

**CHRISTCHURCH AND EAST DORSET EMPLOYMENT LAND STRATEGY**  
**POLICY KS5 CHRISTCHURCH AND EAST DORSET CORE STRATEGY**  
**(FD12)**

**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This paper provides an outline of the evidence that has informed the strategy for employment land provision in Christchurch and East Dorset in the Core Strategy. The approach for employment land provision is in the context of the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT as the functional economic area. Qualitative assessments undertaken as part of the employment land review and the 2008 Workspace Strategy have provided an understanding of current and future business requirements. This has informed the amount, type and distribution of employment land to be provided appropriate to the role of Christchurch and East Dorset in the context of the SSCT and sub market areas. The 2012 Workspace Study has provided up to date projections of employment land within B1, B2 and B8 use classes which has informed an approach for the SSCT with neighbouring authorities.

**2 The Evidence Base**

**(ED48.3) The Christchurch and East Dorset Employment Land Review Stage 1 Report (2007)**

- 2.1 The Christchurch and East Dorset Employment Land Review Stage 1 was published in 2007. This study was produced in accordance with government guidance published by the ODPM in 2004 for conducting employment land reviews.

**Stage 1 Purpose**

- 2.2 The purpose of stage 1 is to take stock of the existing situation, including an initial assessment of the 'fitness for purpose' of existing allocated employment sites in Christchurch and East Dorset.

**Functional Economic Area**

- 2.3 Christchurch and East Dorset form part of South East Dorset and this area formed the study area for Stage 1 of the employment land review. The 2012 Workspace Study used the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT boundary as the functional economic area which follows a similar boundary to South East Dorset. This assessment of the functional economic area informed the approach to provide employment land contributing to requirements across the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT.

### **Commercial Market Assessment:**

- 2.4 The Stage 1 report provides an overview of employment land character in Christchurch and East Dorset and identifies the types of market segment, business sectors and premises provision on employment sites in Christchurch and East Dorset. This has provided a qualitative assessment to inform the amount of employment land and types of site to be provided to relation to meeting current and future business need.

### **Economic Priority Sectors**

- 2.5 The Stage 1 report provided an assessment of investment potential for priority sectors identified in the Regional Economic Strategy in Christchurch and East Dorset. The study concluded that there is potential in Christchurch and East Dorset for a range of priority sectors that may locate on existing sites assessed through the employment land review and in town centre locations.

### **Assessment of Allocated Sites in Christchurch and East Dorset**

- 2.6 The Stage 1 report undertook an assessment of the fitness for purpose of allocated employment sites in Christchurch and East Dorset. This included an assessment of their market attractiveness and the extent to which sites meet the requirements of local business. This process has informed the supply of sites identified in the Core Strategy.

### **Employment Land Supply**

- 2.7 The Stage 1 report provided an assessment of employment land supply in Christchurch and East Dorset. This has subsequently been updated through the 2012 Workspace Study and the Core Strategy.

### **Infrastructure Constraints and Market Attractiveness**

- 2.8 The Stage 1 report provided an assessment of infrastructure constraints for allocated employment sites in Christchurch and East Dorset. This has been examined further through the Core Strategy and infrastructure delivery plan. In particular the Core Strategy identifies key transport improvements through Policy KS10 which help to facilitate the delivery of key transport improvements.

#### **(ED48.4) The DRAFT Christchurch and East Dorset Employment Land Review Stage 2 Report (2009) (subsequently abandoned)**

- 2.9 This draft report was abandoned following publication of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy (2008) which superseded it in relation to the primary requirements for a Stage 2 employment land review.
- 2.10 The primary purpose of the Stage 2 Employment Land Review is to:
- Quantify the amount of employment land required across the main business sectors within the study area during the plan period.
  - How demand can be met in aggregate by the existing stock of premises and by allocated sites.
- 2.11 The market segment analysis, employment sector representation and inward investment assessment have however informed the approach taken to Policy PC1 the Employment Land Hierarchy. This is alongside the qualitative assessment undertaken through the Stage 1 Employment Land Review and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy (2008)

#### **Market Segment Analysis**

- 2.12 The draft report undertook a market segment analysis for employment sites in Christchurch and East Dorset. This has provided a detailed understanding of the locational attributes of employment sites across the plan area including an understanding of the types of businesses and premises located on these sites.

#### **Employment Sector Representation**

- 2.13 This examined the employment sector representation across employment land sites in Christchurch and East Dorset. This has helped to inform the identification of future employment land provision in Christchurch and East Dorset to meet business needs in the context of the sub regional economy. This is alongside qualitative assessment undertaken through the Stage 1 Employment Land Review and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy (2008).

#### **Inward Investment Assessment**

- 2.14 An assessment of key growth sectors has been undertaken and their prospects for growth in the plan area have been examined. This has informed the selection of sites such as Bournemouth Airport Business Park and Ferndown in addressing the scope for inward investment in the plan area. This evidence sits alongside the Stage 1 ELR and the 2008 Workspace Strategy.
- 2.15 The market segment analysis, employment sector representation and inward investment assessment have informed the approach taken to Policy PC1 the Employment Land Hierarchy.

## **Employment Land Supply**

- 2.16 An assessment of employment land supply was undertaken at this stage which was superseded by the assessment of supply in the Bournemouth and Poole Workspace Strategy (2008) and subsequently by the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Study (2012).

## **Employment Projections / Demand Analysis**

### **Local Commercial Agents Assessment of Market Demand**

- 2.17 The draft report included the results of discussions with local agents regarding demand for premises, site / locational requirements across business sectors and infrastructure constraints / issues affecting inward investment. This work has informed the Policy PC1 and the selection of a range of sites in the Core Strategy to meet business needs. Demand for premises was also explored on a sub-regional basis through the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy (2008).

### **Business Survey**

- 2.18 The draft report also included the results of a business survey undertaken across Christchurch and east Dorset in 2006 which has informed future requirements for premises and the types of site required to meet future requirements.

### **Market Demands for Employment Land and Premises in South East Dorset**

- 2.19 An event was undertaken to provide an understanding of future employment land requirements in the context of the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT through consultation with stakeholders, businesses and agents. The event has helped to inform the types of site to be provided in Christchurch and East Dorset in the context of the sub regional economy.

### **Employment Land Take Up rates**

- 2.20 Employment land take up rates were assessed for Christchurch and East Dorset. This has informed future provision of employment land alongside projections in the Workspace Study (2012). It is important to note that employment land provision in Christchurch and East Dorset relates to sub regional supply and take up rates but mainly in relation to employment growth projections undertaken for the Workspace Strategy and Workspace Study.

## **ED42 Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy and Delivery Plan (October 2008)**

- 2.21 The Workspace Strategy was prepared jointly with the South West Regional Development Agency and all the Dorset authorities. The aim of the strategy is to ensure the delivery of sufficient, appropriate employment land and quality of employment premises to meet business requirements and ensure the sustainable growth of the sub regional economy. The study was structured in two parts:
1. The Strategy provides a baseline review and assessment of the sub region and establishes demand and supply patterns
  2. The Delivery Plan identifies in general terms possible interventions to improve the employment land supply situation in the sub region and assesses key sites and makes specific recommendations.

### **Commercial Property Market Review**

- 2.22 This aspect of the study has helped to inform the distinct sub market areas across the sub region and the appropriate distribution of employment land. The assessment examined the industrial / distribution and office property markets. The report concluded that the centre for offices is in Bournemouth and Poole with supporting roles from industrial estates at the Airport, Ferndown and Holton Heath (Purbeck).
- 2.23 In relation to the industrial market the study concluded that Poole is the main focus for industrial premises in the study area. Christchurch and East Dorset contain key sites that support the industrial market with the Airport Business Park and Ferndown Industrial Estate in particular.
- 2.24 The study recognised a reasonable supply of employment land but with some concerns on the deliverability of sites. The deliverability of sites has been addressed further through the Core Strategy and infrastructure delivery plan.

### **Employment Land Take Up**

- 2.25 The 2008 Workspace Strategy examined take up rates across the sub region which has informed future requirements for employment land. Take up rates have been restricted due to infrastructure constraints at key sites such as Bournemouth Airport Business Park. These constraints are being addressed through the Core Strategy which will significantly affect future take up. Take up rates are one element to inform future demand alongside the employment land projections contained in the study based on an annual GVA growth rate.

## **Sector Analysis**

- 2.26 The 2008 study undertook an assessment of business sector distribution in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole. The study concluded that the sub region has a well-balanced sector distribution.

## **Employment Land Demand**

- 2.27 This study provided an assessment of demand for the sub region of 184ha (for B1, B2 and B8 uses) for the period 2006 – 2026 based on a 3.2% GVA growth per annum. The overall demand is mainly for office uses and the focus of office provision should be in Bournemouth and Poole centres. The assessment of demand was based on travel to work areas as functional economic areas. This was later amended to the SSCT areas in the Workspace Study (2012) related to areas within the administrative control of Dorset authorities.
- 2.28 Provision of employment land in Christchurch and East Dorset is in the context of the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT as the functional economic area. In this respect, the majority of future office requirements will be met in Bournemouth and Poole with Christchurch and East Dorset performing a supporting role.

## **Employment Land Supply**

- 2.29 The study provided an assessment of employment land supply in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole. This examined the appropriateness of supply in relation to the phasing of demand across the main business sectors (within B1, B2 and B8) over the period 2006 – 2026. This assessment of supply has been superseded by the 2012 Workspace Study.
- 2.30 A key conclusion of the 2008 study was that there is a shortage of quality land for office use in the Bournemouth Travel to Work Area. Part E of the study recommendations refer to a particular focus of office provision in the town centres of the conurbation.
- 2.31 This strategy is reflected in the level of employment land provision in Christchurch and East Dorset which performs a supporting role in the context of the sub regional economy. Although Christchurch and East Dorset will provide additional office development it is not planned to be of a scale to adversely affect the vitality and viability of Bournemouth and Poole town centres.

## **Delivery Plan**

- 2.32 The strategy identifies a number of key sites across Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole which are important for delivering the sub regional employment land strategy. This included Bournemouth Airport Business Park, the BAE site (Christchurch), Ferndown (East of Cobham Road) and the RSS Area of Search (North West Ferndown 20ha).

## **Assessment of Alternative Sites at the Options for Consideration Stage (2010)**

- 2.33 Policy KS13 of the 'Options for Consideration' Core Strategy published in 2010 was based on employment land projections from the 2008 Workspace Strategy. Prior to publication of the 'Options for Consideration' Core Strategy the following alternative options were considered:
- Little Canford Depot
  - Stourbank Nurseries
  - Cobham Road
- 2.34 The appraisal and reasons for why these sites are not included in the plan is set out in Key Issue Paper 11.
- 2.35 Following the publication of the 2012 Workspace Study and increased requirements for employment land across the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT additional land was identified. At Pre Submission stage additional sites were identified in the Christchurch urban area and additional potential at Bournemouth Airport Business Park.

## **ED43 The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Study (2012)**

- 2.36 The Workspace Study has been prepared jointly with the authorities of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole. The study is a shared evidence base to inform the apportionment and delivery of employment land requirements across the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT to 2031.
- 2.37 The Workspace Study provides projections for the SSCTs and not for individual districts. Christchurch and East Dorset are providing a level and distribution of employment sites appropriate to the districts role in the context of the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT and its sub market areas. In the SSCT Bournemouth and Poole provide the focus for office development which is three fifths of overall demand. Poole is also identified as sub market area for industrial development. Christchurch and East Dorset provide a supporting role in delivering industrial development and a proportion of office development which does not adversely affect the vitality and viability of Bournemouth and Poole town centres.
- 2.38 The Councils have adopted a scenario with 10% flexibility over and above baseline requirements in order to provide the appropriate range and type of sites to meet the needs of business and to be able to respond to changes in economic requirements.
- 2.39 The 2012 study updates the employment land projections from the 2008 Workspace Strategy. This was required for the following reasons:
- The change in economic conditions since 2008 has led to a need to revise employment land projections from the strategy prepared by GVA Grimley

- Revised employment density ratios are now available which update those previously used in the GVA Grimley strategy
- Updated employment land projections are required as part of a shared evidence base to inform the preparation of the respective local plans of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole authorities.

2.40 Employment land projections have been prepared for the Strategically Significant Cities and Towns (SSCTs) on the basis that these tend to more accurately represent functional economic areas than local authority boundaries. The 2012 Workspace Study updates the projections from the 2008 Workspace Strategy but does not replace the 2008 strategy.

### **Employment Land Demand**

2.41 The Workspace Study concluded that there is a projected need for 173ha of employment land for B1, B2 and B8 use classes for the period 2011 – 2031. Of this requirement three fifths of demand is for office uses and two fifths of demand is for industrial. In the context of the sub regional markets it is not appropriate for Christchurch and East Dorset to address the entire shortfall of land for office uses.

2.42 The 2012 Study should be read alongside the 2008 study which provides a qualitative assessment that has informed the types of site to be provided across the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT. In particular the 2008 Strategy still provides a valid qualitative assessment of the commercial market area, sub markets and the sub regional take up of employment land. In this respect the amount of employment land and types of site provided in Christchurch and East Dorset reflect what is required as part of the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT as a functional economic area.

2.43 The delivery strategy for key sites in the 2008 Workspace Strategy has been progressed further through the Core Strategy for sites identified in Christchurch and East Dorset.

### **Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy Statement of Common Ground 23 (Policy KS5 The Broad Location and Scale of Employment Land)**

2.44 As part of the Duty to Co-operate Christchurch and East Dorset Councils are working to deliver the appropriate level of employment land to meet business needs across the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT. The strategy for employment land provision has been informed by the Employment Land Review, the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy (2008) and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Study (2012).

2.45 Bournemouth Borough Council, the Borough of Poole and Purbeck District Council have agreed a Statement of Common Ground that confirms the provision of 80ha of employment land in Christchurch and East Dorset is an appropriate level of provision in contributing towards requirements in the Bournemouth and Poole SSCT to 2031.



2.46 Christchurch and East Dorset Councils are working closely with the South East Dorset authorities to appropriately distribute employment land to address requirements as part of the SSCT. Purbeck District Council is currently progressing a review of their Core Strategy and this is exploring the potential to bring forward more employment land at Holton Heath to contribute towards land requirements. The Borough of Poole is also progressing a review of their Core Strategy and is exploring the potential for additional employment land to come forward at North Poole which would provide added supply for the SSCT. This additional supply in Purbeck and Poole is over and above supply currently identified in the 2012 Workspace Study.

**City Deal (ED48.1)**

2.47 A City Deal - Expression of Interest (ED48.1) has been submitted by the local authorities of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole and the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership for the Bournemouth and Poole City Region. Bournemouth Airport Business Park and the Port of Poole are the focus and key drivers for delivering economic growth. The expression of interest was approved by government on the 19th February, giving the region more localised powers and extra funding. The City Deal proposals involve transport improvements for the B3073 / A338 which are identified in Policy KS10. Proposals would release significantly more employment land at the business park, over and above the 30ha identified in the Core Strategy. Therefore, there is significant opportunity for the South East Dorset authorities to meet requirements identified in table 6.2.

2.48 With City Deal in place it would be possible to bring forward an additional 30ha of employment land at the Bournemouth Airport Business Park over and above the 80ha identified in the Core Strategy. This would result in the projected requirement for 173ha being substantially exceeded.

**3 Employment Land Supply and Demand (Bournemouth and Poole SSCT)**

<b>Bournemouth and Poole SSCT</b>		<b>Supply identified in Core Strategy / Local Plans</b>
<b>Bournemouth</b>	Entire area in SSCT	15.96ha (2011 – 2031) (Core Strategy Adopted, 2012)
<b>Poole</b>	Entire area in SSCT	38.74ha (Adopted Core Strategy, 2009)
<b>Christchurch</b>	Entire area in SSCT	40ha (2011 – 2031)
<b>East Dorset</b>	Ameysford, Colehill, Corfe Mullen, Ferndown, Holt, Longham, Parley, St Leonards & St Ives, Stapehill and Stour (Within SSCT)	46.3ha (2011 – 2031)
<b>Purbeck</b>	Lytchett Matravers; Lytchett Minster and Upton (Within SSCT)	13ha (2011 – 2031) (Core Strategy adopted 2012)
<b>Total Current Supply</b>		<b>154ha</b>

	Total Supply with City Deal	184ha
	Total Demand (Workspace Strategy 10% Flexibility)	173.2ha

- 3.1 Policy KS5 of the Core Strategy identifies a requirement to provide 80ha of employment land, however there is 86.3ha of supply identified in the Core Strategy.