and land supply. The identification of Special Character Areas is considered as part of the Design and Landscape Key Issues Paper. The impact of increased density of development on character of area is an issue which will be addressed in the Core Strategy options document and is found as an Issue in the design and Landscape Key Issues Paper.

3.10 Issue HO5: What criteria should be included in a policy to assess proposals for gypsy & traveller sites and travelling showpeople sites?

- This issue is identified as being important in national policy, evidence base studies and in consultation. Criteria for location of sites will be used to guide unexpected demand for sites as well as the allocation of sites in the Joint Gypsy & Traveller site allocation Development Plan Document. This continues to be a valid issue that will be addressed in the Core Strategy options document and is found in Issue 4 below.

3.11 New Issues raised through issues and options consultation

- **How does the Core Strategy ensure that there is sufficient housing delivered to meet the identified need?**

3.12 This issue has been identified from consultation responses and national policy. Regional policy is no longer relevant and the decision on how much housing should be provided is now to be made at a local level. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment results provide evidence on future levels of housing land supply. There are also links with affordable housing issues as the delivery of affordable housing is closely tied into the performance of the private house building industry. The issue of impact of a revised affordable housing policy on the viability of the general housing market is addressed in the Affordable Housing Key Issues Paper. The issue of delivery of sufficient housing to meet the identified need is a valid issue that will be addressed in the Key Strategy Key Issues Paper. The broad distribution of housing across the districts will be identified, informed by the outputs of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and the master planning process for the urban extension in Christchurch and the new neighbourhoods in East Dorset. A range of housing delivery options will be identified.

- **Should the Core Strategy identify areas where residential development should be promoted?**

3.13 This new issue was raised in the consultation responses to Issue HO4. Areas were suggested where residential development should be targeted. These areas have been assessed for their housing potential as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment exercises. The issue of whether sites outside the urban areas should be considered for future housing is addressed in the Key Strategy Key Issues Paper. Identification of small sites to allocate for housing will be addressed in a Site Allocations Development Plan Document. This issue is also addressed in the Transport and Access Key Issues Paper, which looks at the broad distribution of residential development within the Prime Transport Corridors.

- **Should the Core Strategy have policy on the provision of adequate off-road parking or garage space for new housing?**

3.14 This new issue was raised in the consultation responses to Issue HO2. It is a valid issue, but one that will be considered in the Transport and Access Key Issues Paper.

3.15 New issues raised through evidence studies

- No new issues were raised through the evidence studies although cross border issues identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment are set out below.

3.16 New issues raised through cross border issues

3.17 Christchurch and East Dorset both fall within the Bournemouth and Poole Housing Market Area, as identified by the Bournemouth / Poole Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Housing Market Areas are geographical areas defined by household demand and preferences for housing. The following new issues which relate to cross border matters were identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

- **How can the Core Strategy address the impact of environmental constraints around South-East Dorset on levels of future housing provision?**

3.18 The various environmentally protected areas in South East Dorset heavily influence where future development in Christchurch and East Dorset can be located. Of particular relevance is the requirement to prevent harm to the Dorset Heaths, large parts of which exist in Christchurch and East Dorset. Also of relevance is the New Forest National Park designation. Issues relating to environmentally protected areas are addressed in the Managing and Safeguarding the Natural Environment Key Issues Paper. A Habitats Regulations Assessment is being undertaken for the Core Strategy which will inform the options for the broad locations for residential development addressed in the Core Strategy.

- **How can the Core Strategy address links between the economy and the housing market?**

3.19 The level of future economic growth will impact on housing needs. If the economy grows at a higher rate, more housing will be needed. This issue was also raised in the consultation responses where there was a concern that housing proposals may fail to provide the necessary support for the economic potential of the area, including the additional working population required to meet the forecast number of jobs in the Bournemouth and Poole Travel to Work areas. The Core Strategy will need to ensure the availability of sufficient land to meet housing and employment requirements informed by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and the Employment Land Review.

- **How can the Core Strategy address the influence of migration from the South East region of people wishing to retire on the population structure and demand for housing?**

3.20 Migration from the South East region of people wishing to retire to the Housing Market Area is resulting in increased numbers of older people moving into the area. The Housing Market Assessment is already characterised by its high proportion of elderly people, which is forecast to continue to grow in proportionate significance. The growth of older person's households will have an impact on the type of housing required. This issue should be addressed in the Core Strategy when considering how best to ensure an appropriate mix of housing sizes and types. This is addressed in Issue 1 below.

- **How can the Core Strategy address the influence of school catchment areas on the housing market?**

3.21 Different educational policies in neighbouring authorities and the diverse performance of schools can increase the demand for places at particular schools which can fuel demand for family housing in some catchment areas. This is particularly apparent in Christchurch where demand for places for Twynham School which is close to Bournemouth Borough has pushed up the prices for family housing in its catchment area. The performance and popularity of schools changes through time and should therefore not form the basis for the distribution of housing. This is not an issue which could be addressed in the Core Strategy but would need to be addressed more radically in changes in educational policy, in particular admissions criteria for schools. This is a matter for Dorset County Council as the education authority.

Summary of Identified Critical Issues

3.22 The following issues are the consolidated issues identified from the stakeholder engagement undertaken at Issues and Options and from the baseline information, evidence, consideration of other plans and strategies. Sub issues are set out below the highlighted consolidated issues.

3.23 Consolidated Issues

3.24 Issue 1: How do we ensure that the right type and size of housing is delivered to meet the identified needs of the households requiring housing?

- How do we meet the requirements of PPS3 to ensure there is an appropriate mix of housing, planning for the full range of market housing and adequate levels of affordable housing?
- To what extent can policy on future housing mix be informed by the Balancing Housing Market analysis?
- How do we take into account the current and estimated future population profile, in particular the projected increase in the proportion of older person households, so that any special housing needs are met?
- Should we use the delivery of housing as a method of providing a balanced population profile?
- How do we ensure that the housing needs of different sectors of the community are met?
- The consultation responses indicate that there is a view that the mix of recent housing developments has been unbalanced and biased towards flats. How do we address that issue?

3.25 Issue 2: How do we ensure that new housing meets modern living space requirements?

- How do we ensure that sufficient private garden space is provided to meet the needs of children?
- How do we ensure that internal living spaces are sufficient to support good health, learning needs and personal privacy?

3.26 Issue 3: How do we ensure that the density of development is appropriate?

- How do we encourage housing development which makes efficient use of land in accessible locations?
- Which locations are appropriate for higher densities of development?
- Is it appropriate to set targets for the density of housing development in particular types of area?

3.27 Issue 4: What criteria should be used to assess proposals for gypsy and traveller and travelling show people sites?

- Which factors are important in selecting the right location for a gypsy and traveller site?
- Are there any particular locations that are not appropriate for a gypsy and traveller site?
- How do we address the particular need for travelling show people's sites?

4 Formation of Options

4.1 The formulation of Preferred Options set out within this section considers the outcomes of the Core Strategy Issues and Options engagement process, relevant evidence documents and the sustainability appraisal process undertaken at Issues and Options. This includes a critical assessment of the options put forward to address issues identified in the Issues and Options paper.

4.2 Issue identified at issues and options

4.3 Should we have a policy which specifies which mix of dwelling sizes and types should be built even if this might restrict market choice?

4.4 Issues and Options Consultation Response

		Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
A	No, the mix of properties should be determined on a site-by-site basis.	89	10	6	105
B	Yes, restricted to allocated sites	19	62	9	90
C	Yes the policy should apply to all sites	22	64	7	93

Table 4.1

4.5 The comments disagreed with the principle of having a policy to determine the mix of dwelling types and sizes. These were from planning consultants, developers and house builders, including the Home Builders Federation.

4.6 Comments included:

- PPS 3 states that Councils should set out the likely profile of household types requiring market housing based on Strategic Housing Market Assessments. They may seek to prescribe the mix of affordable housing but must not restrict the ability of developers to respond to the market. Councils should be guided by Strategic Housing Market Assessments and devise sensible policies in conjunction with house builders
- Local policy should not go beyond advice that there should be a mix and range of house sizes, types and tenures.
- The market should determine the appropriate mix of housing for individual sites.
- The market will always correct itself if there is over and under provision of a dwelling type.
- There should be flexibility to reflect changes in market demands and trends over 20 years.
- Local housing demand differs in different parts of the area and is not capable of being addressed in a single policy.

- Should be considered on an individual basis derived from Councils' Strategic Housing Market Assessments.
- PPS3 differentiates between the approach towards policy for the mix of affordable and market housing.

4.7 Several respondents took the opportunity to comment on the types of houses they considered most needed in the area.

- More modest houses with gardens / smaller cheaper houses are required for people to get onto the property ladder.
- There are too many flats. A better mix of housing is required to provide for people throughout the stages of their lives.
- More family homes are needed rather than flats.

4.8 Some of these comments are advocating the market to determine the mix of housing rather than be guided by a strategy. However, national policy is advising authorities to intervene to ensure that the housing mix of new developments is appropriate to meet need. Also there is evidence that what is being built does not always relate to the needs identified in the profile of household types requiring market housing and the Balancing Housing Markets analysis. One of the key findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessments was that there is a mismatch between the existing housing stock and housing requirements.

4.9 Consideration of Policy

4.10 PPS3 – para 22 states that Local Planning Authorities should set out in Development Plan Documents:

- Likely overall proportions of households that require market or affordable housing.
- Likely profile of household types that require market or affordable housing.
- Size and type of affordable housing required.

4.11 Para 23 of PPS 3 – Developers should bring forward proposals for **market housing** which reflect the *demand and the profile of households requiring market housing*. Proposals for **affordable housing** should reflect the *size and type of affordable housing required*.

4.12 Para 24 of PPS 3 distinguishes between strategic sites and smaller sites.

- Strategic sites. Proposed mix of housing should reflect proportions of households that require market or affordable housing and achieves a mix of households as well as a mix of tenure or price.
- Smaller sites. The mix of housing should have regard to proportions of households that require market or affordable housing and existing mix of housing in locality.

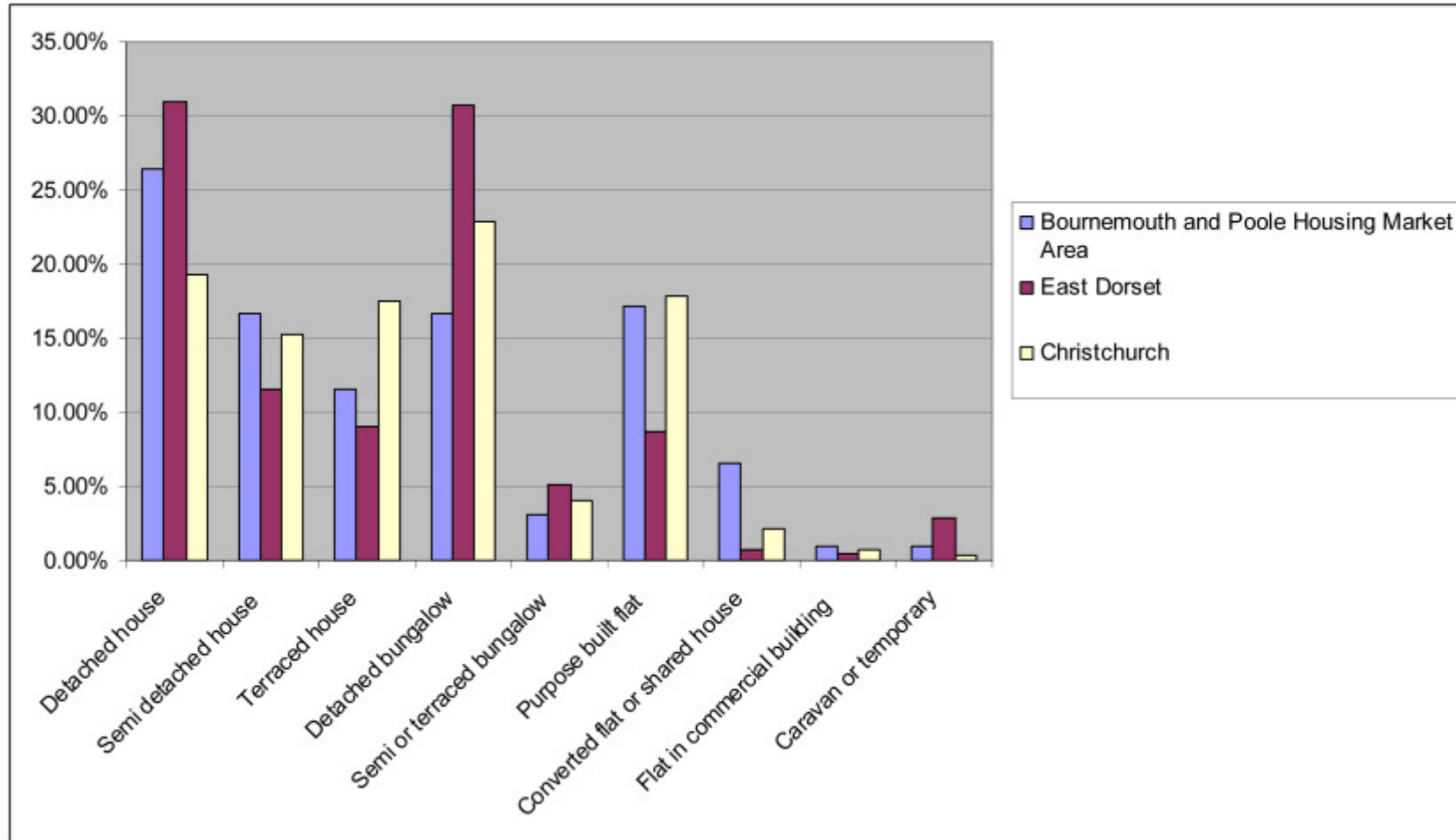
4.13 PPS 3 (Housing) does not distinguish between allocated sites and windfall sites in its guidance on developing policy for size and type of housing.

4.14 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment results will inform the identification of sites within the urban area. It is not envisaged that there will be a great number of large sites coming forward within the urban areas. A high proportion of sites expected to come forward for housing in the next 15 years are small in size (1 – 4 units).

4.15 It is more difficult to influence the mix of dwellings on smaller sites due to the lack of units. If we are to have a strategy which specifies the mix of dwelling sizes and types, it would therefore only be practicable for this to apply to larger sites where there are more units. This would include allocated sites, including the urban extensions, as they are generally large.

4.16 Consideration of Evidence

4.17 The East Dorset and Christchurch Survey of Housing Need & Demand reports identify the split of dwelling types as of 2007, as shown in the graph below. This shows that within East Dorset there are low numbers of flats, terraced houses and semi detached houses and very high numbers of detached houses and bungalows when compared to the average across the Housing Market Area. In contrast Christchurch has a higher number of flats and terraced houses although the proportion of detached properties is still high at 42.5% due to the particularly high proportion of detached bungalows – 23%, which is above the average for the Housing Market Area. This shows the peculiarities of the two districts housing stock and underlines the fact that they are part of a wider housing market. East Dorset historically has provided housing that provides for the more affluent commuters, whereas Christchurch provides a more urban cross section of house type. When looking to balance the housing market it is important to consider the whole market rather than each individual district.



Picture 1 Types of housing in Christchurch and East Dorset (Source: Dorset Housing Needs & Demand Survey Final Report 2008)

4.18 The Balancing Housing Markets assessment gives an indication of the likely demand for particular sizes and tenures of housing across the whole housing market. The results are set out below. However, it is important to note that the model that has been used to predict future balanced housing markets can only predict in the short term and is indicative. Therefore the Balancing Housing Markets assessment should be used as indicative short term guidance rather than a firm forecast of future demand. Other sources of information should be taken into account. The Housing Register provides evidence on need for different size of affordable housing units and housing officers have a more up to date awareness of the local need for both size and tenure of affordable housing. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment contains evidence from local Estate Agents on demand for market housing

Size Requirement					
Tenure	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms	TOTAL
Owner-occupation	49	130	60	55	293
Private-rented	12	-17	-4	-9	-17
Intermediate	26	38	14	0	78
Social Rented	-4	23	57	0	85
TOTAL	83	174	127	55	439

Table 4.2 Balancing Housing Market results for Christchurch (per annum)

Size Requirement					
Tenure	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms	TOTAL
Owner-occupation	-4	104	57	46	203
Private - rented	34	-13	-7	-23	-8
Intermediate	8	45	0	10	63
Social Rented	15	37	28	39	117
TOTAL	52	173	28	39	117

Table 4.3 Balancing Housing Market results for East Dorset (per annum)

Category	Balancing Housing Market Results, translated into % share of dwellings by size – Christchurch			
	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	
Market housing(owner occupied)	17%	44%	20%	19%

Market housing (private rented)	Only demand for 1 bedroom.			
Affordable Housing (social rented)	0%	29%	70%	11%
Affordable housing (intermediate)	33%	49%	18%	0

Table 4.4

Category	Balancing Housing Market Results translated into % share of dwellings by size – East Dorset			
	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
Market housing (owner occupied)	0% Balancing Housing Markets	50%	28%	22%
Market housing (private rented)	Only demand for 1 bedroom			
Affordable housing (social rented)	12%	31%	24%	33%
Affordable housing (intermediate)	13%	71%	0%	16%

Table 4.5

- In Christchurch and East Dorset, the most significant shortfall is for 2 bed properties in the owner occupied sector.
- In East Dorset the results suggest a small surplus of 1 bedroom properties in the owner-occupied sector, whereas in Christchurch there is still a shortfall for this size of property.
- In Christchurch and East Dorset the results suggest a small surplus of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties in the private rented sector. However there is a shortfall for 1 bed private rented properties in both authority areas, particularly in East Dorset.
- Affordable housing – in Christchurch there is more of a need for 3 bed social rented units. There is still a significant demand for 2 bed units, but no demand for 1 bed units. For East Dorset there is most demand for 4 and 2 bed social rented units but still a strong demand for 3 bed units. There is most demand for 2 bed intermediate units in Christchurch and East Dorset, but for Christchurch there is also a demand for 3 and 1 bed.

4.19 The Survey of Housing Need and Demand has identified the **likely profile of household types that require market housing**.

Profile of household types requiring market housing					
Gross demand for market housing (per annum) by household type					
Source: Dorset Survey of Housing Need & Demand 2007 – Christchurch and East Dorset reports					
	Christchurch		East Dorset		
	No.	%	No.	%	
Older persons	492	30.5	594	22.5	
Single non-pensioner	245	15.5	299	11.3	
Multi adult	545	34.5	772	38.5	
Households with children	310	19.6	505	27.7	
Total	1582	100.0	1980	100.0	

Table 4.6

- For Christchurch the largest group requiring market housing is multi-adult followed by older persons. Multi adult households are households with two or more adults under pensionable age with no children. Christchurch has the largest proportion of older person's households requiring market housing in Dorset.
- For East Dorset the largest group needing market housing is multi-adult and the second largest group is households with children.
- East Dorset has more households with children requiring market housing than older person's households.
- Christchurch's proportion of households with children requiring market housing is lower than East Dorset's at only 19.6% compared with 27.7%.
- Christchurch has more single non-pensioner households requiring market housing than East Dorset.

4.20 The profile of households requiring market housing indicates that for both authorities the group with the highest housing need is that of multi adult - (35% CBC, 40% EDDC). The next most significant group requiring market housing for Christchurch is older persons (31%) whereas for East Dorset it is households with children (28%).

4.21 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment identifies a key issue that there is a **mismatch between the existing housing stock and housing requirements** and draws out the implications for certain groups – e.g. young people, single person households, older person's households and families.

4.22 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment provides us with a better understanding of the local and sub-regional housing markets. The Strategic Housing Market Assessments identifies that the needs of younger people seeking their first home and families requiring family housing are not being met by the existing housing stock.

4.23 The Annual Monitoring Reports identify the size and type of housing built.

Christchurch Borough: Types of housing completed						
(Source: DCC Residential Monitoring- figures are for gross completions)						
	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	Total	Average
Houses & Bungalows						
1 bed	0	1	6	0	7	1.8
2 bed	8	17	14	9	48	24
3 bed	52	28	18	15	113	28.3
4+ bed	12	19	16	30	77	19.2
All house & bungalow completions	72	65	54	54	245	61.3
Flats						
1 bed	39	49	85	32	205	51.3
2 bed	45	35	76	36	192	48
3 bed	5	3	4	1	13	3.3
4+ bed	0	5	0	0	5	1.3
All flat completions	89	92	165	69	415	103.8

Total completions	161	157	219	123	660	165
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Table 4.7

4.24 In Christchurch for the past 4 years flat construction has exceeded house building. Bedroom provision in relation to broad house types shows for the past four years that flats have generally 1 & 2 bedrooms and houses and bungalows have mainly 3 & 4 bedrooms.

East Dorset District Types of housing completed

(Source: EDDC Annual Housing Completions Survey - figures are for gross completions)

	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10 (Provisional)	Total	Average
Houses & Bungalows						
1 bed	1	9	6	18	34	8.5
2 bed	17	33	19	23	92	23.0
3 bed	58	41	30	19	148	37.0
4+ bed	38	28	51	31	148	37.0
All house & bungalow completions	114	111	106	91	422	105.5
Flats						
1 bed	7	30	15	6	58	14.5
2 bed	49	47	39	30	165	41.3
3 bed		3		4	7	3.5
4+ bed						

All flat completions	56	80	54	40	230	57.5
Total completions	170	191	160	131	652	163.0

Table 4.8

4.25 Comparing what was built with the Balancing Housing Markets analysis:-

- In Christchurch the Balancing Housing market study identifies the most significant shortfall for market housing is for 2 bedroom units. This could take the form of houses or flats as the type of housing is not specified. A total of 240 x 2 bed flats/houses were built in 2005-9 –36% of the total. A total of 212 x 1 bed flats/houses were built during this period – 32% of the overall number of units, whereas the Balancing Housing Market Assessment identifies a higher need for 3 bed and 4 bed private units than 1 bed accommodation. Comparing what was built with the Balancing Housing Market Assessment indicates that there appears to be proportionally too many 1 bed units built.
- In Christchurch 28% of completions in the past 4 year period were for 3 and 4 bed houses. This is less than the proportion identified in the Balancing Housing Market Assessment requiring 3 or 4 bed housing (39%).
- In East Dorset, the Balancing Housing market study identifies that the most significant shortfall for market housing is 2 bedroom units and again the type of housing is not specified. 39% houses and flats built between 2006 and 2010 had 2 bedrooms whereas 23% had 3 bedrooms and 22% had 4 bedrooms. The Balancing Housing Market Assessment results for market housing worked out as a percentage are 51% 2 bed, 27% 3 bed and 22% 4 bed, so the numbers built seem to have generally reflected this demand.
- In East Dorset the Balancing Housing market study identifies that there is a need for 1 bed private rented units but no need for 2, 3 or 4 bed units in this sector. 14% of dwellings built between 2006 and 2010 were 1 bed, so although it is not possible to identify whether a completed unit will be privately rented, at least the need for smaller units of accommodation is being addressed. In Christchurch there is also only an identified need for 1 bed private rented units. As 32% of the total number of units built over the 4 years 2005 – 2009 in Christchurch were 1 bed flats/houses, the same comments apply.

4.26 Comparing what was actually built with the profile of household types requiring market housing,

- In Christchurch 397 x 1 and 2 bed flats were built in 2005-9 – 60% of the total. Looking at the profile of households requiring market housing, 46% is made up of single non-pensioner and older person households, where an assumption is made that smaller sized accommodation would be required. Multi-adult makes for 34.5% of demand and this group could need smaller or larger sized accommodation, depending on their life stage. Certainly in 2005-9 there would appear to be a heavy bias towards small units of accommodation which may not meet the needs of those households identified which require larger units.
- In East Dorset, 45% of houses built between 2006 and 2010 were 3 and 4 bed, although there were less houses built than flats. This corresponds with the higher proportion than Christchurch of households with children seeking market housing (27.7% compared with 19.6% in Christchurch). 34% of households requiring market housing are made up of single non-pensioner and older person households (compared with 46% in Christchurch), where an assumption is made that smaller sized accommodation would be required.

4.27 Housing supply

4.28 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment considers the potential of the sites in the area to accommodate future housing development for at least a 15 year period. Both Christchurch and East Dorset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment results show that the size of housing sites coming forward within the urban area over the 5 – 15 year period is predominantly small with a high proportion of sites of 1 – 4 units.

4.29 The 5 Year Housing Land Supply identifies sites which have the potential to deliver housing within 5 years. A large proportion of these in Christchurch are small sites of 1 – 4 units - 74% which represents 92 of a total of 124 sites (Christchurch 5 Year Supply 1.4.09). In East Dorset there is also a heavy reliance on small sites. However, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment cannot predict the type and size of dwelling likely to come forward on potential sites.

4.30 As the sites expected to come forward for housing within the urban area in the short and long term in both districts are mainly small in size, there is less of an opportunity to influence the provision of a mix of house types and sizes.

4.31 Completions information shows that there has been a trend for building more flats than houses in both areas in recent years. Although the existing housing stock is heavily biased towards housing rather than flats, it is important that the needs of families are taken into account in new housing development, offering sufficient choice for this group.

4.32 All public sector funded housing in England will be built to the Lifetime Homes standard from 2011 with a final target date of 2013 for all private dwellings. The provision of Lifetime Homes will help to ensure that more older people and people with disabilities can remain in their own homes for longer.

4.33 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.34 For option A – There may be a negative effect on Objective 2 – promote the conservation and wise use of land if the best possible use is not made of sites for housing. It may have a negative effect on Objective 13 – help make suitable housing available and affordable for everybody as if there is no policy to influence a mix of house types and sizes it may result in housing needs for some sectors of the population not being met.

4.35 Option B has a positive impact on Objective 2 (wise use of land) as building a mix of housing which relates to evidence of what is most needed is an efficient use of land. It also has a positive impact on Objective 13 – help make suitable housing available and affordable for everybody as the housing needs of a wider proportion of the population would be met.

4.36 Option C has a positive impact on Objective 2 ‘wise use of land’ as building a mix which relates to evidence of what is most needed is an efficient use of land. There is a positive impact on Objective 13 – help make suitable housing available and affordable for everybody as if there is an influence on the housing mix this is more likely to meet the needs of different sectors of the community.

4.37 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.38 It is clear from the evidence that the districts form part of a wide Housing Market Area and make specific contributions towards the overall existing stock. Analysis of recent provision with evidence of different household types in need has shown that there has not been a significant mismatch between need and provision. PPS3 states that Local Development Frameworks should set out the size and type of affordable housing required. This is considered in the Affordable Housing Key Issues Paper. PPS3 requires a less prescriptive approach for private housing schemes, so that the Local Development Framework does not specify the mix of properties to be provided, but rather establishes the overall proportions of households that are required. This is identified through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

4.39 There was overwhelming consultation support from a wide range of backgrounds and interests for the option of determining the mix of properties on a site by site basis. However, this is contrary to Government policy in PPS 3. If there is no policy to influence the mix of properties built, there is a risk that the right type of housing to meet needs will not be provided.

4.40 Although the results of consultation do not support options B and C, the evidence and policy background points to a need to formulate strategy influencing the mix of dwellings. This highlights the role that small sites play in achieving housing that contributes to the creation of mixed communities having regard to household requirements and existing housing mix. Evidence on housing supply shows that there will be a significant reliance on small sites for the delivery of housing. However, it is not possible to require small sites to provide a specific mix as this would not take into account the scale and nature of the scheme. Rather it is important to understand the general nature of the housing that is likely to be provided through these small sites. This can then be taken into account when considering the type of housing that should be required on larger sites in order to ensure needs are provided for. If there is to be a strategy which influences the mix of dwelling sizes and types, it would seem sensible for this to apply to larger sites where there are more units, offering greater opportunities of influencing the mix.

4.41 If a threshold is to be applied, it is difficult to assess at what level it would be set. There is no guidance on recommended thresholds for such a policy. Responses to Issues & Options consultation did not put forward a suggested threshold for such a policy. A search of equivalent policies in other Core Strategies has shown that most do not have a threshold and those who do have a threshold of 10, as consultation responses have supported a threshold of 10.

4.42 There would seem to be two alternative policy approaches – to either not specify a threshold and apply the policy to whatever size of scheme it is possible to do so, or to have a threshold of 10, based on research of equivalent housing mix policies in other Core Strategies. There would need to be flexibility in applying the policy to take into account individual site circumstances as there may be situations where it will be difficult to influence the mix of housing in larger sites of 10 or more.

4.43 Whether the strategy is restricted to allocated sites only is another matter. PPS 3 does not state that such a policy can only apply to allocations and refers to strategic and smaller sites. It is concluded that any policy on mix and type of housing should not be restricted to allocated sites.

4.44 Therefore it is proposed to have a preferred option which does not specify the site threshold, but identifies the overall proportions of house types and mix to be provided. An alternative option can be put forward which requires that sites of more than 10 dwellings should reflect these overall proportions. This will enable consultation on whether the principle of a site threshold for this policy is the right approach and also whether the threshold size is appropriate, as this question was not asked at Issues & Options stage.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 1: How do we ensure that the right type and size of housing is delivered to meet the identified needs of the households requiring housing?

4.45 Issue identified at issues and options

4.46 If we are to have policies seeking to control the size of housing, what issues are important?

4.47 General comments received in response to this issue

4.48 General comments were received objecting to any form of policy influencing the size of housing – mainly from landowners, house builders and planning consultants. The Home Builders Federation considered that the market is in a stronger position to respond to changes in need and demand than a planning policy.

4.49 Option A: Number of bedrooms of housing unit (1 bedroom, 2 bedroom etc)

4.50 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
72	16	12	100

Table 4.9

4.51 It is noted that the response to this option contradicts the responses to similar options considered in the previous issue.

4.52 Comment received in relation to Option A

4.53 The only comment made in relation to this was from a planning consultant who supported the option but cast doubt as to whether it could be based on sound evidence or if it would be supported at appeal.

4.54 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.55 The Balancing Housing Markets assessment gives an indication of the likely demand for housing of particular sizes. In Christchurch and East Dorset the most significant shortfall is for 2 bedroom properties in the owner occupied sector. But there are also shortfalls for 3 and 4 bedroom properties. In Christchurch there is a shortfall of 1 bedroom owner occupied properties, whereas in East Dorset there is a small surplus. In the private rented sector the most significant shortfall is for 1 bed properties, with bigger properties not having a shortfall. However the Balancing Housing Markets assessment is useful for indicative short term guidance only and should be balanced against other evidence on shortfalls for different sizes of property.

4.56 The profile of households requiring market housing by household type shows that for Christchurch the largest group requiring market housing is multi-adult, followed by older persons, suggesting a need for smaller accommodation. For East Dorset the largest group needing market housing is multi-adult followed by households with children, so there is more of a need for family housing – which suggests 3 bedrooms.

4.57 Issues and Options Sustainability Assessment

4.58 The issues and options Sustainability Appraisal did not identify any clear adverse impacts. There is a positive impact on Objective 2 – wise use of land – as if the size of housing built is what is most needed then it is making the best use of a site. There is a positive impact on Objective 13 – helping to make suitable housing available and affordable for everybody as if there is a balanced mix of size of housing this would meet identified housing needs for different sizes of housing. This policy is concerned with provision of market housing, so may not impact so much on affordability, but if the mix includes smaller units suitable for first time buyers, there would be a positive impact on that element of the market.

4.59 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Option:

4.60 This option is considered in detail as part of the previous Issue. Evidence identifies needs for units of different sizes and tenures. The size of the unit is quantified by reference to number of bedrooms, so the evidence already supports number of bedrooms as an important indicator. The Sustainability Appraisal at this stage supports the most efficient use of land where the type of housing built is what is most needed and helps to make suitable housing available and affordable for everybody.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 1: How do we ensure that the right type and size of housing is delivered to meet the identified needs of the households requiring housing?

4.61 Issues & Options Consultation Response

4.62 Option B: Size of rooms – ensuring that there is an adequately sized living area, kitchen area and bedrooms

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
75	16	10	101

Table 4.10

4.63 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.64 PPS 3 advises that new housing should be sustainable, environmentally friendly and reflect the approach set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes. Of particular relevance in the Code for Sustainable Homes is the need to provide adequate space for drying / home office / cycle storage in the energy and CO² emissions category and the provision of adequate private space in the health and well-being category. Lifetime Homes standards sets out design

criteria to enable accessibility of new homes by a wide range of occupants and homes that are able to be easily adapted to meet changing needs. This allows householders the opportunity for adaptability in their homes to meet their changing circumstances without the need to move. A home built to Lifetime Homes standards must have sufficient space for wheelchair accessibility into and around rooms, therefore this will have an impact on size of room.

4.65 The Draft London Housing Design Guide sets out larger-than-before minimum sizes for new social housing in London, and hints that those guidelines will be extended to the private sector across the UK if the Conservatives win the 2010 election. (Source: Estates Gazette, 28.11.09)

4.66 The report identified that new homes in London are some of the smallest in Western Europe and to continue to overproduce cramped homes will result in homes that cannot meet the changing homes of individuals and families. Research (Shelter's "Crowded House" Report 2004) gave evidence on the serious long term effects of overcrowding on families. The central aim is to promote a new minimum standard for the size of housing in London, in recognition that the quality of housing is affected by space as well as design and every home should have sufficient storage, space for work and study and circulation spaces that provide for the needs of all potential occupants and their visitors.

4.67 It sets out six areas for design for new developments:

1. creating spaces around buildings to make developments integrate with the wider public realm,
2. ensuring a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures at a range of densities,
3. improved entrances and shared entrances to design out crime,
4. minimum internal space roughly 10% above the 1961 Parker Morris standards, making the smallest one-bed flat about 550 sq ft and the smallest two-bed flat 770 sq ft,
5. increasing comfort in homes by making them quieter, lighter and better ventilated and
6. building homes to cope with warmer summers and wetter winters.

4.68 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.69 Option B has a positive impact on objective 12 'health' as if there is a decent living space within a property, this results in an improvement in living conditions for the occupants. There is also a positive impact on Objective 13 - provision of suitable and affordable housing as accommodation with decent sized rooms would meet a wider range of housing needs and adapt to changing lifestyles and patterns of occupancy.

4.70 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.71 There is majority agreement that the size of rooms is an important issue. There are no national minimum room size standards, but Lifetime Homes standards require sufficient space within a property to enable accessibility. The Sustainability Appraisal identifies benefits for the health of occupants if there is decent living space. All new housing with public funding will be built to Lifetime Homes standard by 2011 and regulations for private housing may be brought in from 2013, depending on the Government's review of progress in 2010.

4.72 The size of rooms is important, but setting standards would be too detailed for a core strategy. The principle of including the size of rooms as an important issue in any policy seeking to control the size of housing can be established in the Core Strategy, with any detailed standards to be included in a future Supplementary Planning Documents.

4.73 In conclusion, the preferred options will refer to provision to be made in subsequent Supplementary Planning Documents for issues related to the size of housing – standards for size of rooms.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 2: How do we ensure that new housing meets modern living space standards?

4.74 Issues and Options Consultation Response

4.75 Option C: Size of external living space-gardens, amenity space, communal areas

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
70	20	11	101

Table 4.11

4.76 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.77 PPS 3 (para 16) identifies matters to consider when assessing design quality and this includes the extent to which the development provides good access to private outdoor space such as residential gardens, patios and balconies. In para 17 it states “Particularly where family housing is proposed, it will be important to ensure that the needs of children are taken into account and that there is good provision of recreational areas, including private gardens, play areas and informal play space.”

4.78 The Code for Sustainable Homes in its health and wellbeing environmental impact category identifies the issue of private space. The aim is to improve the occupiers’ quality of life by providing an outdoor space for their use, which is at least partially private. This does not specify family housing as particularly needing private open space so is applicable to all housing.

4.79 The Christchurch and East Dorset Survey of Housing Need and Demand identifies the profile of household types requiring market housing. East Dorset’s second largest group is households with children (27.7%). Christchurch has a lower proportion of households with children requiring market housing (19.6%)

4.80 Evidence on housing completions shows that in Christchurch and East Dorset more flats than houses have been built in recent years.

4.81 Evidence on housing supply for Christchurch and East Dorset indicates a shortage of sites coming forward for housing, in particular larger sites. Therefore there is a need to make the best use of the land coming forward to meet the housing needs. This leads to pressure for increased density and therefore reduced private amenity.

4.82 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.83 Option C could potentially conflict with objective 2 'wise use of land', but the benefits to the occupants of sufficient private space need to be weighed against the increased land take required. However there is a significant beneficial impact on Objective 12 'health' if there is a decent size of external space as this enables children to play in their own gardens and adult occupants to garden or relax in an area of open space. There is also a positive impact on Objective 13 – help make suitable housing available and affordable for everybody, as the provision of sufficient private open space within new housing will meet the needs of a wider section of the community, including families with children.

4.84 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.85 The option has majority support from the public consultation exercise and there is national policy endorsement of the need to ensure sufficient private open space is provided when building new housing.

4.86 The need to meet government targets for housing numbers and shortage of sites coming forward has to be balanced with the benefits to the occupants of providing sufficient private space. PPS 3 specifically refers to the importance of ensuring that the needs of children are taken into account. The issues and options Sustainability Appraisal identifies the benefits of sufficient external living space to the health of occupants, although this has to be balanced with the wise use of land. There are also benefits in meeting wider housing needs including those of families with children.

4.87 Therefore the evidence and results of consultation support the size of external living space as a factor to include if the strategy is to seek to control the size of housing. However this is too detailed an issue to include in the Core Strategy and would be more appropriate to deal with in future Supplementary Planning Documents.

4.88 In conclusion, the options will refer to provision to be made in subsequent Supplementary Planning Documents for issues related to the size of housing – standards for size of external living space.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 2: How do we ensure that new housing meets modern living space standards?

4.89 Option D – Other, please specify

4.90 Issues and Options Consultation Response

4.91 The 29 comments were split between those who objected to any form of policy influencing the size of housing and suggestions for other issues that are important. The issue of whether there should be a policy to influence the size or type of housing is discussed under Option A of the previous issue. See above.

4.92 Of the respondents who were suggesting other issues that were important, the majority of comments were about the need to provide adequate off road parking or garage space. This is an issue that is considered as part of the Transport Key Issues Paper.

4.93 Other points suggested were adequate size of dining areas for a table – which relates to the previous option B of size of room and number of habitable room.

4.94 Conclusion and Implications for Preferred Options

4.95 The following conclusions on this Issue have been reached:-

- Setting out the overall provision of different sizes of dwelling in conjunction with the previous issue (policy seeking to control the mix of dwelling sizes and types) is appropriate.
- Controlling the size of rooms and external living space is an important issue to take into account but the Core Strategy is not the appropriate place to set out any standards. Instead the preferred options will provide a policy that enables future Supplementary Planning Document to address this issue.

4.96 What factors should be taken into account when setting targets for the density of housing development?

4.97 General comments received in response to this issue:

4.98 Comments received from planning consultants consider that the sustainability of the housing site, its proximity to town centres, employment areas, community facilities and public transport corridors, and the quality of the environment that is to be created should all be considered when determining the appropriate density of new development. This is supported and will be addressed through the development of preferred options under the next issue, in particular the expansion of Option C to refer to accessibility to essential community services and facilities as well as public transport.

4.99 A number of planning consultants referred to para 46 of PPS 3 and the findings of the SW Regional Spatial Strategy Panel Report where it states that greenfield urban extensions should be developed to at least 40-50 dph net and also the view that the urban extensions lend themselves more readily to this higher density and innovative design than urban brownfield. This issue will be explored in more detail in the master planning exercise for the urban extensions. (It should be noted that the Regional Spatial Strategy has now been abolished and density targets in PPS3 have been removed.)

4.100 The Home Builders Federation considers that density should be set on a site by site basis responding to character and constraints on a site. The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment should guide the need and demand for the supply of high density housing. Housing density should not be over-prescriptive if specified in the Core Strategy. Any proposed density requirements must also be flexible and allow for some development at lower densities to enable the provision of a full range of housing. This should be informed by an up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Furthermore density has important links with climate change. If density is too high, this can exacerbate the urban heat island effect and increase the likelihood of urban flooding. These points are relevant. Evidence on housing needs from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment has to be balanced with other evidence on the capacity of the area for more housing development such as the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Character Assessments. It is agreed that there should be flexibility within the policy.

4.101 Other comments from a range of respondents including local residents, community groups and a town council include:-

- The character of the area should dictate the acceptable density level per hectare. Design codes, character statements and strategies should promote this issue. However control over densities could be difficult if central government insist on specific densities (Housing Focus Group 7.4.08).

4.102 It is agreed that the character of the area is an important factor to be taken into account when setting standards for the density of residential development – see Conclusions for Option D below. A robust design policy will be developed in the Design and Landscape Key Issues Paper.

- Height to be limited to 2 storeys in Conservation Areas.

4.103 A prescriptive policy on height of buildings within all Conservation Areas is not considered to be an appropriate policy approach. Instead the emphasis should be on developing robust policies on design of new development to ensure its context is respected. Policy will be included in the Historic Built Environment and Design and Landscape Key Issues Papers.

- Need to respect heritage and to maintain the character of heritage sites, the coast and SSSI's.

4.104 This comment is supported. Policy for new development contained within the Design and Landscape Key Issues Paper is relevant.

- The effect of higher density on the population should be considered. Higher density means less garden space which is important for children and adults.

4.105 This is also drawn out in option C of the previous issue above which looks at the importance of size of external living space for new housing.

- Higher density is very subjective and access to public transport is not the panacea.

4.106 It is agreed that high density may not be appropriate for some sites even if there is good access to public transport, hence the need for a robust policy for the design of new development in the Design and Landscape Key Issues Paper.

- Consider the transport and traffic implications.

4.107 Any new development will have to consider this as a matter of course. In supporting projected housing growth there are specific highways improvements that are necessary to enable development to come forward. The South East Dorset Multi Modal Study will identify specific transport infrastructure improvements required to accommodate new development.

- Avoid encroachment into Green Belt / SSSI areas.

4.108 Policy constraints for these protected areas will ensure this. Apart from the urban extension in Christchurch and the new neighbourhoods in East Dorset, the delivery of new housing development is expected to be come forward within the urban areas.

4.109 Option A: Higher density in town centres

4.110 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
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90	21	11	122
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Table 4.12

4.111 Comments received in relation to Option A

4.112 The Highways Agency support the principles of Option A and advises that densities should be sensitive to existing public transport, cycling and walking provision or mitigate impacts on the strategic road network through developer contributions where needed.

4.113 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.114 PPS 3 advises local planning authorities to develop housing density policies having regard to factors including the current and future levels of accessibility, particularly public transport accessibility. However, there is no longer a specific national density target.

4.115 Evidence on housing supply for Christchurch and East Dorset indicates a low number of larger sites coming forward within the urban area. There is a need to make the best use of the land coming forward to meet housing needs. This has implications for the need for a high density of development where this is appropriate.

4.116 Evidence from the Christchurch Annual Monitoring Report for the 3 years 2005 – 2009 shows that an average of 22 % of new dwellings were completed at a density of less than 30dph, 24% at 30 – 49 dph and 54% at 50+dph. The trend over that 4 year period has been for the proportion of completed schemes at higher densities to increase and lower densities to decrease. This is linked to the higher proportion of flats developments completed during this period. However there was a fall in the average density of completed schemes in 2008/9 due to a decrease in the number of flat schemes, although they still account for more units built than houses.

4.117 The East Dorset Annual Monitoring Reports for the period 2005 to 2009 show that 45% of new dwellings were completed at less than 30 dph. This reflects the fact that recent high levels of redevelopment of existing dwellings within low density areas has respected the character of the urban form and not lead to significantly increased densities. Only 17% of dwellings were built at between 30 and 50 dph, whereas 38% were on sites of more than 50dph, reflecting a fairly high number of new flats that have been built.

4.118 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.119 Option A has a strong and beneficial impact on:-

4.120 Objective 1 (protect habitats) as higher density development in town centre areas avoids development in Green Belt areas where there are more nature conservation designations.

4.121 Objective 2 (wise use of land) as higher density of housing development is a wise use of land in maximising opportunities to meet housing needs.

4.122 Objective 7 (need to travel) as town centres offer the most alternatives to private transport.

- 4.123** Objective 13 (suitable housing available and affordable) as higher density housing is more likely to result in opportunities for market and affordable housing – a greater number of units to meet the threshold policy which requires on-site provision and the mix is likely to include smaller units which are more affordable.
- 4.124** Objective 23 (town centre viability) as higher density housing in town centre areas provide more population who can easily access the town centre for shopping and other activities.
- 4.125** Option A has a potentially significant beneficial impact on:-
- 4.126** Objective 11 (non-renewables) as it could have a positive impact on greenhouse emissions if car journeys are reduced through proximity of housing to services.
- 4.127** Objective 14 (educational facilities) as educational facilities are more likely to be in town centres and town centre locations provide more public transport opportunities to access facilities elsewhere.
- 4.128** Objective 16 (community facilities) and Objective 17 (cultural activities) as higher density of housing in town centres will be more accessible to community facilities and cultural facilities which tend to be concentrated in town centres.
- 4.129** Option A has a minor beneficial impact on:-
- 4.130** Objective 4 (minerals) as higher density development could be more economical on construction materials, and therefore lessen consumption and extraction of minerals.
- 4.131** There are potential conflicts identified (but with insufficient evidence) for Option A with:-
- 4.132** Objective 18 (protect heritage) as town centres contain greater concentration of historic areas and there is a potential adverse impact from high density development on character which may be avoided through careful design.
- 4.133** Objective 20 (places and spaces) the challenge will be to ensure that higher density housing does not conflict with the objective to create places, spaces and buildings that work well, wear well and look well.
- 4.134** **Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options**
- 4.135** This option is supported by the results of consultation and evidence. National policy advises that there should be higher densities in the most accessible locations. In view of the constraints on housing sites and the requirement to meet a 5 year supply in Christchurch and East Dorset there is a need to make the best use of the land coming forward to meet housing targets needs. This has implications on densities as housing opportunities should be maximised where appropriate to ensure sufficient housing is delivered. The Sustainability Appraisal identifies positive benefits of this Option on a wide range of sustainability objectives.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 3: How do we ensure that the density of development is appropriate?

4.136 Option B: Higher density on edge of town centre locations

4.137 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
49	48	14	111

Table 4.13

4.138 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.139 See above for evidence in Option A as it is relevant to this option.

4.140 The policy guidance in PPS3 does not refer to the need for higher densities in the edge of town centre locations, but to town centres or areas where there is good access to services and public transport.

4.141 There are six town centres within Christchurch and East Dorset - Christchurch, Highcliffe, Ferndown, Verwood, West Moors and Wimborne. These are of differing size, significance and function, but in general do not cover particularly extensive areas compared with, say Bournemouth or Poole town centres. There is less of a distinct edge of town centre area. Some of these edge of town centre areas may have good access to public transport and essential facilities. They are also within reach of facilities by bicycle or on foot. Option C (see below) refers to higher density being appropriate within areas outside town centres but in locations highly accessible by public transport and other essential facilities. Option B becomes superfluous as Option C would apply to edge of town centre areas which meet the criteria of accessibility.

4.142 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.143 The same scoring and comments apply for all the objectives of Option A.

4.144 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.145 The results of consultation show that there is no overall support or disagreement to this option. Evidence does not specifically identify edge of town centre locations as areas to target higher densities, but rather town centres or areas where there is good access to services and public transport. The issues and options sustainability appraisal scores highly as the benefits to sustainability objectives resulting from higher density housing development in town centre locations can also be shared by edge of town centre locations, particularly in Christchurch and East Dorset where the town centre areas are relatively not that extensive.

4.146 Town centres in Christchurch and East Dorset are more compact in area than other town centres in neighbouring areas such as Bournemouth and Poole, therefore the edge of town centre area is less distinct.

4.147 Option A deals with higher density in town centre areas and Option C with higher density in areas outside town centre but in locations highly accessible by public transport. There would appear to be no merit in identifying edge of town centre areas as a particular area to target higher density areas, but instead ensure that Option C covers all the issues that are relevant when setting targets for higher density in areas outside town centre locations.

4.148 In conclusion, although development will not be specifically directed to edge of town centre locations, the conclusions of Option C (below) are that the areas where there is good accessibility to public transport and essential community facilities and services should provide higher density development, which could include edge of centre sites.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 3: How do we ensure that the density of development is appropriate?

4.149 Option C: Higher density outside the town centres but in locations highly accessible by public transport

4.150 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
59	45	12	116

Table 4.14

4.151 Comments received in relation to Option C

4.152 The Highways Agency supports the principle of Option C and suggests that densities should be sensitive to existing public transport, cycling and walking provision, or mitigate impacts on the strategic road network through developer contributions where needed.

4.153 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.154 See above for evidence in Option A as it is relevant to this option.

4.155 PPS 3 advises local planning authorities to develop housing density policies having regard to factors including the current and future levels of accessibility, particularly public transport accessibility.

4.156 However this has to be balanced with the increased emphasis of national policy to consider the needs of families and to provide sufficient private outdoor space. PPS 3 (para 16) identifies matters to consider when assessing design quality and this includes the extent to which the development provides good access to private outdoor space such as residential gardens, patios and balconies. In para 17 it states “Particularly where family housing is proposed, it will be important to ensure that the needs of children are taken into account and that there is good provision of recreational areas, including private gardens, play areas and informal play space

4.157 The Christchurch Character Assessment provides a comprehensive analysis of the urban character areas. Guidance is set out regarding capacity of areas to accommodate new development and their unique sensitivity to change.

4.158 East Dorset does not have a Character Assessment for the whole District. However, detailed assessments have been undertaken for Special Character Areas identified in the Local Plan.

4.159 Issues and Options Sustainability Assessment

4.160 Option C has a strong significant beneficial impact on Objective 2 (wise use of land)(2), Objective 7 (need to travel) and Objective 13 (help make suitable housing available and affordable for everybody) – see commentary under Option A as the principles of higher density development result in the same benefits. There is a potentially significant beneficial impact on Option 7 (need to travel) The impacts on objectives 1 (protect habitats) and 4 (minerals) are the same as for Option A and B. Option C has a positive impact, but has a lesser positive impact than Option A and B, for the following Objectives, Objective 14 (access to learning), Objective 16 (community facilities), Objective 17 (cultural activities) and Objective 24 (town centre viability). As for Option A the possible conflicts are with Objective 18 (protect heritage) and Objective 20 (places and spaces).

4.161 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Option

4.162 Option C has overall support from public consultation and clear support from national policy.

4.163 National policy advises us to consider the needs of families and to provide sufficient private outdoor space within housing developments. This could conflict with higher density development.

4.164 However there is a need to make the best use of the land coming forward to meet housing needs. Evidence on future housing supply in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment shows that it is necessary to maximise housing opportunities where it is appropriate in order to meet housing needs.

4.165 The Christchurch Character Assessment and East Dorset Special Character Areas assessments can assist in guiding the consideration of areas that may have the capacity to accommodate additional development of higher density whilst respecting existing character. The Core Strategy will also set out design policies which will be applied to maintain character and local distinctiveness. These are covered in the Design Key Issues Paper.

4.166 There are several positive benefits of Option C on sustainability objectives. However, there need to be safeguards to ensure that higher densities are not achieved in areas with high accessibility to public transport at the expense of the character of the area. Access to public transport should not be the over-riding factor.

4.167 To take into account the consultation responses on this issue (see ‘General comments received in response to this issue’ above from planning consultants), where the point was made that it is not just accessibility to public transport that is an important factor when identifying areas suitable for higher density of development, it is proposed to expand Option C to refer to the need for accessibility to essential community services and facilities as well as public transport. Accessibility to facilities such as shops, banks, schools, health facilities and community centres etc is an important factor when considering the location of housing.

4.168 Instead of identifying those areas which are appropriate for higher density of development, an alternative approach would be to specify a range of densities appropriate to different types of location. This would allow the consideration of what is appropriate in different urban and rural situations e.g. urban extensions, town centres, suburban areas, villages. Ranges of density would allow new development to be responsive to the existing character of an area while still meeting requirements for the efficient use of land.

4.169 In conclusion there are two options for policy approaches to the issue of density of development;-

- A policy which identifies areas where a higher density of development would be appropriate.
- A policy which specifies a range of densities appropriate to different types of locations.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 3: How do we ensure that the density of development is appropriate?

4.170 Option D: Taking into account the character of the area

4.171 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
122	5	7	134

Table 4.15

4.172 Comments received in relation to Option D

4.173 One respondent who agreed (Environment Theme Action Group East Dorset) commented that new development is more acceptable to residents where there is little radical change to the existing character. Back garden development should be plan-led and co-ordinated, not piecemeal. Design led approaches should ensure that development is sympathetic to an area’s character, fosters a sense of place and enables special features, including wildlife habitat and open space, to be retained and enhanced.

4.174 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.175 General evidence on density is outlined in Option A – see above.

4.176 PPS 3 identifies matters to have regard to when developing density policies, including the characteristics of the area and the desirability of achieving high quality, well designed housing. Good design is fundamental to using land efficiently. More intensive development is not always appropriate. However, when well designed and built in the right location, it can enhance the quality and character of an area. In Conservation Areas and other local areas of special character, if proper attention is paid to achieving good design, new development opportunities can be taken without compromising the quality of the local environment.

4.177 Both Local Plans contain existing policies setting out criteria for residential development / redevelopment in the area which emphasise the need for development to be appropriate in character, scale, design and materials to the immediate locality.

4.178 The Christchurch Borough Character Assessment sets out guidance regarding capacity of areas to accommodate new development and their unique sensitivity to change.

4.179 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.180 There is a strong significant beneficial impact on Objective 20 (creating spaces, places and buildings that work well, wear well and look well) as this option is concerned with taking into account the character of an area. There is a positive impact on Objective 1 (protect habitats), Objective 19 (enhance diversity as this relates to local distinctiveness) and Objective 22 (enhance landscape).

4.181 Conclusions and Implications for preferred options

4.182 This option has strong support from the results of consultation and clear support from evidence. The issues and options Sustainability Appraisal identifies positive impacts on several sustainability objectives. It is therefore concluded that a policy about density of development should refer to the need to take into account the impact on character of the area alongside the need to meet housing requirements.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 3: How do we ensure that the density of development is appropriate?

4.183 Option E: Higher density in areas where there is a high level of need for affordable housing or on land already owned by housing associations

4.184 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
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70	25	6	101
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Table 4.16

4.185 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.186 General evidence on housing density is outlined in Option A. See above.

4.187 PPS3 outlines the key role that the planning system has in the delivery of affordable housing. CLG: Delivering Affordable Housing (2006) advocates local authorities and other key players using all tools available to them to deliver more affordable housing.

4.188 The need for affordable housing is one of the most significant issues faced by Christchurch and East Dorset areas. A review of affordable housing policy has been identified as one of the key priorities in the Local Development Scheme. National research identifies a high house price to income ratio for Christchurch and East Dorset. Local housing needs assessments (Christchurch and East Dorset Surveys of Housing Need and Demand 2007) conclude that there is a net annual need for 243 affordable units for Christchurch and 440 for East Dorset. The survey reports contain ward level data, and the wards with the highest levels of housing need can be identified.

4.189 Higher density of housing will result in the provision of smaller units which will meet housing need for smaller households and be more affordable to some sectors of the community.

4.190 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.191 Option E has a strong and beneficial effect on Objective 13 (suitable housing) as the higher density of housing is targeted in areas where there is a high level of need for affordable housing or on land already owned by housing associations. Higher density of housing is more likely to result in opportunities for affordable housing. It also supports Objective 1 – wise use of land and Objective 19 – enhance diversity. There may be a potential conflict with objective 20 – places and spaces.

4.192 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.193 This option has strong support from the results of consultation and support from evidence. The issues and options sustainability appraisal identifies a strong beneficial impact on affordability housing objectives.

4.194 In view of the high level of need for affordable housing and policy guidance to use whatever tools possible to increase the delivery of affordable housing, this option could assist in redressing the shortfall identified in the area.

4.195 In conclusion, the strategy should refer to higher densities being more acceptable in areas where there is a high level of need for affordable housing or on land already owned by housing associations.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 3: How do we ensure that the density of development is appropriate?

4.196 Option F: Other, Please specify

4.197 The issues raised by consultees are mainly concerns about the impact of higher density on character, open space, and transport. Open space and character issues in relation to density have been discussed in the conclusions previous issues.

4.198 The planning consultants' comments on the factors to be considered in setting targets for the density of housing development i.e. proximity to town centres, employment areas, community facilities and public transport corridors, and the quality of the environment are all relevant points. Options A, C and D, which are to be carried through to Preferred Options deal with the town centres, public transport corridors and quality of the environment. These comments have been taken into account in the expansion of Option C to refer to accessibility to essential community facilities and services as well as public transport.

4.199 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.200 In conclusion, the following factors should be taken into account when establishing a strategy for the density of housing development:

- Higher density is generally acceptable in town centres
- Higher density is acceptable in locations other than town centres which are well served by public transport, with good accessibility to essential community facilities and services.
- Higher density is acceptable where this form of development will not have an adverse impact on the character of the area.
- Higher density is acceptable in areas where there is a high level of need for affordable housing or on land already owned by housing associations.
- An alternative approach is to specify a range of densities appropriate to different types of location – e.g. town centre, suburban area, village.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 3: How do we ensure that the density of development is appropriate?

4.201 Issue identified at Issues and Options

4.202 Should we protect certain areas from increased redevelopment and infilling for any reason?

4.203 General Comments received in response to this issue:

4.204 Development should be restricted in areas that are, or as a consequence of climate change, will be at risk of flooding as informed by your Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. This will minimise reliance on Emergency Services that may be required to assist in evacuation (Environment Agency)

4.205 It may be appropriate to make good use of urban land but not at the expense of those attributes which make these areas desirable to live in. Development of urban extensions will result in less impacts and could provide more sustainable options to accommodate growth compared to the high reliance on windfall sites (Seward Properties Ltd)

4.206 Redevelopment releases pressure from the greenbelt and provides the opportunity for better designed buildings which suit modern needs. Conservation Areas provide adequate control (Traves James)

4.207 Option A: No, we should not protect any particular housing areas from redevelopment and infill

4.208 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
28	53	12	93

Table 4.17

4.209 Taylor Wimpey commented that conservation areas should be protected from increased redevelopment and infilling. No other comments were provided.

4.210 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.211 PPS 3 gives advice on providing housing in suitable locations. The priority for development should be previously developed land. In setting out the criteria to be used for identifying broad locations and specific sites, a list of factors to be taken into account are identified which include:

- Evidence of current and future levels of need and demand for housing.
- Availability of suitable, viable sites for housing.
- Any physical, environmental, land ownership etc constraints e.g. flood risk,
- Options for accommodating new housing growth, including additional housing in established residential areas.
- Accessibility of proposed development to existing local community facilities, infrastructure and services, including public transport.

4.212 PPS3 gives guidance on the efficient use of land. Para 49 is particularly relevant to Issue HO4. “Careful attention to design is particularly important where the chosen local strategy involves intensification to the existing urban fabric. However, when well designed and built in the right location, it can enhance the character and quality of an area. Successful intensification need not mean high rise development or low quality accommodation with inappropriate space. Similarly, in Conservation Areas and other local areas of special character where, if proper attention is paid to achieving good design, new development opportunities can be taken without adverse impacts on their character and appearance.”

4.213 The Borough of Christchurch Local Plan contains Policy H9 which aims to protect the Chewton Farm estate from inappropriate redevelopment. This policy was saved after Sept 2007 as it is a local character policy.

4.214 The East Dorset Local Plan identifies Special Character Area policies. These do not prevent redevelopment and infilling. However, they do affect the form of development, which can impact on the type of scheme delivered.

4.215 The Christchurch Borough Character Assessment Nov 2003 sets out guidance regarding capacity of areas to accommodate new development and their unique sensitivity to change. The study identifies a number of areas where the existing townscape has some form of special character – called Special Character Areas.

4.216 The Christchurch Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment demonstrates that Christchurch Borough can provide 2,877 deliverable housing units within the existing urban area and the urban extension between 2009 – 2024. . These results were arrived at by looking at a range of densities and mix of houses and flats. It assumes that design can overcome some character concerns and that no areas should be excluded from redevelopment or infilling. If areas had been protected from redevelopment or infilling it would clearly result in a reduction of housing supply.

4.217 The East Dorset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment theoretically identifies the provision of 3,555 dwellings. It is recognised that protecting areas from redevelopment and infilling would reduce the delivery of housing in the District and make it even less likely that such targets could be met.

4.218 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.219 Option A has a strong and beneficial effect on Objective 13 – suitable housing - as this widens the scope of sites for residential development and infill. There is also a beneficial impact on Objective 2 – the wise use of land. There is a potentially significant adverse impact on Objective 20 – places and spaces as a lack of protection of areas of special character could result in a negative impact on the areas recognised quality. There could also be a negative impact on Objective 10 – flooding – if there were no particular housing areas protected.

4.220 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.221 The option of not protecting any particular housing areas from redevelopment and infill does not have support from the results of consultation. National policy guidance however does not recommend the option of protection policies but instead advises that if proper attention is paid to design, new opportunities for development in Conservation Areas and local areas of special character can be taken without adverse impacts on their character and appearance.

4.222 However there is existing policy in Local Plans protecting particular areas. The East Dorset Local Plan identifies Special Character Areas. The Christchurch Character Assessment also identifies Special Character Areas.

4.223 The issues and options Sustainability Appraisal at this stage shows adverse and positive impacts on this option, possibly adversely affecting places and spaces and flooding objectives but positively impacting on wise use of land and suitable and affordable housing.

4.224 The results of consultation on Issue HO3 Option D should also be taken into account – as taking into account the character of the area when setting targets for the density of housing development had the largest majority of support. The results of consultation on Issue HO4 Option B, the comments and suggestions for areas that need to be protected show that this is an issue that the respondents feel strongly about.

4.225 Local evidence and results of consultation have to be balanced with national guidance and evidence on housing supply. There is a need to make the best use of the land coming forward to meet housing needs.

4.226 However the issue of whether there should be protection of certain areas from increased redevelopment and infilling for any reason is an issue that is best determined locally. The Local Development Framework is the appropriate mechanism to consider whether there are any such areas.

4.227 In conclusion, taking into account local evidence, issues and options sustainability appraisal and results of the issues and options consultation, it is not proposed to put forward options for protection areas in the Core Strategy. The reasons for not identifying areas to protect from housing redevelopment and infill are expanded upon in the conclusions for Option B below.

4.228 Option B: Yes, identify and protect the character of low density housing areas to preserve their character, if so where?

4.229 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
61	20	12	93

Table 4.18

4.230 Comments received in relation to Option B

4.231 Areas suggested to protect were:-

- Rural communities
- Gardens
- In areas where single units are being demolished and flats built.
- Areas with existing mature trees.
- Conservation Areas.
- St Catherine's
- Highcliffe
- Mundeford
- Jumpers
- Beaulieu Road
- See Christchurch Character Assessment
- Park Homer Drive, Colehill
- The Grange Estate
- St Leonard's & St Ives parish

- Ashley Heath
- North of Walford Bridge (see UE6)
- All Special Character Areas in East Dorset

4.232 The areas suggested are too broad – either in type of area or geographic location - to put forward for inclusion in a protection policy. So much will depend on an individual site's circumstances and it would be unrealistic to include all types of sites falling within the suggested categories from housing redevelopment. Some may have their own protection policies already – e.g. rural communities will be covered by Green Belt, treed areas may have Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas will be subject to their own policies. Some of the specific areas suggested for protection in Christchurch are also recommended to be protected in the Christchurch Character Assessment 2003. The Design and Landscape Key Issues Paper sets out the intention to review Special Character Area designations in both Districts, updating them through Supplementary Planning Documents. The Core Strategy will also develop robust policies on design of new development to ensure its context is respected

4.233 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.234 See above for evidence in Option A.

4.235 The Christchurch Character Assessment identifies a number of areas where the existing townscape has some form of special character called Special Character Areas. These are at Jumpers (Fig 5.5), Mundeford, Friars Cliff (Fig 5.14) Seaway Ave, Highcliffe Castle & Golf Course, Hinton Wood Ave, Chewton Common and Highcliffe Cliffs (Fig 5.22) and Salisbury Road, Burton (Fig 5.26). The study recommends that these areas should be protected through local townscape character areas.

4.236 As discussed previously in Option A the protection of areas from redevelopment and infill could compromise the ability to meet the housing requirement.

4.237 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.238 There is a significant positive impact on Objective 20 – places and spaces as there would be less risk of an adverse impact of redevelopment on an area's quality. There is also a potentially positive impact on Objective 19 (enhance diversity) as protection would enable the retention of local distinctiveness of an area. However, as this could result in less housing, there could be a negative impact on Objective 2 (wise use of land) and Objective 13 – (suitable and affordable housing).

4.239 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.240 The same issues apply as for Option A above - local evidence and results of consultation have to be balanced with national guidance and evidence on housing supply. There is a need to make the best use of the land coming forward to meet housing needs. The results of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments help to inform us of the level of housing expected to come forward in different parts of the area. These take into account the existing Special Character Areas, Conservation Areas and general character of the urban areas.

4.241 Christchurch Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment identifies sufficient housing land to meet a 16.3 year land supply, assessed against the former draft RSS targets. Or – identifies potential for 2,877 housing units between 2009-2024 but the results were arrived at by taking the Option 1 approach which was looking at a range of densities, mix of houses and flats and assumed that design can overcome some character concerns. Option 2 “lowest potential” tested an approach which maintained lower density, mainly housing development and had stricter protection of existing character.

4.242 Option B has majority support from representations received at issues and options and several areas are put forward as suggestions to be protected. Some are criteria for types of areas to be protected and others are area specific. Some of the specific areas suggested for protection in Christchurch are also recommended to be protected in the Christchurch Character Assessment 2003.

4.243 The Sustainability Appraisal of this Option does not identify any strongly negative impacts on sustainability objectives and indeed there are some positive impacts. However, there is a negative effect on meeting housing needs by providing suitable and affordable housing and wise use of land.

4.244 The types of area suggested for protection (rural communities, gardens, areas where single units are being demolished and flats built and Conservation Areas) are too broad to put forward for inclusion in any policy. So much will depend on individual site circumstances and it would be unrealistic to exclude all types of sites falling within these categories from housing development. Some will have their own protection policies already – e.g. rural communities may be covered by Green Belt, treed areas may have Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Areas will be subject to their own policies.

4.245 In conclusion, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment results indicate that if we were to have a strategy which increases the protection of additional areas from redevelopment, it would result in a reduction in housing delivery and mean that the identified housing needs would not be met. National policy would not support significant restrictions on the delivery of new housing with the assertion in PPS3 that urban intensification need not impact on an area’s character and appearance if careful attention is paid to achieving good design. However the results of consultation indicate that there is a perceived conflict between the need to provide sufficient housing and the protection of existing character. This Design and Landscape Key Issues Paper considers the identification of areas of special character where the form of development should be controlled. However, as suggested in PPS3, this does not mean that there needs to be a restriction on the density of development. Built form need not be driven by density standards.

It is therefore not proposed to take this forward as a preferred option.

4.246 Option C: Yes, identify and protect areas of open market modest family housing to maintain a stock of this type of accommodation. If yes, where should this be applied?

4.247 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
47	19	16	82

Table 4.19

4.248 Comments received in relation to Option C

4.249 Of those who disagreed, there were 3 comments in favour of the market deciding and stating that it would prevail.

4.250 Areas suggested to protect were:-

- Highcliffe
- Walkford
- Mundeford
- Corfe Mullen
- UE6 North of Walford bridge
- Council assessed areas
- Houses near to facilities, shops, transport etc.
- Throughout Christchurch
- Where they already exist.
- All that remain, unless in bad condition.

4.251 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.252 See above for evidence in Option A. The following are also relevant:-

4.253 **PPS 3** contains advice on how to achieve a good mix of housing and highlights the need to take account of the accommodation requirements of specific groups, in particular families with children, older and disabled people.

4.254 The **Balancing Housing Markets assessment** gives an indication of the likely demand for housing of particular sizes and tenures across the whole housing market. This is useful as short term indicative guidance but needs to be assessed alongside other evidence on local housing needs. The following results were identified for private housing:-

- In Christchurch and East Dorset the most significant shortfall is for 2 bedroom properties in the owner occupied sector.
- The next largest shortfall for both areas is for 3 bedroom properties, followed by 4+ bedrooms.

4.255 The profile of households requiring market housing by household type identified the following results:-

- The second largest group needing market housing in East Dorset is households with children, at 27.7%.
- Christchurch's proportion of households with children requiring market housing is 19.6%.

4.256 Information on the make-up of existing housing stock (2001 Census) shows that the proportion of houses is about 79% in Christchurch and about 90% in East Dorset. There is a predominance of detached properties – 64% in East Dorset and 45% in Christchurch.

4.257 Surveys of housing completions show that in past years flats construction has exceeded the construction of other house types (East Dorset and Christchurch Annual Monitoring Report).

4.258 Consultation on Option A of the first issue – dwelling size and types enabled residents to put the case forward for the types of houses that were most needed in Christchurch and East Dorset. The comments were dominated by a central theme of too many flats and more modest houses with gardens needed, more smaller houses needed for people trying to get onto the property ladder and the need for family sized accommodation.

4.259 Consultation from the Christchurch Community Plan 2007 – 2010. The issues raised during Borough-wide consultation 2006 identified concern about the loss of family housing for flat development and need for more housing for younger generation / families.

4.260 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.261 This option has minor positive impacts on Objective 2 (wise use of land) as protecting family housing is a good use of land if there is a proven need and Objective 13 (suitable housing) as protecting family housing lessens the shortfall in such housing and may keep prices from rising.

4.262 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.263 This option has support from the results of public consultation. Comments received show that there is a strong view that there are too many flats being built at the expense of family housing and that the real need is for modest family housing.

4.264 National policy supports the need to take into account the housing needs of specific groups, in particular families with children.

4.265 The issues and options Sustainability Appraisal supports the wise use of land and there are no adverse impacts on sustainability objectives identified.

4.266 The most significant shortfall of housing identified in the Balancing Housing Market analysis is for 2 bedroom units. Although the analysis does not break down into house type, the shortfall could be construed to include a proportion of 2 bedroom modest housing, the type to start families off on the property ladder and the “modest housing” that is referred to in many of the comments received. The next largest shortfall is for 3 and 4 bed housing, which would fall under the category of family housing.

4.267 Although Christchurch has a relatively small proportion of households with children (19.6%) requiring market housing compared to other groups, it nevertheless represents nearly a fifth of households in need. East Dorset has a higher proportion of need for this type of household at 27.7%, so the provision of sufficient family accommodation is a significant issue. However, the majority of need is not for family housing i.e. 80.4% in Christchurch and 72.3% in East Dorset. A restriction on the redevelopment of family housing would therefore undermine these needs.

4.268 Completions information shows that there has been a trend of building more flats than houses in both areas in recent years. Although the existing housing stock is heavily biased towards housing rather than flats, it is important that the needs of families are still catered for in new development, offering sufficient choice for this group.

4.269 In conclusion, the protection of family housing from redevelopment would undermine the provision of housing for other households in need. It would also prove very difficult to apply in practice. Areas of family housing are spread throughout both districts and some would be small and others mixed in housing type, so would be hard to define on a map. It would be difficult to operate a policy of resisting all family sized housing for redevelopment, as there may be benefits to its change to other types of housing – e.g. affordable housing provision. A better approach would be to aim to provide an appropriate mix of housing size and types when there is new housing development.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 1: How do we ensure that the right type and size of housing is delivered to meet the identified needs of the households requiring housing?

4.270 Option D: Other, please specify

4.271 Comments received in relation to Option D

4.272 In response to the question of whether there were other areas that should be protected, comments included:-

- High density areas such as Somerford should not be infilled to the detriment of residents already living there.
- The area around Christchurch Priory should be protected.
- Flood plains
- Need to protect features of nature conservation interest and particular species from damage by infill – e.g. house sparrow depends on larger urban gardens.
- Sainsbury's/Stewarts area – leave meadows alone.
- Stanpit Marsh and Mudeford area.

4.273 In response to the concern about infilling in high density areas such as Somerford, set out above, the impact on the character of the area has already been identified as an important factor to be taken into account when setting targets for the density of housing development. Other factors that are considered important are the need to target higher densities in the most accessible locations to public transport, essential community facilities and services and the need to target higher densities in areas where there is a high level of need for affordable housing or on land already owned by housing associations. As the Somerford area is an accessible location with a high level of need for affordable housing, it would seem an appropriate location for more housing, and therefore it should not be identified as an area to be protected from increased redevelopment. However the need to take into account the impact on the character of the area and the importance of good design is important and covered within the Design and Landscape Key Issues Paper.

4.274 Other areas suggested - around Christchurch Priory, flood plains, Stanpit Marsh, Mudeford, features of nature conservation interest, relate to environmentally sensitive areas which would have their own protection policies and would not be targeted for any development.

4.275 Sainsbury's / Stewart's area – leave meadows alone. This area was included in the Area of Search identified in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for an urban extension to the north of Christchurch. The issue of where residential development should take place will be addressed in the Christchurch Urban Extension Key Issues Paper.

4.276 Several respondents suggested areas that should be built on for more housing within the urban area:-

- Unused industrial sites e.g. Bargates/Fairmile, Somerford
- Disused petrol stations
- Hoburne caravan park.

4.277 Unused industrial sites e.g. Bargates/ Fairmile, Somerford would need to take account of the results of the Employment Land Review to see if these sites are still required to meet the employment needs of the area.

4.278 Disused petrol stations may well be suitable sites for residential redevelopment.

4.279 Hoburne caravan park is still in operation and provides valuable tourist accommodation for the area.

4.280 All sites that have potential for residential redevelopment, including the above, will have been assessed as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment exercise.

4.281 Several respondents objected to continued infill development within urban areas and suggested alternative areas outside the towns to build housing:-

- Scrubland around Christchurch – e.g. Hurn
- Green Belt land around Hurn.
- Land around the airport
- Site of Homefield School
- Caravan parks.
- Gravel extraction sites
- Redundant farms

4.282 Apart from caravan sites, which are situated in urban areas, all the sites suggested are within the Green Belt where new residential development is considered inappropriate, or the countryside outside the Green Belt in East Dorset where housing development would not be supported. Caravan sites within the urban areas such as Hoburne Caravan Park may be acceptable for redevelopment. However, they do provide a valuable contribution to the mix of tourism accommodation within the area.

4.283 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.284 Taking into account the results of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, it is not proposed to identify specific areas across the plan area which will be protected from increased redevelopment and infilling. Instead the wording of the strategy should address the issue of ensuring that there are no conflicts between development and local character and distinctiveness of the area. Text will also be inserted to explain the intentions to review Special Character Area designations and if necessary update them through a Supplementary Planning Document.

4.285 It is not proposed to identify areas to be protected for open market modest family housing due to the difficulties in identifying such areas and operating a policy to resist their redevelopment, plus also the impact on delivering other forms of housing to meet wider needs. A better approach would be to provide an appropriate mix of housing size and types when there is new housing development.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 1: How do we ensure that the right type and size of housing is delivered to meet the identified needs of the households requiring housing?

4.286 Issue identified at issues and options

4.287 On the basis that we are required by Government to provide for gypsy and traveller accommodation what criteria should be included in a policy to assess proposals for gypsy & traveller sites and travelling show people sites?

4.288 General comments received:

4.289 Friends and Families of Travellers comment that:-

- Criteria should include the broad issues outlined in Circular 1/2006 and indicate that there will be a balancing exercise, undertaken using the concept of reasonableness. Circular 1/2006 does indicate that criteria should be fair and realistic with some certainty that when they are met, and not necessarily all of them, that planning permission will be granted.

4.290 Several general comments indicate a level of opposition to the principle of providing sites for gypsies and travellers.

4.291 Option A: Sites for gypsies and travellers should be close to existing communities to use services and facilities, including schools, shops, medical facilities and public transport.

4.292 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
28	57	17	102

Table 4.20

4.293 Comments received in relation to Option A

4.294 Friends and Families of Travellers comment that hard and fast criteria providing distance to be achieved from services may prove counter-productive. They consider that the criteria should include the broad issues outlined in Circular 01/2006 and indicate that there will be a balancing exercise undertaken using the concept of reasonableness.

4.295 The Highways Agency supports the inclusion of Option A which seeks to ensure that gypsy and traveller sites are located close to services, facilities and public transport.

4.296 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.297 Circular 1/2006 requires local authorities to assess the needs of gypsies and travellers and to provide permanent and transit sites within their areas.

4.298 The SW Regional Spatial Strategy Proposed Changes identified the number of pitches that will be required in each authority area for gypsies and travellers by 2011 – 33 residential pitches and 16 transit pitches for Christchurch and 50 residential and 30 transit for East Dorset. The Dorset authorities in general did not agree that the figures for each local authority represented the actual need for gypsy and traveller pitches in the County. Due to the ambiguity regarding the accuracy of these figures in both the Panel Report and the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes the Dorset authorities have submitted objections to the Secretary of State and suggested revised pitch figures. Christchurch and East Dorset Councils have put forward a case for a total of 12 residential and 16 pitches for Christchurch and 13 residential and 20 transit pitches in East Dorset.

4.299 The Housing Act 2004 imposes a statutory requirement for local authorities to include gypsies and travellers in their Local Housing Needs Assessments and to inform the Local Housing Strategies.

4.300 The Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment was carried out in 2005 by Anglia Ruskin University. This report interprets several sources of data and sets out demand for gypsy & traveller accommodation over a 20 year period for each authority.

4.301 Circular 01/2006: Planning for Gypsy & Traveller caravan sites (paras 31 – 32) advises that the Core Strategy should set out the criteria for the location of gypsy and traveller sites which will be used to guide the allocation of sites in the relevant Development Plan Document. These criteria will also be used to meet unexpected demand. These criteria based policies must be fair, reasonable, realistic and effective in delivering sites. Annex C of Circular 01/2006 sets out good practice for criteria policies.

4.302 CLG's Good Practice Guidance on Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites 2008 advises that selecting the right location for a gypsy site is a key element in supporting good community relations and maximises its success.

4.303 There are existing criteria policies for gypsy and traveller accommodation in both Local Plans.

4.304 The Dorset Gypsy & Traveller officer group has been progressing the development of a core strategy criteria policy. Poole Borough Council are the furthest advanced with their Core Strategy and their criteria policy has been through an Examination in Public and the Inspectors Report (Feb 2009) confirms that the policy has been found sound. The policy is now contained within an adopted Borough of Poole Core Strategy. For the purposes of consistency across the Dorset authorities, it would seem appropriate to have the same criteria in this policy for all Dorset authorities, unless local circumstances require otherwise. Issues identified in Poole Borough Council's Core Strategy Policy PCS 10 are concerned with:-

- Sites should be well located to the highway network;
- Adequate on-site facilities for parking, storage, play and residential amenity;

- Adequate levels of privacy and residential amenity for the occupiers,
- Sites not to have a detrimental impact on the amenities of adjacent occupiers and
- Sites not to result in a detrimental impact upon the natural environment.

4.305 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.306 This option has several significantly positive effects on the following objectives:-

4.307 Objective 7 – (need to travel)

4.308 Objective 12 – healthy lifestyles, as the provision of sites for gypsies and travellers will have a positive impact on the health of those in existing overcrowded conditions or on unauthorised sites.

4.309 Objective 13 – suitable housing as the provision of gypsy and traveller sites will meet identified pitch needs and provide for the special accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers.

4.310 Objective 14 – access to learning as if sites are provided close to existing services and facilities including schools, gypsies and traveller children will be able to continue with their education.

4.311 Objective 16 – community facilities as sites close to existing communities will enable gypsies and travellers to access basic services easily, safely and affordably

4.312 Objective 19 – enhance diversity as the provision of gypsies and traveller sites will enable this group to maintain their distinctive lifestyle and cultural traditions.

4.313 It also has a positive impact on Objective 2 wise use of land as sites close to existing communities are an efficient use of land and Objective 1 – protect habitats as this should limit pressure on designated sites.

4.314 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.315 Although there is not majority support for Option A from the consultation results, those who do agree include organisations whose view should be given weight – including Friends and Families of Travellers, Highways Agency and Twynham Housing Association. Those who object to this option, from their comments elsewhere would appear to object to the principle of providing sites for gypsies and travellers. As it is a statutory requirement to provide these sites, the option of not providing sites cannot be taken forward.

4.316 Evidence is in support of this option. Circular 01/06 (para 64) advises that issues of sustainability are important and should not only be considered in terms of transport mode and distances from services. Consideration should include the wider benefits of easier access to GP and other health services, children attending school on a regular basis. Para 65 states that in deciding where to provide for gypsy and traveller sites, Local Planning Authorities should first consider locations in or near existing settlements with access to local services, e.g. shops, doctors and schools.

4.317 The issues and options sustainability appraisal identifies several significant positive impacts to this option.

4.318 In conclusion, a location strategy for gypsy and traveller sites should include the criteria that sites should have good accessibility to existing communities to use services and facilities, including schools, shops, medical facilities and public transport. Other issues contained in the Poole Core Strategy gypsy and traveller site criteria policy (referred to above) can be included in the Preferred Option for consistency across the Dorset districts.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 4: What criteria should be used to assess proposals for gypsy and traveller and travelling show people sites?

4.319 Option B: Should we allow for sites for gypsies and travellers in the Green Belt?

4.320 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
14	72	15	101

Table 4.21

4.321 Comments received in relation to Option B

4.322 Friends & Families of Travellers consider that given the extent of Green Belt within the districts and the proposed urban extensions into the Green Belt then an exceptions policy should be developed to take into account the likely difficulties of finding achievable sites

4.323 Dorset Wildlife Trust commented that sites should be considered against their sustainability and biodiversity impact, just as with any other housing proposal. Impacts of recreation on the Dorset Heathlands, impacts on Sites of Nature Conservation Interest and biodiversity habitats are just as important for this type of housing as any other.

4.324 Linden Homes comment that if Green Belt sites are to be identified, preference should be for previously developed land before greenfield sites.

4.325 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.326 See above in Issue HO5 Option A for evidence on the need for criteria policies within the Core Strategy.

4.327 PPG2: Green Belts – advises that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Inappropriate development includes housing and by inference gypsy and traveller sites as they are a form of housing.

4.328 Circular 01/2006 in para 49 refers to the fact that national planning policy on Green Belts applies equally to planning permission from gypsies and travellers and the settled population. Alternatives should be explored before Green Belt locations are considered. Pressure for development of sites on Green Belt land can usually be avoided if the Local Planning Authorities allocates sufficient sites elsewhere in its area to meet identified need.

4.329 Para 51 of Circular 01/2006 advises that alterations to the Green Belt boundary can be used in exceptional circumstances for housing and other types of development inappropriate in the Green Belt. Such alterations have often been used in cases where a local authority's area contains a high proportion of Green Belt land and no other suitable sites outside the Green Belt exist. Such an exceptional limited alteration to the defined Green Belt boundary (which might be to accommodate a site inset within the Green Belt) could be considered to meet a specific, identified need for a gypsy and traveller site in the same way such an alteration could be used for any other type of development. Where land is removed from the Green Belt in this way, it should be specifically allocated in a Development Plan Document as a gypsy and traveller site only.

4.330 This advice is relevant to the Christchurch and East Dorset area, where there is a high proportion of Green Belt and where there are difficulties in finding sufficient sites for gypsies and travellers as well as general housing sites.

4.331 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.332 This option has significant beneficial effects on Objectives 13 suitable housing and 19 – enhance diversity for the same reasons as given for Option A above. However there may be conflicts with objective 1 – protect habitats, objective 2 – wise use of land and objective 7 – need to travel.

4.333 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Options

4.334 This option is not supported by the results of consultation. However national policy allows for the exceptional limited alteration to the Green Belt to meet a specific identified need for a gypsy and traveller site. In this situation, it could be specifically allocated in a Development Plan Document as a gypsy and traveller site only.

4.335 The Sustainability Appraisal identifies positive impacts on suitable housing and diversity, but also potential negative impacts on other objectives.

4.336 Considering the need to deliver transit and residential pitches within Christchurch and East Dorset and the difficulties in finding such sites, it seems reasonable not to exclude the option of a Green Belt site at this stage. However, the principle of locating sites within urban areas close to existing facilities has been established by national policy. Only if it is not possible to find sites within the urban area should the option of Green Belt exception sites be explored.

4.337 In conclusion, Option B should not be dismissed at this stage. This does not mean that the criteria policy will contain a criterion advocating the use of gypsy and traveller sites in the Green Belt, as sufficient work has not been undertaken to identify potential locations for sites yet. Rather the criteria policy should not contain a criterion excluding Green Belt from the possibility of a gypsy and traveller site. An alternative option of a policy could be put forward which adds flexibility to respond to gypsy and travellers' preferences for locations of sites.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 4: What criteria should be used to assess proposals for gypsy and traveller and travelling show people sites?

4.338 Option C. Should specific sites be identified for travelling show people?

4.339 Issues and Options Consultation Response

Agree	Disagree	No Opinion	Total
43	36	17	96

Table 4.22

4.340 Consideration of Evidence and Policy

4.341 Circular 04/2007 requires local authorities to assess the needs of travelling show people and to provide sites within their areas.

4.342 Circular 04/2007 advises that the Core Strategy should set out criteria for the location of travelling showpeople sites which will be used to guide the allocation of sites in the relevant Development Plan Document. These criteria can also be used in respect to planning applications on unallocated sites that may come forward. These criteria based policies must be fair, reasonable, achievable and effective in delivering sites. Annex C sets out good practice for criteria policies.

4.343 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal

4.344 This option has significant beneficial effects on Objectives 13 suitable housing and 19 – enhance diversity for the same reasons as given for Option A above. However there may be conflicts with objective 1 – protect habitats, objective 2 – wise use of land and objective 7 – need to travel.

4.345 Conclusions and Implications for Preferred Option

4.346 There is support from the results of issues and options consultation for the requirement to provide sites for travelling showpeople. It is also supported by evidence.

4.347 Neither District have existing travelling showpeople’s sites, nor any history of demand for such provision.

4.348 At this stage it is unclear precisely where in the East of the County a travelling show people’s site is best located. It may not need to be in Christchurch or East Dorset but this option cannot be ruled out.

4.349 This is an issue that is best addressed in the Dorset Wide Gypsies and Travellers Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document.

4.350 In conclusion, it is proposed to have text in the Core Strategy to explain the appropriate document which will address the issue of travelling showpeople's sites before the proposed policy setting out criteria for gypsy and traveller sites.

4.351 Proposed text to explain the appropriate Development Plan Document for a policy for travelling showpeople's sites will be set out in conjunction with the preferred options.

Options to address this issue are set out under the following strategic issue:

Issue 4: What criteria should be used to assess proposals for gypsy and traveller and travelling show people sites?

4.352 Option D: Other, please specify (16 comments)

4.353 Several comments related to the disagreement of the principle of providing sites for gypsies and travellers. Other comments included:-

- Consideration should be given to the position of the Dudmoor gypsies whose situation has never been satisfactorily resolved. The simplest and most practical solution would be to include them as a Green Belt exception and grant them planning permission (Friends of Families and Travellers)

4.354 The position of Dudmoor gypsies is an issue that needs careful consideration. As stated previously, Central policy is to locate gypsy & traveller sites within urban areas close to essential services and facilities. Potential for sustainable sites within the urban area will have to be investigated first before the option of a Green Belt exception policy is considered. This work will be carried out as part of the joint Dorset Gypsies and Travellers Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

- There is a need to pay due regard in the Core Strategy to the proportion of need arising for affordable site accommodation in the same way that conventional housing is dealt with (Friends of Families and Travellers)

4.355 It is now up to each authority to determine the quantity, location and form of provision. Provision may be in the form of private sites, Council sites or Registered Social Landlord provided sites. This issue will be addressed in the delivery plan of the Joint Gypsy & Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

- As gypsy and traveller sites when owned or managed by a Registered Social Landlord are considered as affordable housing, Local Planning Authorities may negotiate S.106 agreements with developers to include gypsy and traveller sites in new developments, ensuring that mixed communities are created at the outset. Such developments should form part of the provision for gypsy and traveller accommodation. (Friends of Families and Travellers)

4.356 The scale of need for gypsies and travellers accommodation is relatively small compared to the needs for affordable and general housing. It would therefore prove impractical to require the provision of gypsies and travellers accommodation on the same basis as affordable housing. Such provision is better provided through clear site identification and funding through public sources. This will be addressed within the Joint Gypsy & Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

- Preference should be for previously developed land before greenfield if Green Belt sites are to be identified (Linden Homes)

4.357 National policy requires that gypsy & traveller sites should be within urban areas so the potential for previously developed sites will be investigated before Green Belt exception sites can be considered.

- The timing of delivery of the needed sites should be paid due regard. (Friends of Families and Travellers)

4.358 The timing of delivery of new gypsy & traveller sites will need to be addressed in the delivery plan which will form part of the Joint Gypsy & Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

- Several comments on the need to allocate sites on a payment basis only as with any caravan site.

4.359 Sites will either be Council, Registered Social Landlord or private. In all cases there will be payment required by gypsies and travellers, either by rent or purchase.

5 Options

The Options are to be found in the Meeting Local Needs chapter of the Core Strategy.

Issue 1: How do we ensure that the right type and size of housing is delivered to meet the identified needs of the households requiring housing?

Preferred Option LN1

Dwelling size and mix – no reference to threshold

Overall, the size and type of new market and affordable dwellings will reflect current and projected local housing needs identified in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and be informed by future Annual Monitoring Reports to ensure that the proposed development contributes towards attaining a sustainable and balanced housing market.

Non Preferred Option LN2

Dwelling size and mix – threshold of 10

On residential sites of 10 or more units the size and type of new market and affordable dwellings will reflect current and projected local housing needs identified in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and be informed by future Annual Monitoring Reports to ensure that the proposed development contributes towards attaining a sustainable and balanced housing market.

Non Preferred Option LN3

Dwelling size and mix – no reference to threshold

The size and type of new market and affordable dwellings will reflect current and projected local housing needs and demands identified in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and be informed by future Annual Monitoring Reports to ensure that the proposed development contributes towards attaining a sustainable and balanced housing market. Developments should incorporate:-

Market Housing

- A mix of dwelling sizes that meet the identified need for smaller dwellings (2 bed) while also allowing for sufficient provision of family housing (3 + bed)

Affordable Housing

- A mix of dwellings sizes that meet the needs for 1, 2 and 3 bed affordable housing.

All housing

- A sustainable mix of dwelling types that meet the needs of all household groups including older persons, people with special needs, single person households, families with children and those unable to afford market housing.

Non Preferred Option LN4

Dwelling size and mix – threshold of 10 or more.

On residential sites of 10 or more units, the size and type of new market and affordable dwellings will reflect current and projected local housing needs and demands identified in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and be informed by future Annual Monitoring Reports to ensure that the proposed development contributes towards attaining a sustainable and balanced housing market. Developments should incorporate:-

Market Housing

- A mix of dwelling sizes that meet the identified need for smaller dwellings (2 bed) while also allowing for sufficient provision of family housing (3 + bed)

Affordable Housing

- A mix of dwellings sizes that meet the needs for 1, 2 and 3 bed affordable housing.

All housing

- A sustainable mix of dwelling types that meet the needs of all household groups including older persons, people with special needs, single person households, families with children and those unable to afford market housing,

Issue 2: How do we ensure that new housing meets modern day living requirements?**Preferred Option LN5**

New housing will be built to Living Space Standards defined in a Supplementary Planning Document

Alternative Non-preferred Option

There will be no Living Space Standards.

Issue 3: How do we ensure that the density of development is appropriate?

Parts of the area are covered by Special Character Area designations as saved policies in the East Dorset District Local Plan or identified in the Borough of Christchurch Character Assessment. It will be necessary to review these policies and if necessary to update them through Supplementary Planning Documents. The defining features of character areas within the plan area will be described in separate statements (supplementary planning documents) and local design studies will continue to inform decisions regarding protection of local character and appropriate design control.

Preferred Option LN6**Density of housing development**

On all sites the design and layout of new housing development should maximise the density of development to a level which is acceptable for the locality. A minimum density of net 30dph is expected unless this would conflict with the local character and distinctiveness of an area where a lower density is more appropriate. Proposed housing densities will be informed by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, housing need as set out in the Balanced Housing Markets assessment in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and future Annual Monitoring Reports.

Proposals for high density developments (a minimum of net 40dph) will be acceptable in the following types of location where this form of development will not have an adverse impact on the character of the area.

- **Urban extension sites (density range to be determined by outputs of master planning process)**
- **Town centres**
- **Along the Prime Transport Corridors**
- **Areas outside town centres with good access to public transport and essential facilities and services**
- **In areas where there is a high level of need for affordable housing or on land already owned by housing associations.**

5.1 The Councils will carefully consider the design and density of new development in terms of their responsibilities for community safety under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will involve the Police Architectural Liaison Officer in appropriate cases.

Non Preferred Option LN7

On all sites the design and layout of new housing development should maximise the net density of development to a level which is acceptable for the locality. Density of new development will be within the following ranges unless the design solution for such a density would conflict with the local character and distinctiveness of an area where a lower density is more appropriate. Proposed housing densities will be informed by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, housing need as set out in the Balanced Housing Markets assessment in the Strategic Housing Market Assessments and future Annual Monitoring Reports.

The Councils will carefully consider the design and density of new development in terms of their responsibilities for community safety under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will involve the Police Architectural Liaison Officer in appropriate cases.

Type of Area	Net Density Range
Urban extension sites	40 – 60 dph*
Town centres	40 – 120 dph
Areas along Prime Transport Corridors and in close proximity to employment areas and essential community facilities.	40 – 70 dph
In areas where there is a high level of need for affordable housing or on land already owned by housing associations	40 – 70 dph
Suburban areas – areas with predominantly lower density development	30 – 55 dph
Villages (population under 3,000)	30 – 70 dph

Table 5.1

* Range to be determined by outputs of master planning process.

Issue 4: What criteria should be used to assess proposals for gypsy and traveller and travelling showpeople sites?**Preferred Option LN8**

The required provision of allocated permanent and transit pitches will be addressed through joint working with other Dorset authorities in the Dorset Gypsy & Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document to provide a co-ordinated approach to provision. This Development Plan Document will also consider the accommodation needs of Travelling Showpeople and will seek to identify two plots within the County to meet this need.

The following considerations should be taken into account when determining locations for gypsy and traveller sites and travelling showpeople sites:-

1. Sites should be located to meet the needs of gypsy & traveller communities with a preference for close proximity to existing communities to use services and facilities, including schools, shops, medical facilities and public transport;
2. Sites should provide for adequate on site facilities for parking storage, play and residential amenity;
3. Sites should allow for adequate levels of privacy and residential amenity for the occupiers;
4. Sites should not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of adjacent occupiers; and
5. Sites should not result in a detrimental impact on the natural environment

Proposals for sites for travelling showpeople will also need to provide adequate space for residential, maintenance and storage uses and be:-

1. Well related to the public highway network to accommodate the passage of large vehicles,
2. Located so as to minimise the impact of on-site business activities on neighbouring properties,
3. Located so as to minimise the visual impact of the uses on the landscape.