

Core Strategy

01 Vision and Objectives 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

October 2010

1 Introduction	2
2 Baseline	3
3 Identification of Issues	26
4 Formation of Vision and Objectives	36
5 Implementation	49

1 Introduction

1.1 This paper has been prepared as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) to inform development of the vision and objectives of the Core Strategy. This vision and set of objectives will give direction and inform the detailed policies of the LDF Core Strategy for Christchurch and East Dorset.

1.2 The vision and objectives will be common to both areas, although some objectives will relate more to one area than the other.

1.3 The vision and objectives have been developed from a number of sources, both at the “evidence gathering” and “Issues & Options” stages of Core Strategy development. These include:

- Key messages from evidence studies.
- Responses to Issues & Options consultation questions regarding the vision and objectives.
- Outcomes of specific visioning workshops and events held in Christchurch and East Dorset.
- Visions already developed in strategic and local policy documents, including Community Strategies.
- National policy.
- Sustainability Appraisal Objectives.

1.4 In formulating vision and objectives in this paper, a number of key principles have been developed, based on national policy guidance in PPS1 and PPS12. These are:

- That the vision and objectives should be driven by the outcomes of evidence gathering and public engagement.
- That the vision should reflect wider council and community aspirations set out in Corporate and Community strategies.
- That the vision should be focused on the main issues, rather than trying to cover every issue.
- In turn, that the vision and objectives should be as succinct as possible.
- That there should be a clear link between objectives in the Core Strategy, and the objectives used for sustainability appraisal.
- Finally, that the vision and objectives should be “fit for purpose” to provide a clear direction for the spatial strategy and policies.

2 Baseline

Sustainability Appraisal Baseline Information

2.1 The Christchurch and East Dorset Sustainability Appraisal 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 will impact on the location of new development, and could increase flood risk to the existing population in certain areas.

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 Government 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 development on new or redevelopment 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 Habitats

2.9 All of the Core Strategy will be subject to a Habitat Regulations Assessment which will determine the impact of the broad location of development across the area. Most housing provision in 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. 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.

2.10 Water / Flood risk

2.11 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 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).

2.12 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.

2.13 Renewable Energy and Green House Gas Emissions

2.14 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.

2.15 The construction of new residential and commercial development – ensuring that it is as energy efficient as possible – is important to protect scarce resources and reduce greenhouse emissions.

2.16 Countryside

2.17 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 development on brownfield sites to minimise the impact on the countryside and encroachment into the Green Belt. The Core Strategy has a role in protecting Green Belt boundaries, keeping the land open, nature conservation and providing an aspect of protection to much of the countryside areas.

2.18 Landscape

2.19 There are significant areas of landscape importance within the plan area which include Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB, River Avon SSSI, Areas of Great Landscape Value, Special Character Areas and areas of historic value.

2.20 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.

2.21 Historic and Urban Environment

2.22 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 should address this issue and ensure that future housing provision, and other new development does not adversely affect the character of these areas. The impact of higher density development is particularly relevant to this issue.

2.23 Energy / Resource Use / Waste and Recycling

2.24 The impact of new development 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 development should promote the use of renewable materials and sources of energy.

2.25 Social Baseline and Considerations

2.26 Population

2.27 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.

2.28 The proportion over retirement age is 34% in Christchurch and 32% in East Dorset compared with 29% in DCC 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
DCC Dorset	17.0	54.4	28.6
South West	17.7	59.8	22.5
England and Wales	18.8	62.0	19.2

Table 2.1

2.29 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 DCC 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)

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

2.31 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.

2.32 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.

2.33 Housing

2.34 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. 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.

2.35 As the supply of new housing is constrained by environmental considerations including Green Belt and flood risk, 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.

2.36 Health

2.37 The Core Strategy will have an influence on people's health and wellbeing through provision of suitable housing, including adequate room and amenity space. Provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities also ensure that all ages can take part in physical exercise, and those without private gardens can enjoy a place to play and relax. Provision of facilities to serve an ageing population, including the provision of life time homes will be part of the planning strategy.

2.38 Social Inclusion and Deprivation

2.39 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 pockets of deprivation in Tricketts Cross East, Ferndown in East Dorset. Gypsies and travellers are a socially excluded minority. Evidence on their needs is contained in the Dorset Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment. Provision of authorised sites for gypsies and travellers needs addressing if we are to improve social inclusion.

2.40 Crime

2.41 There is a need for the design and planning process of new 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.

2.42 Education

2.43 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. The location of gypsy and traveller sites needs to take into account access to schools. School facilities also have a potentially significant dual role in the provision of community facilities, and sports provision.

2.44 Economic Baseline and Considerations

2.45 Economy

2.46 The Christchurch economy is centred on distribution, hotels and restaurants and public administration, education and health. Together these account for half of all employment in the Borough. Christchurch has an above average proportion of employment in transport and communications; higher than the county average by 4%. Manufacturing and distribution and hotels and restaurants are also just above average.

Main Employment Sectors	Employees	% of Total Employment	
		Christchurch	DCC
Total Employment	17,600		
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	5,100	28.8	26.6
Public administration, education and health	3,700	21.1	28.5
Banking, finance and insurance	2,600	14.7	15.7
Manufacturing	2,300	13.3	12.3
Transport and communications	1,800	10.5	4.1
Construction	1,100	6.5	5.3
Other services	900	4.8	4.6
Agriculture and fishing	c	c	2.3

Main Employment Sectors	Employees	% of Total Employment	
		Christchurch	DCC
Energy and water	c	c	0.5

Table 2.2 Annual Business Inquiry 2006 ONS

2.47 The East Dorset economy is centred around the service sector, although the proportion employed in manufacturing is above average. A quarter of employment is based in the distribution, hotels and restaurants sector. Close to another quarter work in the banking, finance and insurance sector. Nearly a quarter of employees work proportionately in the manufacturing and public administration, education and health sectors. East Dorset has a particular strength in Banking, finance and insurance with above average employment in this sector.

Main Employment Sectors	Employees	% of Total Employment	
		East Dorset	DCC
Total Employment	29,800		
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	7,400	25	26.6
Banking, finance and insurance	7,200	24	15.7
Public administration, education and health	5,200	17.6	28.5
Manufacturing	4,800	16	12.3
Construction	2,200	7.4	5.3
Other services	1,500	5.1	4.6
Transport and communications	900	3	4.1
Agriculture and fishing	500	1.8	2.3
Energy and water	c	c	0.5

Table 2.3

2.48 Business Sector Spatial Requirements

2.49 The locational / site requirements need to be met for those businesses currently located in the Borough and for those that can be attracted to the plan area to 2026. In promoting sustainable economic growth consideration needs to be given to accommodating growth sectors that provide high quality employment opportunities and make a significant contribution to raising productivity (increased GVA output).

2.50 Availability of Skilled Labour

2.51 There is scope for the local economy to grow significantly over the next 20 years but this is limited by access to appropriately skilled labour. Policy interventions to attract specific forms of business activity must consider the availability of appropriately skilled individuals. Planning policy intervention through the Core Strategy to attract skilled labour would involve the provision of sufficient employment land in the right locations with necessary locational attributes to attract a range of business activity offering skilled employment opportunities.

2.52 Rural Diversification

2.53 A high proportion of those living in rural areas commute to urban areas which creates unsustainable commuting patterns. The Core Strategy must consider the appropriate growth of employment in rural areas and the nature of rural diversification which would help to reduce the level of commuting from rural to urban areas alongside increasing opportunities for home working.

2.54 Employment Land at Bournemouth Airport

2.55 Employment land at Bournemouth Airport stands out as a key strategic site for the plan area and the south east Dorset sub region. There is significant scope for employment growth at the Airport with potential to influence a 'step change' in the economy. The Core Strategy considers the infrastructure and ecological constraints involved in bringing forward sufficient land and premises to meet projected demand over the plan period.

2.56 Employment Land in East Dorset

2.57 Existing employment land at Ferndown including land identified to the west of Ferndown has the potential to deliver in the region of 30ha of employment growth subject to appropriate highways and public transport improvements to mitigate impact on the A31. Other sites are being considered in East Dorset at Woolsbridge and Verwood.

2.58 Town Centre Vitality

2.59 The Core Strategy considers an appropriate mix of employment activity to be accommodated on allocated and established employment sites in the plan area. In determining the range of uses to be accommodated it is necessary to assess the impact on the vitality and viability of town centres within the plan area and Bournemouth and Poole. This is particularly in respect of the level of office and retail uses to be accommodated on employment land over the plan period.

2.60 Transport

2.61 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, 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.

2.62 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.

2.63 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.

2.64 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives.

2.65 As part of the initial stages of LDF preparation, the Councils produced a joint Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (August 2008). This provides an analysis of the current issues and characteristics. Among the purposes of this report was to identify environmental, social and economic objectives contained in other plans and programmes which would be relevant to the LDF.

2.66 In its identification of other relevant plans and programmes, a number of key messages emerged:

2.67 General

- The need to integrate social, environmental and economic issues in considering future development.
- The aim to create mixed communities.

2.68 Social

- The area has a predominantly ageing population.
- There is a need for affordable private and social housing.
- Access to local amenities (particularly in the rural areas), including green spaces is a major issue.
- The need to ensure the community can access cultural facilities.

2.69 Environmental

- Impact of climate change.
- Conservation, maintenance and enhancement of protected habitats and species is essential.
- Efficient use of land for development (brownfield sites, higher densities) is preferable to development on green field sites.
- Communities value the high quality built and natural character of the area.
- Traffic congestion and car dependency influence development and community perceptions.

- The maintenance of good air quality is important for the health of the community.
- Flooding is likely to have a significant impact.
- Provision and maintenance of a safe and plentiful water supply is required.
- There is a need to conserve energy, including energy used in travel, and provide renewable energy sources to reduce the use of fossil fuels.
- The population faces problems of how to deal with the waste it generates.

2.70 Economic

- There is presently a shortage of labour and this is forecast to worsen in the coming years. Out migration of young people will have a major impact on the future economy.
- Businesses are finding it hard to grow because of a lack of suitable and available employment land.
- The Airport should accommodate relevant knowledge based activity and industries which make a positive contribution to sustainable economic growth.
- There is a need to control the levels of commuting.
- The area has important town centres that need to be supported in order to keep them vital and viable.
- There is a need to ensure a sustainable economy in rural areas.

2.71 From these key messages, and a more detailed analysis of issues raised in plans, policies and programmes, a sustainability appraisal framework was developed. This consists of a series of objectives and indicators by which progress against the objectives can be measured.

2.72 Initially a set of 24 objectives was developed. However this has now been revised down to a core set of 12 SA objectives which have been used in the assessment of Core Strategy options. These are:

2.73 *1 – Protect, enhance and expand habitats and protected species (taking account of climate change), avoiding damage to designated wildlife and geological sites and protected species which depend on them.*

2.74 *2 – Make sustainable use of resources.*

2.75 *3 – Minimise pollution (including air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light).*

2.76 *4 – Minimise factors contributing to climate change.*

2.77 *5 – Reduce the need/desire to travel by car, lorry or air by making public transport, cycling and walking easier and more attractive.*

2.78 *6 – Provide a safe and secure environment (including coastal protection, major hazards e.g. blast zones, crime/fear of crime and flooding).*

2.79 *7 – Create conditions to improve health, promoting healthy lifestyles, especially routine daily exercise and reducing health inequalities.*

2.80 *8 – Help make suitable housing available and affordable for everybody.*

2.81 9 – *Help communities to support social cohesion and to enable easy, safe and affordable access to basic services and facilities, learning, training, skills, knowledge and culture.*

2.82 10 – *Protect and enhance historic buildings, archaeological sites and other culturally important features.*

2.83 11 – *Maintain and enhance local distinctiveness and create places, spaces and buildings that work well, wear well and look well.*

2.84 12 – *Facilitate a sustainable and growing economy for the District that creates economic and employment opportunity, as well as providing for vital and viable town centres.*

2.85 Policy Background

2.86 National policy

2.87 The main national planning policy relating to the production of Local Development Frameworks is contained in Planning Policy Statements 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), and 12 (Local Spatial Planning).

PPS 1 encourages planning to be a positive and proactive process, operating in the public interest, with sustainable development as a core principle. Planning is seen as a tool for local authorities to use in establishing and taking forward the vision for their areas as set out in their community strategies.

In planning for and delivering sustainable development, PPS 1 encourages planning authorities to:

- Provide a positive framework for economic growth;
- Promote urban and rural regeneration;
- Promote communities which are inclusive and safe;
- Bring forward sufficient land for housing, industrial and commercial development, and for leisure;
- Provide improved access to jobs and services;
- Focus major development in existing centres;
- Reduce the need to travel, and encourage more sustainable patterns of transport development;
- Promote the efficient use of land through higher density development, mixed use development, and better use of previously developed land;
- Enhance and protect biodiversity;
- Address the causes of climate change.

Table 2.4 PPS 1

PPS 12 notes that Local Authorities have a role as place shapers, based on assuming a leading role in their communities and bringing different partners together:

“in order to create a vision of how to respond to and address a locality’s problems, needs and ambitions and build a strategy to deliver the vision in a coordinated way.”

Spatial planning is identified as having the role of producing a vision for the future of places that responds to the local challenges and opportunities, and is based on evidence, local distinctiveness, and community derived objectives.

Core Strategies are seen as having 4 main elements:

- An overall vision which sets out how the area and the places within it should develop.
- Strategic objectives for the area focusing on the key issues to be addressed.
- A delivery strategy for achieving these objectives; and
- Clear arrangements for managing and monitoring the delivery of the strategy.

PPS12 goes on to advise that:

“The vision should be informed by an analysis of the characteristics of the area and its constituent parts and the key issues and challenges facing them. The vision should be in general conformity with the RSS and should closely relate to any Sustainable Community Strategy for the area.”

“The strategic objectives for the link between the high level vision and the detailed strategy. They should expand the vision into the key specific issues for the area which need to be addressed, and how that will be achieved within the timescale of the core strategy.”

Whilst Core Strategies should be visionary, they must also be effective, so the vision and objectives must create a spatial strategy which is deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored. Core strategies must show how the vision, objectives and strategy for the area will be delivered and by whom, and when. It should also be flexible enough to deal with changing circumstances, and should be able to be monitored to ensure that it can be reviewed if it appears to be failing.

Table 2.5 PPS 12

2.88 Regional policy

The Integrated Regional Strategy was produced in 2004, and is entitled “Just Connect”. The Strategy is an important mechanism for better integrated regional working in the region as it provides a set of broad objectives and priorities relevant across sectors.

Its headline aims are:

- to harness the benefits of population growth and manage the implications of population change
- to enhance our distinctive environments and the quality and diversity of our cultural life
- to enhance our economic prosperity and quality of employment opportunity
- to address deprivation and disadvantage to reduce significant intra-regional inequalities
- to make sure that people are treated fairly and can participate fully in society

These aims are supported by a number of “crunch objectives” which respond to challenges where integrated action across strategies is critical to the successful achievement of the aims.

Table 2.6 Integrated Regional Strategy

2.89 With the revoking of Regional Spatial Strategies in July 2010, the policies and objectives of the South West Regional Spatial Strategy are no longer relevant to this Core Strategy.

2.90 Local Policy

2.91 The Local Development Framework is set to replace most existing planning policy documents including the local plans for Christchurch and East Dorset, and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan.

2.92 Consequently, the vision and objectives set out in these documents is less relevant as a reference point for the Core Strategy. Nonetheless, it is important to take account of past visions for development of the local area as a context for future direction.

The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan (2000) contains the following vision:

“...a County where, compared with the present, the economy creates more wealth and provides more jobs; all the housing needs of Dorset are met, community life is fostered, safety and health are improved; and the distinctive quality and diversity of the natural and built environment is enhanced.”

This leads into a strategy for the County Structure Plan:

- to secure the conscientious stewardship of all resources;

The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan (2000) contains the following vision:

“...a County where, compared with the present, the economy creates more wealth and provides more jobs; all the housing needs of Dorset are met, community life is fostered, safety and health are improved; and the distinctive quality and diversity of the natural and built environment is enhanced.”

- to provide for the restructuring of Dorset’s economy and the development of local enterprise;
- to improve the accessibility of Dorset to other areas;
- to create opportunities to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car;
- to provide opportunities to meet travel needs in ways which minimise environmental damage and costs, provide maximum choice and improve safety;
- to make adequate provision for the housing needs of Dorset;
- to provide opportunities to maintain and improve community life;
- to conserve and improve Dorset’s environmental inheritance;
- to concentrate new built development in existing built-up areas, particularly the conurbation and other towns;
- to contain the outward spread of the South East Dorset conurbation;
- to exploit the potential of the Poole-Weymouth railway corridor for further growth and development;
- to promote the economic regeneration of the Weymouth/Portland/Dorchester area;
- to provide for a reduced rate of migration led population growth.

Table 2.7 Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan (2000)

The Christchurch Borough Local Plan (2001) based its guiding principles on the sustainable development advice in the then PPG 1 “General Policy & Principles”. The plan did not contain a succinct vision, but rather a set of objectives to underpin a strategy of sustainable development an consolidation.

These objectives were as follows:

- i) to translate the general policies and proposals of the structure plan into a detailed framework for the control of development and the use of land.*
- ii) to review and develop policies which meet the housing (including affordable housing), economic and other land use needs of the Borough especially insofar as these have an impact on the urban and rural economies.*
- iii) to use already developed areas in the most efficient way, while making them more attractive places in which to live and work.*

The Christchurch Borough Local Plan (2001) based its guiding principles on the sustainable development advice in the then PPG 1 “General Policy & Principles”. The plan did not contain a succinct vision, but rather a set of objectives to underpin a strategy of sustainable development an consolidation.

iv) to secure transportation improvements relating to traffic flows, public car parking and public transport, and to encourage people to reduce their reliance on the car by the promotion and encouragement of alternative modes of transport.

v) to protect and enhance the character, natural beauty and wildlife (or scientific interest) of the Borough’s river valleys, coast, heathlands and other natural amenities.

vi) to safeguard the Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings in the Borough and to secure their enhancement.

vii) to consolidate and enhance the functions of the area as a centre for recreation and tourism.

viii) To define the precise boundaries of the Green Belt, thereby maintaining an area of open land around the built-up area and protecting the separate physical identity of settlements by preventing their coalescence.

Table 2.8 Christchurch Borough Local Plan (2001)

The East Dorset Local Plan (2002), again does not contain a specific vision. Instead, the plan contains a number of aims relating to sustainability, economic and social needs, and transport/travel. Under sustainability, the plan aimed to promote global sustainability, to protect natural resources in its area, and to protect and enhance local environmental quality. The economic and social aims included encouraging production of needed goods and services, and development of local employment, provision of housing land, social facilities and recreation, and allowing the distribution of goods. The safe and efficient movement of people and goods was also an aim under transport and travel.

The plan then sets out a large number of objectives under each of the aims above. These are not all listed here, but some examples include:

Global sustainability:

Limiting the need to travel; siting development where heat loss will be minimised; safeguarding renewable resources.

Protecting natural resources:

Protection of best and most versatile farmland; avoid conflict between sources of pollution and pollution sensitive development.

Protecting the local environment:

The East Dorset Local Plan (2002), again does not contain a specific vision. Instead, the plan contains a number of aims relating to sustainability, economic and social needs, and transport/travel. Under sustainability, the plan aimed to promote global sustainability, to protect natural resources in its area, and to protect and enhance local environmental quality. The economic and social aims included encouraging production of needed goods and services, and development of local employment, provision of housing land, social facilities and recreation, and allowing the distribution of goods. The safe and efficient movement of people and goods was also an aim under transport and travel.

Protection of cultural heritage; protection and enhancement of landscapes; high quality of design and landscaping in new developments.

Social & Economic Aims:

Provision of adequate areas and sites for industrial and commercial development; vital and attractive town centres, and local shops; adequate areas and sites for housing, and for affordable housing;

Safe & efficient movement:

Creating a network and hierarchy of traffic routes; provide a network of safe, attractive local routes for pedestrians and cyclists; siting of development to encourage public transport use.

Table 2.9 East Dorset Local Plan (2002)

2.93 Community Strategies

2.94 Whilst the local plan and structure plan provide a context for the Core Strategy vision, Government guidance suggests that the Core Strategy should take its lead from and be the spatial expression of the Sustainable Community Strategy. Analysis of the vision statements of the relevant community strategies and plans for the area is therefore important. Community plans exist in both Christchurch and East Dorset, and the Dorset Community Strategy is also relevant given its relationship to the Local Area Agreement.

The **Christchurch Community Plan** was published in 2007, for a period until the end of 2010. The plan is led and produced by the Christchurch Community Partnership, and is designed to be an action focused community led document, rather than a more traditional overarching strategy.

The document does not therefore have one overall vision and objectives, but instead sets out a vision for each of its Action Groups:

- *Health & Care – A Christchurch where good health is promoted, ill health treated and vulnerable groups supported.*
- *High Quality Environment – A Christchurch where the high-quality natural and built environment is protected and enhanced*
- *.Increased Prosperity – A Christchurch which is economically vibrant and where people want to live, study, work, bring up children, be supported through unemployment, and retire.*

- *Travel & Access – A Christchurch where travel is efficient, affordable and sustainable*
- *.Community Safety – A Christchurch where crime levels are low and where people feel safe.*
- *Generations – A Christchurch where relationships between people of different generations are strong and where all sections of the community are valued.*
- *Culture, Learning & Lifestyles – A Christchurch valued for its range of cultural and educational opportunities and where the quality of life is high.*

Table 2.10 Christchurch Community Plan

The East Dorset Community Strategy was adopted in 2008, and covers a 7 year period to 2015. The vision of the document is as follows: By 2015, East Dorset will be:

- **a healthy place to live and work;**
- **a place where enterprise is valued and encouraged where we invest in the future through skills and training;**
- **a safe community where residents do not fear crime;**
- **a strong community with a thriving well supported voluntary sector;**
- **an enjoyable place to live and visit where culture and leisure is valued;**
- **a district that supports and enhances its environment, and;**
- **a community in which all development is sustainable and carbon emissions are reduced.”**

The delivery of the vision is to be achieved through 10 strategic objectives, where the partnership will:

- Actively engage with the community
- Support to sustain and grow the economy
- Develop and support the voluntary and community sector
- Develop sustainable communities and decent homes
- Improve housing, health and well-being
- Promote learning for all
- Protect and enhance the environment
- Reduce the fear of crime
- Stimulate culture and leisure activities.

The plan also identifies children and young people, and those with disadvantage and isolation, as priority groups on which to focus attention. It also focused attention on 4 key strategic challenges:

- Declining facilities in villages.
- Poor access to urban areas and large settlements.

The East Dorset Community Strategy was adopted in 2008, and covers a 7 year period to 2015. The vision of the document is as follows: By 2015, East Dorset will be:

- a healthy place to live and work;
 - a place where enterprise is valued and encouraged where we invest in the future through skills and training;
 - a safe community where residents do not fear crime;
 - a strong community with a thriving well supported voluntary sector;
 - an enjoyable place to live and visit where culture and leisure is valued;
 - a district that supports and enhances its environment, and;
 - a community in which all development is sustainable and carbon emissions are reduced.”
- Pressure for new housing and development.
 - Lack of affordable housing.

Table 2.11 East Dorset Community Strategy

The Community Strategy for Dorset, “Shaping Our Future” was adopted in 2007 and has an end date of 2016. The strategy uses the shared vision for Dorset, adopted already by the County Council and its partners:

“A living thriving Dorset where everyone has a part to play in creating a better quality of life.”

The strategy does not list a set of key objectives, but does group its key policies and actions under themes:

- Providing affordable, sustainable and appropriate housing.
- Developing Dorset’s economy.
- Improved access to services, employment and leisure.
- Safeguarding Dorset’s environment now and for the future.
- Dorset’s demographic challenge.
- A series of objectives grouped under the theme of Thriving Communities.

Table 2.12 Dorset Community Strategy

2.95 Corporate Plans

2.96 Both Councils have produced their own corporate plans. Whilst these have a function of allowing key performance to be measured and managed, the documents also have a dual role in setting out the Councils key objectives for a set period of years.

The latest Christchurch Borough Council Corporate Plan covers the period 2008-2012. The plan does not contain an overall vision, but sets out the Council's core values, and identifies seven key themes which affect quality of life, with objectives listed under each theme. In summary, the themes and objectives are:

Safe and Healthy Communities.

Reducing anti-social behaviour, maintain crime at 06/07 levels or below, encourage involvement in physical exercise, improve awareness of Christchurch being a safe and healthy place to live.

Business and Tourism

Support business and employment opportunities, increase business activity in the Borough, support commercial growth in Christchurch and Highcliffe, support expansion of the airport.

Transport

Encourage use of sustainable and fuel efficient transport to reduce congestion, implement Local Transport Plan schemes on time and on budget, develop speed management/pedestrian improvements in areas of need.

Improving Prospects for Housing

Develop policy to increase supply of high quality sustainable housing, improve utilisation of stock, provide more housing advice/support, improve condition of private sector stock, improve levels of housing investment.

Children and Young People

Provide greater range of services and facilities for young people, implement "Every Child Matters" legislation, encourage young people to make a positive contribution in Christchurch.

Protecting the Environment

Increase amount of waste recycled, maintain a high quality environment, promote energy efficiency within the Borough, ensure that provision of green spaces keeps pace with housing development, encourage use and enjoyment of Christchurch's unique amenities.

Professional Pride

The latest Christchurch Borough Council Corporate Plan covers the period 2008-2012. The plan does not contain an overall vision, but sets out the Council's core values, and identifies seven key themes which affect quality of life, with objectives listed under each theme. In summary, the themes and objectives are:

Services delivered by well trained, motivated and efficient staff, using financial resources effectively, ensure standards of service compare favourably with other Councils, involve people in designing and delivering services, use partnership and innovation to give value for money.

Table 2.13 Christchurch Borough Council Corporate Plan

2.97 East Dorset Corporate Plan

2.98 East Dorset District Council has recently published a new Corporate Plan for the period 2010-2016, entitled "Our Promises to East Dorset".

2.99 The vision of the Corporate Plan is as follows:

2.100 *"To be a forward looking organisation, working with the community and partners to identify and respond to local needs in an efficient and cost effective way.*

2.101 *People will be able to have their say on issues which affect their local area and will receive good value for money. They can expect appropriate housing and to live in safe, clean and sustainable neighbourhoods with access to public services that meet their needs.*

2.102 *The natural and cultural heritage will be well managed, and people who live in the area can expect to have employment opportunities and feel valued and respected."*

2.103 Beyond the vision, the Corporate Plan identifies five priority areas, which will be a focus for the Council's work, with specific targets listed under each priority area:

2.104 Communities – to promote thriving communities that are well served, healthy and safe with a strong local identity.

- More people are voting in local and national elections.
- More people are involved in consultation on the way we provide local services.
- More people are playing an active role in their local community.
- Communities are being supported to improve their neighbourhood.
- We have lively local centres.
- Rural communities have access to the services they need.
- Children & young people feel safe, have good job and career prospects, have access to facilities which reflect their needs, and can identify what action is being taken to address climate change.

- People have access to good local health care facilities.
- People are leading healthier lifestyles.
- People's standard of living has been improved in areas of need.
- The low crime rate has been maintained and we are still one of the safest places in the UK.
- People recognise that they live in a low crime area.
- There is improved road safety.
- Services are provided in a fair and accessible way.
- Support has continued to be given to vulnerable people and marginalised groups.
- There is a better understanding between young and older people.

2.105 Economy – to promote a successful local economy.

- Businesses are providing higher value employment opportunities.
- Employment land is being developed.
- More businesses are starting and survival rates have improved.
- More local businesses are recognising and investing in older people's skills.
- Older people are acting as mentors for new businesses.
- Public transport companies are servicing industrial and trade parks, and rural settlements.
- Travel to work times have been reduced.
- There is a wider choice of safe alternative transport routes to the key employment areas.
- We have worked and are continuing to work with partners in Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset and have improved the prosperity of the area.
- We have worked and are continuing to work closely with the business community.

2.106 Environment – to manage and safeguard the natural and built environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

- There is better access to the natural and historic environment.
- There are opportunities for learning about our environment.
- We have protected our heathlands and other special protection areas.
- Effective use of land has allowed appropriate development to be supported.
- Conservation areas, listed buildings, historic, archaeological and cultural features have been protected.
- The district is clean and tidy.
- Designated habitats and features have been protected and biodiversity has been increased.
- Having new and improved cycleways, bridleways and footpaths to less sensitive areas of the countryside.
- There is reduced use of energy, water and raw materials.
- There is a reduced number of car journeys.
- There is a reduced need to travel.

- More and better trailways, cycle routes and footpaths have been provided.
- More local food is produced.
- More products are reused and recycled.
- Less waste is buried in landfill sites.

2.107 Housing – to improve the quality and availability of appropriate housing.

- Fewer people are homeless or require temporary accommodation.
- Elderly, vulnerable and disabled people are able to live in the comfort and security of their own homes.
- People with specific housing needs are able to live in appropriate accommodation.
- The range of accommodation has increased.
- More young people are able to stay in the local area.
- Social and private rented housing is of a decent standard.
- Homes are more energy efficient and fuel poverty has been reduced.

2.108 Performance – to ensure the efficient and cost effective use of resources.

- Users are receiving better services at no extra cost or same level of services at lower cost.
- Annual savings targets are published and achieved.
- Council Tax increases have been minimised.
- Council's buildings and assets are being used effectively.
- Councillors are receiving the training and support they need to carry out their role effectively.
- Policy decisions are taking due account of the needs and future aspirations of the community.
- Key priorities are being delivered.
- Employees are supported in their work through effective management and development opportunities, have the opportunity to reach their full potential, and have the opportunity to help improve roles and new ways of working.
- Services are being provided in the most appropriate way.
- Services are being provided electronically whenever possible.
- Targets are being hit and projects are being delivered on time and within budget.
- Resources are being focused on priority areas.

2.109 Core Strategic Messages

2.110 The Christchurch & East Dorset Core Strategy needs to establish a clear vision and objectives to guide future development in the two authorities over the next 15-20 years. In doing so this vision should be a product both of the aspirations of local people, local organisations and businesses, politicians, and external stakeholders with an interest in the area.

2.111 It is also important however, that the Core Strategy vision and objectives are guided by national advice, and by the overarching plans with which the Core Strategy should conform, particularly the Corporate Plans and the Community Strategies for each area.

2.112 The vision and objectives contained in these overarching plans are set out in some detail above. However it is useful to examine the key messages from national guidance, and to piece together common themes running through the various visions, which the Core Strategy might wish to reflect.

2.113 The key areas of focus for local authorities set out in PPS 1 are, broadly:

- Economic growth (including provision of employment land and better access to jobs and services).
- Efficient development (regeneration, focusing development in existing centres, looking at higher densities and mixed use development, and reducing the need to travel).
- Climate change (addressing the causes, planning for the effects)
- Communities (promoting safety, and making them inclusive).
- Biodiversity (protection of habitats and species and future enhancement).

2.114 PPS 12 encourages local authorities to become “place shapers” and to form their Core Strategy vision from analysis of the key characteristics of the area, and the issues facing it. In this respect, it appears important that the Core Strategy vision should be clearly identifiable as being specific to Christchurch and East Dorset. Whilst its aspirations may reflect national or regional priorities, it should interpret them in a locally distinctive way.

2.115 An analysis of the main aspirations set out in the vision and objectives of the regional, local, community and corporate plans is set out in the table below. It is surprising perhaps how much variation there is between the various visions/objectives. Only one theme (economic prosperity) was common to all 9 plans. The themes of protecting the environment, supporting culture, community cohesion, housing provision and reducing travel needs, were mentioned in around 50% of the plans.

2.116 In part this reflects the different date of the various plans, and also their respective scope, but clearly it also reflects the individual priorities of the documents. This again confirms that, whilst the Core Strategy should reflect the aspirations of higher level plans, it must also interpret its own priorities which are locally distinctive to the plan.

2.117 There were also some variations between the 2 authorities in terms of themes. In East Dorset, there was greater prominence given to stewardship of resources, and to improving culture. In Christchurch reducing the need to travel and promoting sustainable transport, protection of Green Belt, and enhancing tourism were more prominent.

	IRS	BDPSP	CBLP	EDDLP	CCP	EDSCS	DCS	CCorp	EDCorp	Total
Community health and fitness					####	#####	####		#####	4
Response to population changes / growth	###						####			2

	IRS	BDPSP	CBLP	EDDLP	CCP	EDSCS	DCS	CCorp	EDCorp	Total
Enhance and protect distinctive environment	###	#####	#####		####		####		#####	6
Improving and supporting culture	###			#####	####		####		#####	5
Economic prosperity and employment growth	###	#####	#####	#####	####	#####	####	#####	#####	9
Safer communities					####	#####	####	#####	#####	5
Address deprivation and disadvantage (including regeneration)	###									1
Improving community cohesion, participation, and Inter-generational activity	###	#####			####		####			4
Meeting housing needs		#####	#####	#####			####	#####	#####	6
Focusing development on main centres		#####	#####	#####						3
Stewardship of resources		#####		#####					#####	3
Reduce need to travel, improve accessibility and promote sustainable transport		#####	#####	#####	####		####	#####		6
Protect the Green Belt		#####	#####							2
Enhance tourism			#####							1
Increase energy efficiency / recycling				#####				#####		2

Table 2.14

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, members of the public and through the evidence base.

3.2 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.

3.3 The section will also set out the outcomes of further visioning work which the Council's have undertaken following the issues and options consultation.

3.4 The Issues and Options consultation considered the following issues:

3.5 VN 1 – What major themes should the Core Strategy Vision have?

3.6 VN 2 – If you could only select 3 of the above options (or including any additional issues you have identified), to be included in the vision, which would they be?

3.7 The original issues posed in the Issues and Options consultation in 2008 are considered to be valid in addressing the possible vision and objectives for the Core Strategy. They broadly reflect regional and local plans, and are generally well supported by those responding to the Issues & Options consultation. The detailed responses to the Issues and Options consultation questions are set out in Section 4 below.

3.8 Subsequently, both Councils have undertaken further visioning work, either as part of formal focus groups, or within existing Community Partnership action group meetings and seminars. These comprise (in chronological order):

- Meeting of Increased Prosperity Action Group (CCP) – specifically to look at the need and possible policies for affordable housing. (30th April 2009)
- Member visioning event & training by Addison Associates. (9th July 2009)
- Christchurch Stakeholder Visioning Event, including specific workshop sessions on Town Centres, Urban Extension, Airport and Flood Risk. (14th October 2009)
- Seminar organised by Generations Action Group (CCP) – looking at future planning for children & young people. (25th November 2009).
- Vision seminar of Culture Learning & Lifestyles Action Group (CCP) (26th January 2010).
- Vision seminar of Health & Care Action Group (CCP) (5th February 2010).
- Vision & Future Planning seminar on issues for older people (Dorset Age Partnership) (15th February 2010).
- Visioning Day, East Dorset Members & Heads of Service (4th March 2010).
- Vision for the Environment of East Dorset – seminar run by Environment Theme Action Group (EDCP).

3.9 The following section aims to provide a summary of the issues identified at each of these sessions. This can only be given in brief outline in this paper, however full notes of each of the seminars and meetings can be obtained from the Councils on request. For the purposes of this summary, the visioning work will be divided as follows:

- Member and Stakeholder visioning events at Christchurch & East Dorset.
- Community Partnership events.

3.10 A summary of the main issues identified across all events will be provided at the end of this section.

3.11 Council visioning events.

3.12 Christchurch and East Dorset Councils have organised 3 specific Core Strategy visioning events, supplemented by Community Partnership events set out later in this Key Issue Paper. Full notes from each of these events are appended to this paper. The following section provides a summary of the main issues raised.

3.13 The main Council events were:

3.14 9th July 2009 – Visioning seminar for both Councils members and officers run by Addison Associates.

3.15 14th October 2009 – Christchurch vision event for key stakeholders.

3.16 4th March 2010 – East Dorset vision event for members and officers.

3.17 One recommendation of Addison Associates was that the Councils should run visioning events jointly, in support of the joint Core Strategy document. However the Councils have opted to continue with running separate locally organised visioning events in order to ensure better attendance and avoid residents and stakeholders having to travel significant distances to venues.

3.18 Joint Visioning seminar - 9th July 2009

3.19 Following an independent diagnostic analysis of the Councils' LDF by the Planning Advisory Service, the Councils arranged a seminar on visioning from consultants Addison Associates. This seminar was attended by lead members and officers involved in the LDF process, including members of the joint LDF Steering Group.

3.20 In part, this seminar dealt with practical ways in which the Councils could engage communities on the vision for the LDF Core Strategy, and was not therefore a specific event focused on developing that vision.

3.21 However, as part of the seminar, members and officers were asked to provide suggestions on the key components of a vision for the area. The following key attributes of that vision were identified:

- Reducing carbon footprint and pollution.
- Allowing for high quality of life and opportunities for all and removing discrimination, by creating a more inclusive society.
- Providing a range and mix of facilities for cultural engagement.
- Creating sustainable economic growth, by attracting growth sectors which create suitable jobs and allow for vibrant town centres.

3 Identification of Issues

- Creating opportunities to enhance skills of the workforce.
- Providing a sustainable transport network, with good connections and giving everyone opportunities to access goods and services.
- Creating distinct cohesive communities where urban areas are protected from over intensification and where the green and historic environments are protected and enhanced.
- Creating safe and supportive communities and a society of respect.
- Creating access to housing of types and at ranges which are affordable for all.

3.22 Christchurch event – 14th October 2009.

3.23 This event included a range of key stakeholders in the Borough, as well as lead officers and members. Stakeholders attending included statutory consultees such as the Environment Agency and Natural England, parish councils, adjoining local authorities, landowning and business interests, representatives of the Community Partnership, and one transport operator.

3.24 The event was structured to provide input to both the LDF Core Strategy, and the Sustainable Community Strategy, which is to be produced towards the end of 2010.

3.25 The event was in two main parts. Firstly, participants were invited to identify 3 ambitions they had for the future in Christchurch, and also 3 challenges they faced in realising these ambitions.

3.26 Most participants highlighted affordable housing, traffic congestion and sustainable transport as areas of high priority during the exercise. Nearly 80% identified improving public transport and reducing traffic congestion as priorities for 2026, while 60% saw affordable housing as a priority. One third of participants identified flood risk as a key issue, and enhanced cultural opportunities leading to better quality of life was also mentioned by a third of participants. Creating a greener Christchurch was an aim of 20% of those attending.

3.27 In terms of challenges, the greatest challenge was seen as lack of funds for securing development, or for associated infrastructure. Half of participants saw issues of policy, strategy or management as major challenges. Increasing car use, and increasing amounts of waste were also seen as challenges, as was limitations on land available for new and more affordable housing.

3.28 The second element of the visioning event was to divide participants among 4 workshop groups which addressed 4 key issues already identified through evidence gathering as being important for the Core Strategy. The event was structured to focus people on the workshop issues of most relevance to their interests, and time was allowed for each participant to visit 2 workshop groups. The groups were:

- Future development of Bournemouth Airport.
- Flood risk.
- Christchurch and Highcliffe town centre.
- The north of Christchurch urban extension proposal.

- 3.29** The Bournemouth Airport workshops looked at what the vision should be for the whole airport site, including the business parks. It was noted that much of the airports future had already been set out by the planning approvals for the revised terminal facilities. Adequate strategies for dealing with aircraft noise remained a concern.
- 3.30** Development of the business parks was a significant aspiration, but relied greatly on provision of suitable infrastructure, in particular transport, but also sewerage and flood alleviation. It was noted that the airport should tap into the knowledge and “green knowledge” economies, including perhaps making links with higher education establishments in the area. However there was a concern expressed that development of the airport business parks should not act as a barrier to development in the main town centres of the conurbation.
- 3.31** The flood risk workshops considered the implications of the Council’s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 work which had identified reasonably significant areas of the town centre, Purewell and Stanpit where future development would be prohibited. The groups however noted that existing river defences can be improved over time, but that it may be impossible to defend against tidal flooding from the harbour due to complex land ownerships, heights and access.
- 3.32** It was noted that the SFRA affects several sites which are key to future development opportunities in the town centre, such as the Gas Holders site in Bridge Street. The groups therefore felt that efforts should be made to secure the release of these sites for development through flood risk alleviation measures.
- 3.33** The third workshop explored aspirations for Christchurch and Highcliffe town centres. The groups felt that the aim should be to create an environment which people would want to visit, spend money and invest in. It was felt that neither centre currently offered such an environment, with Christchurch High Street lacking space for pedestrians, and Highcliffe being strangled by heavy traffic.
- 3.34** The competition from Bournemouth and Castlepoint was noted, however it was felt that Christchurch should not try to compete with these centres, but rather offer a unique alternative, drawing upon its strengths as an historic centre. The groups felt that a good mix of national and local independent retailers should be provided, with a focus on culture and creative industries.
- 3.35** Development opportunities in the town centres are limited, but it was noted that the existing Saxon Square shopping area is in need of modernisation and redevelopment. Opportunities to redevelop the Magistrates Court site adjacent to Bargates and Barrack Road were also discussed.
- 3.36** The impact of traffic congestion in Christchurch was also mentioned, with a view that people may be put off shopping there due to difficulty in getting in or out. Removal of through traffic in the centre was discussed, with some feeling that the High Street should be opened only to public transport, but others considering that excessive bus services were actually contributing to congestion, and that a new bus terminus should be provided outside the High Street.
- 3.37** There was also discussion of creating two way traffic in Wick Lane to encourage through traffic to use this route instead of the High Street.
- 3.38** The final workshops addressed future development of the urban extension north of Christchurch. The area of search in the Regional Spatial Strategy covered an area around Roeshot Hill and East of Burton. In the main, the participants felt that the focus for development should be land south of the railway around Roeshot Hill. However there was an acknowledged role for land within the whole area of search to provide infrastructure and community facilities.

3.39 The workshops identified the following key services and facilities which needed to be examined:

- Public/sustainable transport links;
- Access to the A35.
- Schools provision;
- GP surgeries, with additional support likely to be required;
- A vision for the site to secure distinctive development;
- Funding mechanisms to be investigated, not just developer contributions.

3.40 East Dorset Visioning Day – 4th March 2010.

3.41 This whole day event included Councillors, lead officers and representatives from the East Dorset Community Partnership. The event was run by a facilitator.

3.42 Participants were tested in an informal “quiz” to ascertain their understanding of the issues facing the District. The main sessions of the day, and the broad outcomes are set out below.

3.43 The first part of the day tasked different groups with examining key issues facing East Dorset over the next 20 years, with the groups asked to set out potential opportunities and challenges under each heading:

- Where do people work? & How deprived is the District?
- How safe is the District? & How healthy are the residents?
- How do they move around? & Where do residents go?
- How high is the quality of the environment?
- Who lives here?
- Where do people live?

3.44 Individual group responses are set out in Appendix 1 to this paper. In summary however, the groups drew the following conclusions:

3.45 Where do people work and how deprived is the District?

3.46 In general the group felt that enterprise was alive and well in East Dorset, with a range of employment sites, and a high quality environment which attracts new businesses. However it was also recognised that the nature of work was changing, and that sometimes this resulted in mismatches of skills and lack of appropriate labour supply. In certain respects however, East Dorset was perceived as a residential commuter District, rather than as an employment centre. The presence of sensitive habitats was also seen as a potential barrier to employment growth and finding suitable sites.

3.47 How safe is the District and how healthy are the residents?

3.48 The group felt that East Dorset was generally a safe District, with relatively affluent and healthy residents. In particular the large, well educated retired population means that third sector volunteering is strong, with good community development and engagement.

3.49 However perception of crime remains high, and this forms part of wider divisions between young and old. There is also some complacency about crime and antisocial behaviour in certain areas. It was also noted that pressure on public services may lead to significant impacts on services for older people.

3.50 How do they move around and where do residents go?

3.51 It was considered that a vicious circle exists in most of East Dorset where reductions in public transport have led to high car dependency, which in turn have made provision of new public transport services unattractive to operators. Timing of new residential development in relation to transport infrastructure is a key issue. However the group recognised that new developments such as urban extensions and the airport offer opportunities to fund new transport infrastructure, and to stimulate investment in services. In rural areas provision of demand responsive transport should be investigated.

3.52 Possible new ways of thinking about transport were discussed, for example tackling the “school run” culture, and encouraging parents to walk and cycle to school with their children rather than take them by car. The role of low carbon/alternative fuel vehicles can be developed much further, and the outcomes of the Multi Modal Transport Study were identified as being significant.

3.53 How high is the quality of the Environment?

3.54 SANGS were seen as critical both in protecting the environments that we have, and creating a new network of green spaces to further enhance the area. It was noted that the character of the urban environment should not be overlooked, particularly in historic towns and villages. The quality of the environment is critical to the tourist industry. However it was also accepted that the protection of the environment can be taken too far. This was already felt to be the case with the habitat regulations, which are restricting development. It was also felt that continuing to resist high density development will lead to more land take from the Green Belt.

3.55 Who lives here and where do people live?

3.56 It was generally felt that the LDF should be used to provide housing which is much more geared towards meeting the needs of the District. It was also felt that if a need could be demonstrated, that it was appropriate to review Green Belt boundaries as part of determining how to meet that need. However the group also noted that it would be hard to make residents accept certain aspects of housing delivery, notably Green Belt release, and gypsy & traveller sites.

3.57 The group felt there was a significant role for creating new types of housing, including new technology, energy efficiency, lifetime homes and new forms of ownership such as shared equity. Affordable housing thresholds needed to be lowered, and living space standards should be investigated to create decent room and garden sizes. The challenge here was to what extent it was reasonable for planning policy to influence the market.

3.58 The second part of the day moved on to what elements should make up the vision, and to determine areas of synergy and tension between them. Numerous detailed issues had been raised from the first sessions, but these could be broadly grouped under the following headings:

3 Identification of Issues

- Sufficient and appropriate housing.
- Better transport for all.
- Seamless service delivery.
- Reduced deprivation.
- Business enterprise.
- Better lifelong education and skills for all.
- An environment to be proud of.
- Safe, healthy, active and occupied population.
- Facilities for all ages.
- Local needs – local provision.
- Happy and attractive town centres.

3.59 The groups identified potential tensions between housing and economic growth and protection of the environment, and also between provision of housing and associated provision of infrastructure “the Verwood Syndrome”. There was also a perceived tension between a desire to positively embrace change, and community views which might seek simply keep things as they are.

3.60 Synergies were identified between housing and economic growth, between community development and facilities/town centre provision and development. Transport was seen as a driver of many other aspirations including economic growth, education provision, community development and town centre enhancement.

3.61 Finally, while the overall vision might deal with a 20 year time frame, groups were also asked to look at potential short term priorities which might form part of the vision and objectives of the Core Strategy. Responses included:

- Sending out positive messages about housing development.
- Encouraging local grown produce, allotments and garden sharing.
- Greater recognition for the Economic Development Unit.
- Making young people aware of services and facilities which already exist.

3.62 Community partnership vision seminars

3.63 In addition to the Council run visioning events listed above, both Community Partnerships in Christchurch and East Dorset have held meetings and seminars to look at vision and future objectives as they relate to individual action groups. These seminars and meetings were also intended to inform future development of sustainable community strategies and partnership plans, so often contain a level of detail too fine to be appropriate for the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. The following sections therefore summarise the issues of most relevance to the Core Strategy. Once again, detailed notes from these events are appended to this Key Issue Paper, and the sections below provide a brief summary of the main outcomes. The events are summarised chronologically.

3.64 CCP Increased Prosperity Action Group meeting 30th April 2009.

3.65 This meeting of the action group included a specific discussion about future affordable housing policy in Christchurch. The group considered that the urban extension must have a significant role in future affordable housing delivery in the Borough. The need to provide for key worker housing was also considered important. This was especially the case for care workers given the high proportion of elderly persons in Christchurch. Use of empty homes was discussed, however it was noted that many owners in the area appear unwilling to utilise their properties in this way.

3.66 Planning together for children and young people seminar 25th November 2009

3.67 This seminar was run by the CCP Generations Action Group. Whilst its primary intention was to inform an improved structure for the planning of events, however it also provided a useful summary of issues faced by agencies representing children and young people in Christchurch. Among the issues discussed where:

- The PCT had identified a requirement for additional health care space in a central location in the town. They were also aware that the former health centre in Saxon Square is vacant and still being paid for by the Trust.
- Connexions manager has identified 110 young people as NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in Christchurch. This is a significant number given the size of the town. A key barrier is finding suitable places to meet with young people outside of the home or school.
- Somerford Children's Centre noted that Somerford is the most health deprived SOA in Dorset, and also educationally deprived, yet access to funding is still difficult.
- Funding of 29,000 has been awarded to establish a Children's University to be based in Christchurch.
- It was noted that school swimming pools in Christchurch are under threat of closure thus severely reducing opportunities.

3.68 CCP Culture, Learning & Lifestyles Action Team seminar 26th January 2010

3.69 The CCP action team held a specific seminar to look at aspects of a cultural vision for Christchurch. It was noted several attendees at the CBC Vision seminar in October 2009 had identified culture as central to the overall quality of life in Christchurch, with issues such as new educational/cultural spaces, and enhancement of the town centre also noted.

3.70 The Increased Prosperity Action group was keen to promote Christchurch through cultural events such as a Son et Lumiere, historic walks and tours, and promotion of buildings, e.g. the Constables House. Similarly, Christchurch Tourism Association was also using cultural events to promote the town, especially the Food Festival.

3.71 The University of the 3rd Age currently run over 100 courses in the area, but have yet to establish themselves in dedicated offices, nor do they have adequate meeting/class rooms.

3.72 Highcliffe Castle, a Grade 1 Listed Building, has been slowly developed by Christchurch Council over the last 10 years, following almost total destruction by fire. It now represents an important cultural and historic asset to the Borough. Future development plans include establishing business rooms and a new heritage centre. The Friends of Christchurch Station, as well as promoting the station as a gateway to Christchurch, also wish create a small resource centre at the station to accommodate regular art, craft and film exhibitions.

3.73 Perhaps the most significant project being developed is the new Druitt Hall Community Centre which is being designed as a landmark building for the benefit of all residents of Christchurch. The intension is to create a hub for organisations that will be used by community groups across the spectrum and be a place where the different generations can interact with each other in an informal and attractive setting. Planning permission has already been secured, but significant fundraising is now required to secure its delivery.

3.74 A number of common issues were raised during the seminar, which potentially act as barriers to cultural development in Christchurch:

- The need for dedicated space to deliver programmes such as U3A, including office accommodation.
- Better signage and maps to enable visitors to interpret the heritage assets of the town.
- Recruitment of volunteers for local events and projects.

3.75 CCP Health & Care Vision seminar 5th February 2010

3.76 This seminar opened by reviewing the emerging priority areas for action on health in Dorset:

- Reducing the number of people who smoke.
- Reducing alcohol misuse.
- Reducing domestic violence.
- Promoting sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancy.
- Improving mental health.
- Promoting health amongst older people.
- Combating obesity.
- Focusing on healthy practices in schools and the workplace.

3.77 It was noted that the role of Christchurch Hospital is likely to change over time and consultations are ongoing on future service delivery, including developing the hospital as a “re-ablement” facility supporting greater independence and regaining daily living skills.

3.78 The key outcomes from this seminar do not all have a spatial dimension and include better co-ordination among the many organisations involved in health and care, and better communication of what services are being offered. However provision of community transport was seen as an essential part of enabling people to access health and care services. Whilst some services exist, provision could be better and gaps exist.

3.79 Concerns on health issues for young people, including teenage pregnancy, sexual health and obesity were raised by many organisations. The wider links to provision of facilities and diversionary activities for young people in the area are clearly relevant to the Core Strategy.

3.80 Special meeting of the Dorset Age Partnership 15th February 2010

3.81 This was an already planned special meeting to discuss better co-ordination of agencies involved in provision of services for older people in Christchurch. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the roles of various agencies, however as part of the meeting a series of common issues, and these included:

- Raising the profile of organisations and service providers.
- Recruitment and retention of volunteers.
- Space for activities, training and meetings.
- Provision of appropriate transport and parking facilities.

3.82 EDCP Environment Theme Action Group seminar

3.83 This seminar specifically examined this action group's own vision for the future of East Dorset District, to inform the Core Strategy vision. The group formulated its own vision as follows:

3.84 *An environment which increasingly reflects the unique natural and cultural heritage of East Dorset for the long term benefit of our community.*

- *The distinctive and varied landscape character of East Dorset will be conserved and enhanced.*
- *The environment will be valued for its own sake and for the contribution it makes to people's health and well being.*
- *All land use proposals will recognise that a healthy natural environment is essential to sustain human life and economic activity by providing (often hidden) "ecosystem services" including clean air and water, food, climate regulation and flood risk management. Cumulative impacts of proposals will be identified and environmental limits respected.*
- *New development and associated green infrastructure will be required to enhance the character of natural and cultural landscapes and biodiversity, to reduce both consumption of natural resources and waste, and to mitigate impacts of climate change.*
- *The distinctive and varied natural habitats of East Dorset will be conserved and enhanced through extension, linkage and positive management. Key opportunities for landscape scale habitat restoration will be identified and safeguarded for that purpose.*
- *The natural and historic environment's contribution to the agricultural, tourist and leisure industries will be recognised and supported as a major driver of the economy of East Dorset.*
- *A solution will be found to the District's problem of above average car ownership and below average availability of public transport and its economic, social and environmental consequences.*

3.85 The group then identified a series of aims and opportunities under each element of the vision.

4 Formation of Vision and Objectives

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 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal. The process includes a critical assessment of the options put forward to address issues identified in the Core Strategy Issues and Options paper.

4.2 Outcomes of the Issues & Options consultation

4.3 A formal public consultation on Issues & Options took place between March & May 2008. The consultation, quite deliberately, did not propose any draft vision or set of objectives, but instead asked two questions aimed at establishing what people felt should be the key elements of the Core Strategy vision:

4.4 Issue VN 1 – What major themes should the Core Strategy vision have?

4.5 A – Protecting the natural environment.

4.6 B – Protecting the built environment and heritage.

4.7 C – Addressing climate change as it might affect Christchurch & East Dorset.

4.8 D – Creating sustainable economic growth.

4.9 E – Improving transport.

4.10 F – Providing appropriate homes for all.

4.11 G – Supporting our communities.

4.12 H – Providing for the needs of children and young people.

4.13 I – Making our communities safer.

4.14 J – Tackling deprivation and social exclusion.

4.15 K – Improving the health of our communities.

4.16 L – Other, please specify.

4.17 Issue VN 2 – If you could only select 3 of the above options (or including any additional issues you have identified), to be included in the vision, which would they be?

4.18 Issue VN 1 – What major themes should the Core Strategy vision have?

4.19 The response to question VN 1 indicated that people supported each of the themes listed strongly. The tables below show the relative strength of support for each theme, using 3 rankings. The first shows the total number of responses to each theme (either yes, or no), which provides an overall show of interest in the relevance of the theme. The second table shows the total number and percentage of respondents who supported each theme, and the final table shows the total number and percentage of respondents not supporting each theme.

4.20 Table 1 (total responses)

4.21	Protecting the natural environment	126
4.22	Improving transport	126
4.23	Addressing climate change	120
4.24	Protecting built environment & heritage	118
4.25	Providing appropriate housing	118
4.26	Creating sustainable economic growth	110
4.27	Making communities safer	107
4.28	Supporting communities	106
4.29	Improving health	106
4.30	Needs of young people	103
4.31	Tackling deprivation & social exclusion	94

4.32 Table 2 (% support/total support)

4.33	Improving transport	99% (125)
4.34	Protecting the natural environment	98% (123)
4.35	Protecting built environment & heritage	95% (112)
4.36	Supporting communities	93% (99)

4 Formation of Vision and Objectives

4.37	Making Communities safer	92%	(98)
4.38	Needs of young people	93%	(95)
4.39	Improving health	91%	(96)
4.40	Creating sustainable economic growth	90%	(99)
4.41	Providing appropriate housing	88%	(104)
4.42	Tackling deprivation & social exclusion	86%	(81)
4.43	Addressing climate change	78%	(94)
4.44	<u>Table 3 (%not support/total not support)</u>		
4.45	Addressing climate change	22%	(26)
4.46	Tackling deprivation & social exclusion	14%	(13)
4.47	Providing appropriate housing	12%	(14)
4.48	Creating sustainable economic growth	10%	(11)
4.49	Improving health	9%	(10)
4.50	Making communities safer	8%	(9)
4.51	Needs of young people	8%	(8)
4.52	Supporting communities	7%	(7)
4.53	Protecting built environment & heritage	5%	(6)
4.54	Protecting the natural environment	2%	(3)
4.55	Improving transport	1%	(1)

4.56 The strength of agreement on each of the themes listed in the consultation, means it is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions on peoples priorities. Almost all of the themes were supported by over 90% of respondents. The only exceptions to this were the themes on housing, on addressing deprivation, and on addressing climate change, where support was below 90%, although still significant.

4.57 Improving transport, and protecting the natural environment stand out as the themes which generated most responses, and which generated almost 100% support.

4.58 There were 26 other suggestions made under this question, many of which related to the themes listed above:

4.59 Under theme A – protect the Green Belt, use urban land more efficiently.

4.60 Under theme B – support cultural heritage and identity, preserve archaeology.

4.61 Under theme C – include solar heating in all new buildings, address flood risk, ethical waste management).

4.62 Under theme E – Encourage use of public transport, and less use of cars.

4.63 Under theme F – reduce the number of flats, meet all housing needs.

4.64 Under theme G – improve the social health of communities, support the settlement hierarchy, provide more for elderly people, promote vitality and viability of town centres, ensure infrastructure is delivered alongside new growth.

4.65 Under theme J – foster true community spirit.

4.66 Other issues – Contributions should not kill the viability of development schemes, the market and not the planners should lead new development, policy should be flexible, population forecasts should be questioned.

4.67 Issue VN 2 – If you could only select 3 of the above options (or including any additional issues you have identified), to be included in the vision, which would they be?

4.68 The response to question VN 2 asked people to put forward three of the themes which they felt were most important in the future Core Strategy vision. Respondents were not asked to rank the three they suggested, but were to place the themes in boxes A, B, and C. From this, it is possible to examine a tentative assessment of what people considered most important, on the assumption that they would mark their most important theme in box A, and so on.

4.69 The table below shows the number of responses for each theme, together with an indication of how many placed their choice in box A, B or C on the response form.

Theme	Box A	Box B	Box C	Total
A - Protecting the natural environment	37	14	7	58
B - Protecting the built environment and heritage	10	17	11	38

Theme	Box A	Box B	Box C	Total
C - Addressing climate change	5	8	5	18
D - Creating sustainable economic growth	9	23	9	41
E - Improving transport	8	12	15	35
F - Providing appropriate homes for all	20	4	10	34
G - Supporting our communities	3	5	10	15
H - Providing for the needs of children and young people	0	3	3	6
I - Making our communities safer	3	2	9	14
J - Tackling deprivation and social exclusion	1	2	3	6
K - Improving the health of our communities	0	2	12	14
L - Other, please specify	5	1	1	7

Table 4.1

4.70 There was a greater variation in the selection of “top three” themes, than was evident in the overall agreement with each theme in question VN 1. Protection of the natural environment ranks above all else as an important part of any vision, with 4 other themes (creating sustainable economic growth, improving transport, protecting the built environment and providing appropriate housing) being scored fairly well above the others in terms of importance.

4.71 There was some variation in terms of which box people mentioned each theme. While this cannot be taken as a ranking, some interesting trends can be noted:

- The natural environment and housing provision scored well above others in the responses in box A.
- Sustainable economic growth was most favoured as a choice for Box B.
- The more community based themes (health, supporting communities, safer communities) scored better in respondents choices in Box C.
- Some themes (notably transport and protecting the built environment, scored evenly across all 3 boxes).

4.72 Summary of key issues identified

4.73 It is appropriate to restate what the key principles of this paper have been, when formulating a vision and objectives for the Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy:

- That the vision and objectives should be driven by the outcomes of evidence gathering and public engagement.
- That the vision should reflect wider council and community aspirations set out in Corporate and Community strategies.
- That the vision should be focused on the main issues, rather than trying to cover every issue.
- In turn, that the vision and objectives should be as succinct as possible.
- That there should be a clear link between objectives in the Core Strategy, and the objectives used for sustainability appraisal.
- Finally, that the vision and objectives should be “fit for purpose” to provide a clear direction for the spatial strategy and policies.

4.74 In terms of **issues identified through the evidence gathering process to date**, the major studies undertaken by the two Councils over the past 2-3 years have been focused on the following issues:

- Identifying demand for housing, both open market and affordable.
- Identifying sufficient land for housing in the short, medium and long term.
- Masterplanning and capacity testing of potential new housing sites in Wimborne, Colehill, Corfe Mullen, Parley, Verwood and Christchurch.
- Developing a strategy to protect sensitive Heathland habitats from impacts of new residential development.
- Economic, Ecological and Transport studies which examine the potential growth of Bournemouth Airport and an airport and employment centre.
- Examining the potential demand for new retail and leisure facilities in town centres.
- Reviewing demand for and supply of employment land.
- Assessing the likely risk to different parts of the area from future flooding, taking account of climate change, particularly in Christchurch.
- Examining the supply and demand for open space of various types across the area.
- Providing input to the wider South East Dorset Multi Modal Transport Study which will support a new transport strategy for the South East Dorset sub-region.

4.75 Table 4.1 provides an overview of the key **elements of the various visions and objectives contained in regional and local planning documents, community plans, and corporate plans covering Christchurch and East Dorset**. A wide range of issues are covered by these policy documents, but the key issues appear to be:

- Ensuring economic prosperity and employment growth.
- Meeting housing needs.
- Reducing the need to travel, improving accessibility and promoting sustainable transport.
- Protecting and enhancing the environment.
- Improving and supporting culture.

4.76 These themes formed part of the vision and objectives of at least half of the policy documents which influence the LDF Core Strategy.

4.77 The **Issues & Options consultation in March 2008** sought views on what issues people felt should make up a vision for the Core Strategy. The outcome of this consultation was not particularly conclusive, with widespread support for all of the issues set out in the document. However, the issues which were supported by over 90% of respondents were:

- Improving transport.
- Protecting the natural environment.
- Protecting the built environment and heritage.
- Supporting our communities.
- Making our communities safer.
- Providing for the needs of children and young people.
- Improving the health of our communities.
- Creating sustainable economic growth.

4.78 When responding on which themes people would include in a “top 3” for inclusion in a vision, a number of themes stood out in terms of support:

- Protecting the natural environment.
- Creating sustainable economic growth.
- Protecting the built environment and heritage.
- Improving transport.
- Providing appropriate homes for all.

4.79 These broadly correspond with those supported in principle by respondents above, with the exception of the housing issue, which appeared to be better supported in the second question than the first.

4.80 It is more difficult to establish priorities from analysis of the outcomes of the various visioning events held with stakeholders, councillors and community partnership groups, not least because many focused on particular areas of concern to those attending. The two visioning events run at Christchurch and East Dorset do however provide a robust analysis of views about the most important issues seen as affecting the two areas.

4.81 Interestingly, only 3 themes emerged as being seen as a high priority from both seminars, these being provision of appropriate and affordable housing, improved transport, and protection and enhancement of the environment.

4.82 In Christchurch, additional priority issues were mitigating impacts of flood risk and enhancing cultural activity in the area. The East Dorset seminar also identified seamless service delivery, reducing deprivation, business enterprise, lifelong education and skills, a safe, healthy and active population, better facilities meeting local needs locally, and attractive town centres as important themes for a vision.

4.83 The community partnership seminars concentrated on specific issues, but it is notable that some common themes emerged which are important to many of the organisations represented on the partnerships:

- A need to develop and sustain volunteering in local communities, which in turn ensures service provision in both the voluntary and increasingly, in the public sector.
- A need to provide premises, both in terms of venues for events, classes and activities, but also office and meeting premises for organisations.

- Better communication and awareness raising about community facilities and events, ranging from interpretation signs in town centres to guide visitors, to awareness raising about services and support for young people.
- Provision of appropriate transport to meet the specific needs of voluntary organisations. This need may not always be met by mainstream public transport operators.

4.84 Preferred Vision & Objectives for the Christchurch & East Dorset Core Strategy

4.85 The preferred vision is to have a memorable, and locally distinctive vision. It will be supported by a series of key objectives which reflect priority themes identified through evidence and engagement. The vision and objectives can be found in the Vision and Strategic Objectives chapter of the Core Strategy.

4.86 CORE STRATEGY VISION

4.87 The natural environment of Christchurch and East Dorset and its historic and thriving towns and villages are and will continue to be the most important assets for the area. However this environment will be used to sustain the growth of the local economy, and the welfare of its local communities, rather than being used as a reason to turn our back on growth which can be achieved sustainably.

4.88 The Dorset Heathlands, the Cranborne Chase Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Christchurch Harbour and its beaches will be protected and enhanced to ensure that recreation and commercial activity sustains these areas.

4.89 The area will adapt to the emerging demands of climate change through clear strategies to reduce risk of flooding, and through encouraging high standards of building design and construction.

4.90 The housing needs of the area will be addressed, with housing delivered of a type and tenure which meets the aspirations of those wishing to buy or rent. An element of this housing will be in the form of new well planned sustainable residential areas in both Christchurch and East Dorset. These will be attractive new areas, including high quality, sustainable homes, areas of open space, new community facilities, and improved transport links to the surrounding area.

4.91 Housing will also continue to be met from redevelopment within the existing towns, but developments will now better reflect the character and type of housing found in each local area, and will make appropriate contributions to infrastructure. Almost all new housing development will contribute to provision of affordable housing, creating a step change in delivery of affordable dwellings and a significant reduction in waiting lists.

4.92 The character of the area will also be protected through retention of the Green Belt in all areas except those needed to secure well planned and sustainable housing and employment growth as part of the Core Strategy.

4.93 Historic towns such as Christchurch and Wimborne will be vibrant centres of commercial and cultural activity, with niche shopping, and varied attractions and facilities for residents and visitors alike. Other key local centres in Ferndown, Verwood, West Moors and Highcliffe will support shops and services for their local communities, with villages and smaller neighbourhood centres providing basic services. New ways of delivering services and facilities in rural areas will be developed.

4.94 The economy of the area will grow, both by sustaining its traditional sectors such as tourism, but also by creating a mixed economy with emphasis on growth in new knowledge based sectors, especially the green knowledge economy. Economic growth will be sustained by the creation of major high quality employment sites in East Dorset and at Bournemouth Airport, and by the protection of other well located sites for key employment uses. These will have an important role in sustaining the economy of South East Dorset.

4.95 The area will be easier to get around, not just for those who have a car, but for those who wish to use public transport, to walk or to cycle. In Christchurch, development will be focused on the existing public transport corridors on the A35 and A337 and better links will be made to Christchurch and Hinton Admiral stations, with the urban extension also linked to the transport network. Christchurch Borough Council will continue to press for the development of a Christchurch Bypass as a long term solution to the town's traffic problems.

4.96 The Airport will grow sustainably into a significant regional transport hub, providing scheduled and charter flights to a wide range of business and tourist destinations. Both the airport and its business parks will be linked to the surrounding conurbation by public transport services.

4.97 In East Dorset, transport corridors will be developed to help reduce the need to travel and promote a wider choice of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport. These corridors will include linking the towns and villages of Ferndown, West Moors, Three Legged Cross and Verwood, and improving links to Wimborne from Poole. Improvements to Canford Bottom Roundabout and dualling the A31 from Ferndown to Merley will reduce congestion and improve connectivity with the rest of Dorset and Hampshire.

4.98 And perhaps most important of all, our communities will thrive. There will be targeted redevelopment of local areas of deprivation in the Somerford, Leigh Park and Heatherlands Estates. Support will be given to the community groups and organisations to develop volunteering, and to obtain premises from which to deliver services. In particular, a new Druiitt Hall community facility will be developed in Christchurch in parallel with remodelled community gardens, which will act as a focus for community activity in the town.

4.99 To underpin this vision, the Core Strategy has the following objectives:

4.100 Objective 1 – To manage and safeguard the natural environment of Christchurch and East Dorset:

4.101 The **Green Belt** will be retained and protected except for strategic release of land to provide new housing, and at Bournemouth Airport. Impact on **designated sites** will be avoided, and residential development will contribute to mitigation of development on Heathland habitats. New **greenspace** will be provided as part of major housing proposals. Important **natural features** such as Christchurch Harbour and the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and enhanced.

4.102 Key options:

- Clearly defined and justified Green Belt release, with strong protection elsewhere.
- Criteria based option to protect designated sites.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace to be provided in step with new housing development.
- Review the Area of Great Landscape Value boundaries in East Dorset.
- Consider development of rural design policies.

4.103 Objective 2 – To maintain the character of the towns and villages, and to create vibrant local centres:

4.104 A clear **hierarchy of centres** will be developed, with a clear strategy for the major centres. Town centre boundaries will be created in Christchurch, Wimborne, Ferndown, Verwood and West Moors to help create a vibrant centre with a range of services and facilities. **Locally listed buildings** will now form part of the heritage protection strategy, and a local list will be created in East Dorset, and the Christchurch Local List updated. The Christchurch Borough Character Assessment and design standards in East Dorset will be used to guide design of new development. Article 4 (1) and 4(2) Directions will be considered to control small scale works which might damage the character of **Conservation Areas**. **Open space** will be provided alongside new residential development.

4.105 Key options:

- Creation of a settlement hierarchy of town, district and local centres.
- Focus new commercial development in Christchurch, Wimborne, Ferndown and Verwood town centres.
- Define town centre boundaries in key settlements.
- Potential new development sites identified in Christchurch town centre.
- Produce a list of locally listed buildings in East Dorset and update the list for Christchurch.
- Consider use of Article 4(1) and 4(2) Directions to control small scale development in Conservation Areas.
- Review special character areas in East Dorset.
- Produce urban design guides for East Dorset.
- New open space and green infrastructure standards based on quantity, quality and accessibility.

4.106 Objective 3 – To adapt to the challenges of climate change:

4.107 The impact of **carbon emissions from transport** will be reduced by more sustainable patterns of development in accessible locations, and by encouraging travel by bike, on foot, or by public transport. Developments will be expected to incorporate **carbon reduction, water and energy efficiency measures** as part of measures to reduce impact on climate change. At least 10% of total energy used on developments of 10 or more dwellings or 1,000m² of non-residential floorspace will come from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources. Development will be located in areas at lowest **risk of flooding** as required by PPS25. A Supplementary Planning Document for Flood Risk will be produced in Christchurch on how the sequential and exception tests will apply locally.

4.108 Key options:

- Focus developments in accessible locations to reduce the need to travel.
- Develop prime transport corridors on major routes such as the A35, A337, A347, A349 & B3073.
- Encourage developments to incorporate carbon reduction, energy and water efficiency measures.
- Minimum percentage of energy from developments of 10+ dwellings or +1000m2 non-residential floorspace to come from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources.
- Smaller developments to make contributions to off site measures.
- Detailed flood risk Supplementary Planning Document to be produced for Christchurch.
- Requirement for flood management strategies in appropriate locations.

4.109 Objective 4 – To enable the mixed economy of Christchurch and East Dorset to grow, and to develop new employment sectors:

4.110 Significant **new zones of employment development** will be located at Bournemouth Airport (15-20ha) and on key sites in East Dorset to serve the local and sub-regional economy. **A range of employment sites** will be provided meeting the needs of the local economy, and a hierarchy of sites will be developed so that certain sites can be reserved for higher order development in key employment sectors. Rural **farm diversification** will be supported in appropriate locations near key rural settlements such as Alderholt, Colehill, Corfe Mullen, Cranborne, Ferndown, St Leonards/St Ives, Sturminster Marshall, Verwood, West Moors, Wimborne, Burton, Winkton and Hurn, and adjacent to the main Christchurch urban area. The key environmental features which attract **tourism** will be protected, including Christchurch harbour, rivers and beaches and the Dorset Heathlands.

4.111 Key options:

- Provide an appropriate range of employment sites in appropriate locations to meet the requirements of business.
- Encourage a mix of business premises.
- Encouragement of live/work units in appropriate locations.
- Develop Bournemouth Airport and suitable sites in East Dorset to deliver employment land to serve the wider needs of South East Dorset.
- Define a series of high quality employment sites in Christchurch to deliver B1, B2 and B8 uses, at the Airport, Stony Lane, and sites fronting Somerford Road.
- Adopt a more flexible approach to “non-B class” uses on other sites.
- Define locations where farm diversification will be acceptable, and a range of uses which could be permitted.
- Enhance and protect key features which encourage tourism, such as the Christchurch Harbour and beaches, the Dorset heaths, and historic town centres in Christchurch and Wimborne.

4.112 Objective 5 – To provide a suitable, affordable and sustainable range of housing to meet local needs:

4.113 Sufficient housing will be provided in Christchurch and East Dorset to address local needs, whilst maintaining the character of local communities. This housing will include well planned sustainable new communities on greenfield land in appropriate locations. The **size and type of dwellings** (both open market and affordable) will reflect current and projected local need through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. All residential development

resulting in a net increase in dwellings will contribute towards **provision of affordable housing**, at a rate of 40% of total units being developed. Development of 100% **affordable housing schemes may be considered exceptionally** in land adjoining rural and urban settlements. Criteria for the provision of **gypsy and traveller housing** sites will be developed.

4.114 Key options:

- Locate new housing development in the main urban areas primarily, in accessible locations close to shops and facilities.
- Release Green Belt land in appropriate locations north of Christchurch and in East Dorset to secure delivery of sustainable, well planned new housing areas.
- Set out robust and detailed policies to secure open space provision in line with new housing development, based on local needs, and on quality and accessibility as well as quantity.
- Monitor housing delivery against assessments of need and market demand to ensure appropriate types and sizes of dwelling are built.
- Set out criteria based option to enable delivery of gypsy and traveller housing in appropriate locations.
- All new residential development to contribute to provision of affordable housing.
- Allow urban and rural exception sites to come forward in appropriate locations to enable delivery of affordable housing in smaller settlements.

4.115 Objective 6 – To help our communities to travel less, and to travel more easily by a range of choices.

4.116 Development will be located in **the most accessible locations**, focused on prime transport corridors and town centres. New residential development will be located either close to existing facilities, or where good transport links exist to such facilities. **Prime transport corridors** will be developed in the short term on the A35 and A337 in Christchurch, the A348 in East Dorset, and the B3073 between the two areas. In the medium term, further prime transport corridors will be developed in East Dorset on parts of the A347, A349, B3074 and B3072, and corridors north of the A31(T). Significant **transport improvements** are proposed at Canford Bottom Roundabout, A31(T) Merley to Aneysford (dualling), and B3073/A338 airport transport improvements. The overall aim will be to reduce congestion in key locations, by reducing the need to travel and encouraging public transport use, walking and cycling as alternatives to the car.

4.117 Key options:

- Locate development in the most sustainable locations, focused on the conurbation, prime transport corridors and town centres.
- New residential development located in close proximity to employment facilities and services, or in locations allowing access to a range of transport modes.
- Short term transport corridors A35, A337, A348 and B3073.
- Medium term transport corridors south of A31(T) on A347, A349 and B3074.
- Long term transport corridors north of A31(T) on B3072.
- Improve interchange facilities at Christchurch and Hinton Admiral railway stations.
- Improve bus services and expand real time information at bus stops.
- Encourage travel plans in line with new developments.

- Further expand and improve the footpath and cycleway network.
- Short term improvements at Canford Bottom roundabout.
- Medium term improvements along the A35 junctions through Christchurch.
- Medium to long term dualling of the A31(T) Merley – Ameysford, and B3073/A338 improvements.
- Encourage innovative ways of improving accessibility, such as a rural travel exchange, to reduce need to travel in rural areas, particularly in East Dorset.

4.118 Objective 7 – To help our communities to thrive, and to help people support each other.

4.119 The main town centres of Christchurch, Wimborne, Ferndown and Verwood will be **the focus for commercial, retail and community facilities**, with District centres and villages playing a supporting role. **New facilities and serviced** will be developed along side the new neighbourhoods, and associated facilities will be provided as part of new employment development at Ferndown and Bournemouth Airport.

4.120 Key options:

- Encourage provision of facilities and services to support local communities, and to reflect the changing age profile of the area.
- Concentrate most facilities in accessible locations in existing urban areas of Christchurch, Burton, Highcliffe, Wimborne, Colehill, Ferndown, West Moors, Verwood, Alderholt, Cranborne, Sixpenny Handley, Three Legged Cross and Sturminster Marshall.
- Resist loss of facilities unless it is shown that they are no longer needed.
- Development to contribute toward provision of community facilities.
- Provision of a new community hall in Christchurch town centre.
- Develop new ways of delivering services in rural areas where it is not viable or practical to establish new facilities.
- New open space and green infrastructure standards based on quantity, quality and accessibility, and based on local needs areas.

5 Implementation