
WEST DORSET LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK :

CORE STRATEGY ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Consultation: Feedback Report

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|--|-----------|
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1. The Local Development Framework and the Core Strategy | 1 |
| 1.2. The purpose of this report..... | 1 |
| 1.3. Previous consultation..... | 1 |
| 1.4. The Issues and Options Paper and Questionnaire..... | 2 |
| 2. How we consulted on the Issues and Option Paper | 3 |
| 3. Who responded to the questionnaire | 4 |
| 3.1. The respondents..... | 4 |
| 3.2. Equalities monitoring..... | 4 |
| 4. Analysis of comments made | 5 |
| 4.1. The Vision..... | 5 |
| 4.2. Location of development..... | 6 |
| 4.3. Affordable Housing | 7 |
| 4.4. Employment and Tourism | 7 |
| 4.5. The Environment | 8 |
| 4.6. Shopping and Community Facilities | 10 |
| 4.7. Transport | 12 |
| 4.8. Design and Sustainable Construction | 14 |
| 4.9. Developer Contributions | 15 |
| 4.10. Any other comments..... | 16 |
| 4.11. Additional consultation with local businesses..... | 16 |
| 5. What happens next | 18 |
| 5.1. Publicity and distribution of this report..... | 18 |
| 5.2. Taking comments forward..... | 18 |
| 6. List of Appendices | 19 |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Local Development Framework and the Core Strategy

- 1.1.1. The Local Development Framework will, in due course, replace the West Dorset District Local Plan, adopted in 2006, which sets out policies against which planning proposals are considered. The Core Strategy is one of the first and most important documents in the Local Development Framework to be prepared. It will set out the vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the district linking with the aims set out within the West Dorset Community Plan. The Core Strategy will cover the period up until 2026, and all other local planning documents should conform with its policies.
- 1.1.2. It is important that the community are consulted at the early preparation stage of the Core Strategy¹. The consultation undertaken is in line with the methods detailed in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, adopted in January 2007.

1.2. The purpose of this report

- 1.2.1. This report contains a summary of the results of the consultation undertaken by the District Council on many issues and options relating to a wide range of topics that will be included in the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework.
- 1.2.2. The feedback from the consultation will assist the Council in preparing the Preferred Options document of the Core Strategy.

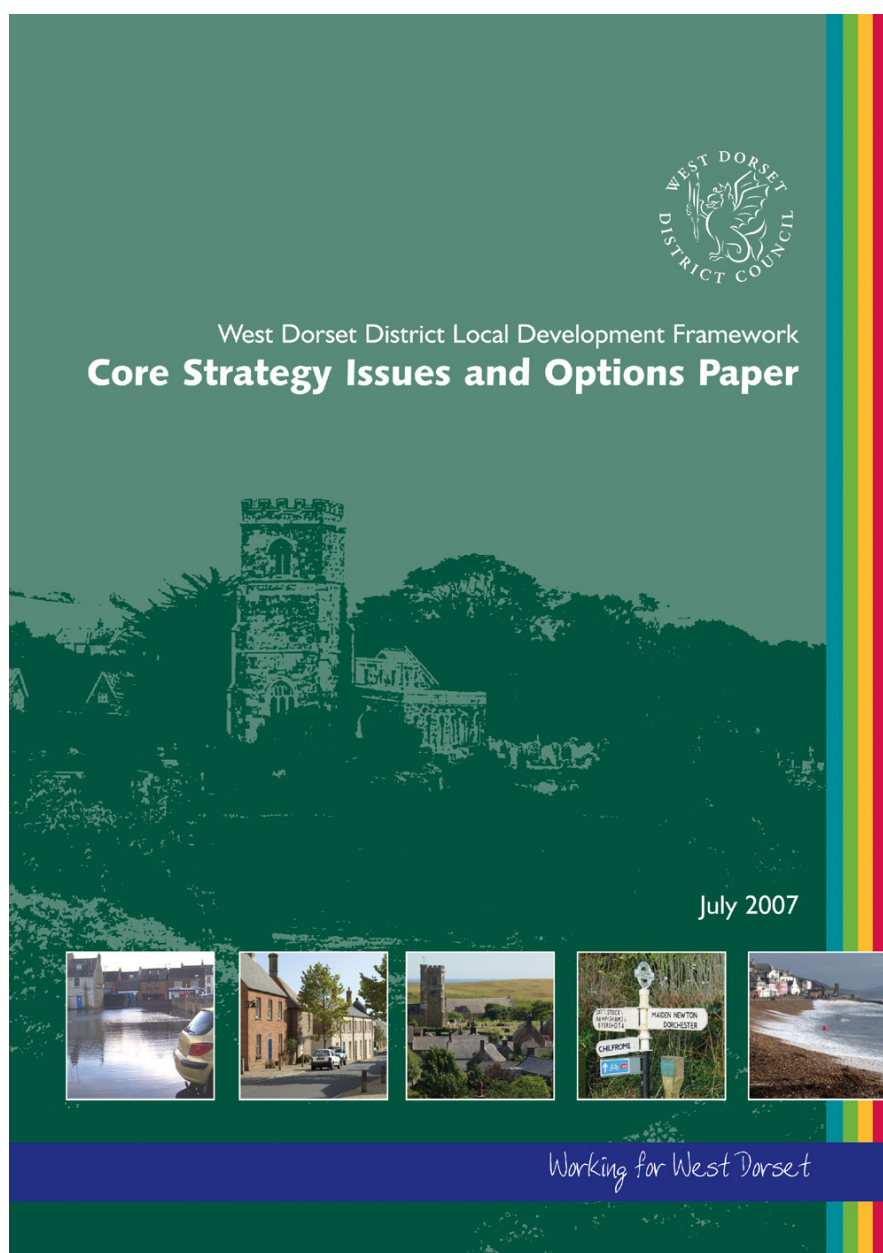
1.3. Previous consultation

- 1.3.1. Several informal consultation events with groups took place from December 2006 to June 2007. Feedback from these events fed into the preparation of the Issues and Options Paper and Questionnaire. The events were:
- Meetings with Town and Parish Councils to explain the new planning system in December 2006;
 - A Stakeholder Day at Charlton Down on 19 January 2007;
 - A Youth Day in Beaminster on 13 April 2007;
 - Consultation with older people's forums in Lyme Regis, Sherborne, Dorchester and Bridport between March and June 2007;
 - Consultation with disability forums in Bridport, Dorchester and Sherborne in April 2007.
- 1.3.2. The report "Core Strategy Issues and Options – Consultation So Far" was published in June 2007 and placed on the Council's web site. It summarises the results of those events and forms Appendix 1 to this report.

¹ The District Council is required to consult under regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

1.4. The Issues and Options Paper and Questionnaire

- 1.4.1. The Paper explained that it sought views on key issues for planning in West Dorset. It set the context for the consultation by briefly explaining about the Local Development Framework (with more details in an appendix), the Regional Spatial Strategy, the Core Strategy and the evidence base.
- 1.4.2. At each topic section, the Paper set the context, referred to any relevant evidence base, stated relevant issues identified in the West Dorset Community Plan, and explained what people/ groups had already told the Council at earlier consultation events. It then asked questions; some of them asked for answers to be ticked in boxes, other questions gave the opportunity for written responses. A separate questionnaire was provided for the responses.



2. HOW WE CONSULTED ON THE ISSUES AND OPTION PAPER

- 2.1.1. The paper and questionnaire were published on 16 July. The consultation period was until 28 September 2007. The completed questionnaire could be posted to the Council using freepost. The paper and questionnaire were available on request in other formats including large print and audio tape. They were placed on the Council's web site with a link from the home page; the questionnaire could be submitted on line.
- 2.1.2. Copies were sent to all town and parish clerks, local area partnerships, statutory and other consultees. Copies were sent to all libraries within West Dorset.
- 2.1.3. A letter was sent to all those on the District Council's LDF consultee data base informing them about the Issues and Options stage. An article was placed in Community Link, a newsletter that is delivered to all households in West Dorset District and placed in locations such as Tourist Information Centres and the District Council offices. This gave the link to the web site. Press releases were given to local newspapers and the local radio station.
- 2.1.4. Eye-catching A4 and A3 colour posters were placed in libraries, council offices and other appropriate locations such as supermarkets and leisure centres and sent to each town/parish council with the paper and questionnaire.

Planning for the future of West Dorset
have your say on **major** planning issues

Complete a questionnaire by 28 September and have the chance of winning £30 worth of gift vouchers

Let us know what you think about various important issues such as affordable housing, location of development, employment, climate change and community facilities.

Please pick up a leaflet and questionnaire from West Dorset District Council's offices in Dorchester, Bridport or Sherborne or public libraries or log on to www.dorsetforyou.com and complete it online.

Completed forms can be posted back by Freepost

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Working for West Dorset

- 2.1.5. The Council advertised and held three 'drop in' sessions from 11 am – 7 pm at which planning officers were available to answer any queries. These were at the District Council offices at Bridport on 30 August; at the Digby Hall, Hound Street, Sherborne on 6 September; and at the District Council offices, Dorchester on 10 September. In addition, planning officers attended a consultation event organised by the Lyme Regis Local Area Partnership.

3. WHO RESPONDED TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

3.1. The respondents

- 3.1.1. 128 completed questionnaires were submitted. Half of these were from individuals on their own behalf; others were from groups such as town and parish councils and local area partnerships, from consultees such as Natural England and the Environment Agency, and from, or on behalf of, landowners and commercial interests. Summaries of these responses are in Appendix 2 (overall responses), Appendix 3 (individuals), Appendix 4 (groups) and Appendix 5 (landowners and commercial interests).
- 3.1.2. In addition, four letters were submitted instead of a questionnaire. Some other letters expanded on responses within a completed questionnaire.

3.2. Equalities monitoring

- 3.2.1. To help us check whether we reached a wide audience, and whether responses reflected the views of the wider community (being from people of all ages, gender, ethnicity and disability) we asked people to voluntarily complete an equalities monitoring form. About three-quarters of the respondents completed these questions.
- 3.2.2. Only 6 respondents (6% of those who answered the question) were younger than 35 years old (and three of those were responding on behalf of a landowner/ commercial interest). 24% were in the age range 35 – 54 years old. 70% were older than 55 years. These figures do not reflect the population proportions within the District: 33% of the population are under 35, 27% are aged 35 – 54 years, and 40% are older than 54. In particular, there was a disappointing input from people under 35 years.
- 3.2.3. 64% of respondents were male and 36% female. The gap reduces to 56% male and 44% female for individuals responding on their own behalf. The District figures are 48% male and 52% female.²
- 3.2.4. 94 respondents ticked they were white-British; one respondent ticked white-Irish and one 'other white background'. The district average is 96.69% white-British. People with a disability were slightly under-represented in the consultation; 11 respondents considered that they have a disability.

² Mid 2005 population estimates, Dorset County Council

4. ANALYSIS OF COMMENTS MADE

4.1. The Vision

4.1.1. The majority of respondents supported the district and local visions suggested in the issues and options document.

4.1.2. 78 respondents (69% of those who answered this question³) agreed with the district vision with 35 (31%) disagreeing. Comments from respondents included:

- The Vision requires an overarching statement stressing the interrelationship between the towns and the rural areas, and their dependence on each other for their vibrancy, wellbeing and the balance of their communities. It should also reflect the relationships between villages in the rural areas, and aim to establish a hierarchy of mutually sustaining communities;
- The Vision should fully recognise the role that tourism plays and should refer directly to the promotion of West Dorset as a year round tourism/visitor destination;
- The Vision should place less emphasis on tourism as it is more important to concentrate on encouraging higher paid jobs;
- The importance of cultural facilities should be referred to in the Vision;
- ‘Steady economic growth’ is inherently unsustainable: the Vision should instead read ‘There is a strong, stable and sustainable economy’ (more than one respondent commented that steady growth was either unsustainable or unrealistic);
- There should be greater emphasis on providing jobs and houses than maintaining the appearance of the district;
- The Vision should aspire not only to preserve the existing beauty of the countryside but also to restore and enhance the habitats and species it supports, and in so doing to help buffer those interests against the foreseeable impacts of climate change.

4.1.3. 66 respondents (57%) agreed with the local visions for the towns and rural areas with 50 (43%) disagreeing. Comments from respondents included:

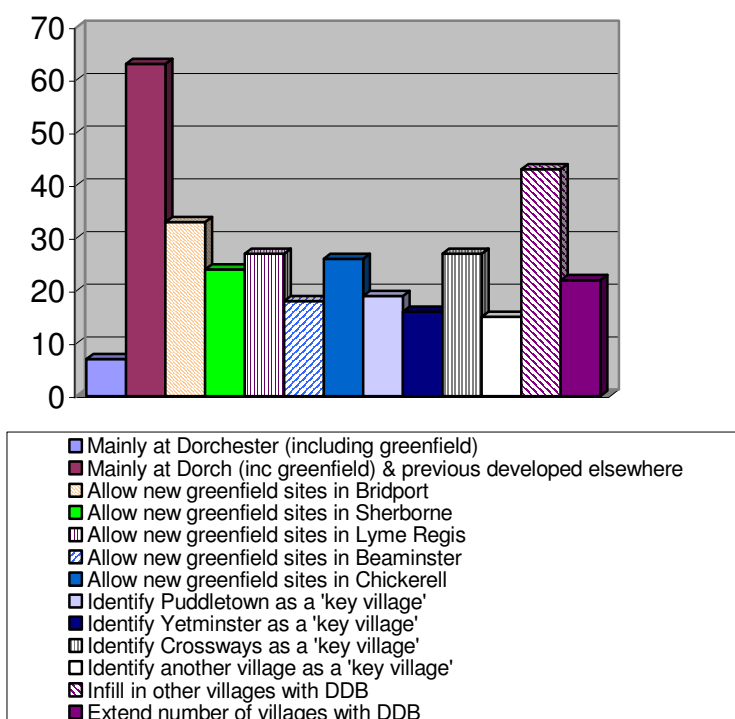
- Dorchester should look to develop further education and training centres so as to encourage the retention of young people and maximise vitality and viability;
- Dorchester’s vision should include reference to its relationship with Weymouth in terms of commuting and the balance of jobs and housing;
- It may be difficult to achieve the housing development required to reduce commuting, due to environmental constraints;
- Bridport may need some outward expansion though it is also important to safeguard its rural setting;
- Sherborne’s vision should consider traffic problems in the town and how they can be addressed. The core strategy should also consider the currently poor communication links between Sherborne and Dorchester, and Sherborne’s relationship with Yeovil;
- Lyme Regis needs suitable housing, employment and leisure opportunities to ensure the mix of ages and skills required for a balanced community. It should also develop its arts and cultural reputation and become as environmentally sustainable as possible;
- Chickerell is likely to need to grow to meet its own and Weymouth’s needs. It is a significant employment area within Dorset;
- Beaminster’s vision should not refer to growth as being ‘on a small scale’;

³ The percentage figures in this document refer to the percentage of those people who answered the related question.

- The rural areas' vision should be more proactive about the provision of development that can meet identified and evidenced needs for local affordable housing, employment and community facilities, while still protecting the countryside;
- The rural areas' vision should recognise the potential for renewable energy development, although this is a challenge within the AONB.

4.2. Location of development

- 4.2.1. A number of options for the broad distribution of future development were put forward in the consultation paper. The option that received the greatest support from respondents (with 61% of those who answered this question supporting it) was that the majority of development should be at Dorchester, including greenfield land, but also developing previously-developed land elsewhere. There was some support for allowing some new greenfield development at Bridport (32%), Lyme Regis (26%), Chickerell (25%), Sherborne (23%) and Beaminster (18%). Only 7% of respondents favoured a complete concentration at Dorchester with no development elsewhere.
- 4.2.2. There was support for identifying 'key villages' for some development at Crossways (26% of respondents), Puddletown (18%) and Yetminster (16%). Other villages suggested included Maiden Newton (which acts as a 'hub village' for the Upper Frome Valley and includes a range of services and a station); Longburton (due to its location on a transport corridor); Martinstown; Cerne Abbas; Burton Bradstock; Charmouth; Broadmayne and Bradford Peverell. Some of these villages were suggested by only one respondent.
- 4.2.3. Infill development in villages with existing defined development boundaries was supported by 42% of respondents; and 21% respondents considered that the number of villages with defined development boundaries should be increased.



Options supported by respondents (numbers are percentages of those who answered question)

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- 4.2.4. There was considerable support for allowing a range of development types in smaller settlements, with affordable housing the highest priority (supported by 97% of respondents), followed by employment (69%), community facilities (68%), rural workers' dwellings (61%), tourism (48%) and wind turbines (26%). The existing local plan policies take a flexible approach to the development of many of these uses in smaller settlements and the consultation responses indicate support for this approach. 28% of respondents supported the development of open market housing in smaller settlements – this is potentially in conflict with the council's adopted policy and national policy on concentrating new housing development in more accessible locations; however, some respondents may have been thinking about smaller villages that have defined development boundaries when answering.
- 4.2.5. A similar order of priority was expressed when responding to the question on development types appropriate in the countryside, though in most cases there were smaller numbers of supporters than for the same developments in the settlements. Affordable housing and rural workers' dwellings were strongly supported. Wind turbines and other renewable energy developments such as biomass were supported by 34% and 38% of respondents respectively. A detailed submission relates to low impact development – defined as 'development which by virtue of its minimal or benign effect upon the local or global environment may be acceptable in locations where more conventional development would not normally be permitted'. It seeks changes to planning policies to allow for some such development.

4.3. Affordable Housing

- 4.3.1. 60% of respondents considered that the percentage of affordable housing sought on general housing development sites should be higher than the current 35%; 40% of respondents however considered that it should not be increased. Suggestions for what the percentage should be ranged from 25% to 100%, with the majority favouring percentages between 35% and 50%. 22 of the individuals responding supported a 50% target. Some expressed concern that a percentage over 40% could deter house building and so cause greater problems. Some suggested a progressive increase, or a variation in percentages across the district depending on extent of need.
- 4.3.2. 76% of respondents supported the lowering of site thresholds on which affordable housing percentages were sought at the main towns, below the current threshold of 15. Some commented that this was a more important issue than the target sought. Asked if this was particularly important in any specific towns, respondents mentioned Lyme Regis, Bridport, Sherborne, Dorchester and Beaminster.
- 4.3.3. The majority of respondents (74%) considered that most of the percentage of affordable housing sought should be for rent to those most in need. Respondents were split on whether the core strategy should set a percentage for provision of special needs housing, with 50% supporting and 50% against.

4.4. Employment and Tourism

- 4.4.1. 83% of respondents supported business start-up premises being encouraged within the district. There was also strong support for higher value employment sectors (eg IT firms) being encouraged (78%) and opportunities for existing firms to expand (72%).
- 4.4.2. Seven respondents considered that educational, specialist tourist, arts and cultural attractions are needed or should be encouraged, and stressed that the few remaining hotels in Lyme Regis should be retained.

4.4.3. Other suggestions included:

- More B & Bs and Guest Houses; more higher quality hotels for increasing international tourism;
- More and expanded camping parks but not caravan parks;
- Small scale (less than 15 pitches, perhaps only 5 or 10) campsites in association with farms and rural businesses. These would cater mainly for walkers/cyclists;
- "Green" tourism;
- More visitor facilities aimed at higher spending visitors;
- The marketing of the Jurassic coast plus more good hotel accommodation and tourist centres with more exhibitions and centres with facilities. Arts, craft, boutiques growth for tourists;
- Leisure Centres. More leisure facilities to appeal to teenagers. Encourage things like ironman, music/art festivals to increase tourism;
- Concern that much employment is seasonal; there should be more tourism developments that encourage winter visitors;
- More live/work units; encourage working from home;
- A more supportive policy for those who want to live and work on smallholdings;
- More apprenticeships for young people and assistance to develop small enterprises.

4.4.4. Regarding employment or tourism that should not be allowed or encouraged, responses included:

- Caravan sites/ expansion of sites, especially on the Heritage Coast (20 responses);
- More self catering units within Lyme (7 responses);
- Second homes/holiday lets/holiday cottages (6 responses);
- 8 responses refer to not encouraging tourism to the extent it harms the beautiful area that people come to see;
- More heavy industry (3 responses). One response specifically said not in Sherborne or Beaminster;
- Out of town superstores, estate agents.

4.4.5. Other issues raised relating to employment and tourism included comments from two large holiday park enterprises that the Core Strategy should recognise fully the importance of holiday parks to the area's tourist economy and be positive in its support for caravan and camping tourism.

4.4.6. Fourteen respondents suggested that all year round employment opportunities should be encouraged. Four responses referred to increasing the opportunities for young people to able to be employed locally. Concern was expressed about the loss of hotels to dwellings or self catering holiday apartments.

4.4.7. Further comments regarding employment matters are at section 4.11 of this report with feedback from meetings with local businesses.

4.5. The Environment

4.5.1. A high proportion of respondents answered the questions in this section. The first question sought opinions on how we can reduce the impact that we make on the environment. 91% of respondents who answered this question agreed with ensuring that new buildings should be designed to minimise energy requirements. 80% considered that we should encourage reduction in the use of the private car by locating development near

to public transport routes and facilities. This approach is in line with government guidance and the settlement strategy in the Local Plan adopted in 2006.

4.5.2. 78% of respondents considered that major new development should be required to include facilities to generate renewable energy to reduce carbon emissions by over the minimum of 20% set in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

4.5.3. 88% felt that it is important to define landscape character in order to help protect those features that make a place locally distinctive. The District Council undertook a landscape appraisal of the district in 2000 and is currently reviewing this.

4.5.4. Many additional comments were submitted regarding the environment and climate change. Regarding public transport, respondents considered that it will be used if it is good and affordable; however, it must be improved before the use of private cars is limited. Others pointed out that in a low population density area like West Dorset there will, realistically, only be a limited opportunity to replace personal transport with public; therefore, the focus should be on efficient cars and on best use of them (perhaps car share) and perhaps this is better than heavily subsidising public transport. Rail freight should be encouraged. Another respondent considered that reducing car parking in town centres, unless excellent public transport/park and ride are in place, will discourage visitors.

4.5.5. There were many suggestions regarding sustainable construction:

- Insulate buildings with deep local wool. Double or triple glaze;
- Homes should also be capable of roof power generation and have excellent heat retention capabilities;
- Support widespread micro-generation;
- Design new buildings with outdoor drying facilities - no tumble driers, no air conditioners;
- All new buildings should have solar panels for hot water. If built in the roof at the time of construction the pay back period is fairly short. At the moment the cost effectiveness of individual wind generators is questionable - as are individual solar panels for electricity generation. Nonetheless, installing during construction is likely to prove more beneficial;
- Minimising energy resources in buildings should be through the building regulations not the planning system;
- Use more modern building techniques which can now produce cheaper AND more environmentally friendly homes – 7 comments;
- The District Council should take a lead on installing renewable energy on its buildings and sites;
- Encourage more energy-efficiency in existing, not just new, buildings;
- Insist that all new buildings include solar capture and solar gain. Make retrofitting energy saving devices easier, solar panels shouldn't need planning permission;
- Eco-building should be a requirement. Government grants for eco-home improvements;
- External wall mass can assist with a building being cool in summer and warm in winter.

4.5.6. Some comments regarding renewable energy included:

- The suggestion that each development should generate 20% of renewable energy on site is problematic: it duplicates government requirements in that Generators themselves should include this level of renewable energy in the electricity provided; and it could create problems for many developments that do not easily lend themselves to energy generation schemes that are either incompatible with the environmental quality of the area or the site,

its location or the buildings to be provided. A policy could be considered to unnecessarily duplicate other legislation and regulation;

- Many renewable energy schemes have negligible energy impact. Schemes which have undesirable impacts (eg wind farms on land of scenic value) are a particularly significant example of what should be avoided;
- New evidence shows that wind turbines are not an efficient means of production.
- Growth of crops to provide bio-fuels should not be encouraged - this would change the character of the countryside, and divert focus away from the increasingly successful area of quality food production;

4.5.7. Other comments included:

- The Strategy should aim to be at least carbon neutral across all its policy areas. This might be achieved by provision for the development of renewable energies, promotion of recycling, reduced food miles, overall reduction in car use, carbon neutral housing etc. Further consideration should be given for the potential for the LDF to promote soil conservation measure as well as low input farming. The LDF should identify the importance of methane to climate change and ensure its policies also aim to reduce future emissions. Measures might include expansion and promotion of composting and a review of existing and future landfill facilities. The LDF should not only aim to protect existing biodiversity interest, but also promote the restoration and recreation of the key wildlife habitats identified in the South West Nature Map;
- Avoid housing and employment development on flood plains. If they are to be developed they are more suited to outdoor recreation and sports pitches as there is less monetary loss if these flood;
- The Core Strategy must consider the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment;
- "Clusters" of low-impact dwellings have significant benefits on the environment and climate change. They can cut a person's carbon footprint by enabling people to use renewable energy, share cars and other resources, have a social life without needing to drive, grow their own food and design dwellings made from materials with a low embodied energy;
- The removal of predominant signage should be encouraged.

4.6. Shopping and Community Facilities

4.6.1. 64% of respondents considered that shopping provision in the district is adequate.

4.6.2. Reasons given for considering that provision is not adequate include concern about the loss of shops in Lyme Regis that provide a range of everyday goods that suit local needs and wages (10 responses) and similar concerns about a lack of balance between 'basic' shops and 'tourist' shops, between chain stores and individual shops in general. Other comments included:

- The Charles Street development is essential for the viability of Dorchester as the County Town;
- Business rates /shop rentals are too high (especially in Dorchester) to allow local companies to survive. Too much importance is given to having a 'key store' in the new development - this causes rents to be hiked;
- Chickerell residents have to drive some distance to get to a major retail food outlet. Moreover, the congestion caused in Weymouth as a result is not good for tourism or job attraction/retention. A large retail store site near the Chickerell Weymouth border is suggested;

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- The western part of the district lacks easy access to a good department store and an alternative to Tesco/Morrisons.

4.6.3. 59% of respondents considered that the provision of community facilities in the district's towns is not adequate. Reasons given include:

- There is a lack of facilities for young people (12 respondents);
- Lyme has no tennis or badminton courts and no hockey pitch; football pitches could be improved (9 respondents);
- More sports facilities should be made available for both young and old;
- Public swimming baths needed in centre of Dorchester to be used during day;
- Chickerell has no allotments. There are adequate playing fields. The land south of Green Lane should be allocated for allotments not for a playing field. Opportunities should be taken to improve sporting and leisure facilities in this area;
- Concern about loss/ potential loss of post offices, shops, pubs and libraries/ reduction in opening hours (5 responses);
- Need for good theatre/ arts centre in Dorchester (3 responses);
- Lack of good quality accommodation for voluntary and community groups and of public meeting places;
- Many towns do not have easily accessible one stop drop in centres. Transport links are disparate. More meeting rooms in Bridport needed;
- Sherborne lacks a community arts centre;
- Village halls are failing because of the lack of sufficient community. Housing development will help facilities such as Scout/Guide Troops/Garden Clubs to exist. Paragraph 7.5 is wrong.

4.6.4. Half of those who responded considered that further provision should be at Lyme Regis. 41% considered that Dorchester and 39% that Bridport needed further provision. A lower proportion said Sherborne (28%) and Beaminster (26%).

4.6.5. There are many retail and community uses outside the district to which West Dorset residents travel.

- Shopping to Yeovil (13 responses), Exeter (8), Poole/Bournemouth (6), Axminster (4), Taunton (3), to Honiton (2), Weymouth (3), Southampton (3), Bath, Bristol (2), PC World, IKEA, Street (2);
- Professional theatre to Yeovil (5 response), Bournemouth (3), Exeter, Southampton, Salisbury;
- Leisure/ sports facilities to Axminster (2 responses), Weymouth, Poole Park amusements;
- Library facilities at Yeovil;
- Builders' merchants at Yeovil.

Other comments included:

- Travelling to major retail facilities/ supermarket/superstores (14 responses);
- Travelling to the theatre/ cinema/ music (13 responses);
- Athletes and volunteers and supporters travel out of West Dorset up to several times per week;
- People will choose to travel further for special events and attractions; the strategy should focus more on the provision of facilities to meet day to day needs;
- Sherborne is close to Yeovil which is well provided with shopping and entertainment facilities. There is no need to duplicate where everyday facilities are adequate;
- Furniture and other household items are better obtained out of West Dorset;

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- Travel from southern part of District into Weymouth is to be expected. Would like to see travel to remoter towns for shopping trips and entertainment reduced;
 - Travelling to DIY depots;
 - Travelling for medical services and health centres / clubs;
 - Travelling to sport/ ice rink/ 10 pin complex/ skatepark/ swimming pool/ theme park.

4.6.6. Half of the respondents who submitted a questionnaire stated what type of retail, community or other development they felt was needed in the villages. There was strong support for

- a shop (32 responses)
- post office (30 responses)
- hall (14 responses).

4.6.7. Respondents also referred to:

- Public house (7 responses)
- Sports facilities (2 responses)
- Library (2 responses)
- Doctors' surgery (2 responses)
- Bank facilities
- Retain village schools
- Mobile shops
- More recycling centres

4.6.8. It was considered important to retain existing facilities. Other comments included:

- Villages over a certain size should have a community centre with medical/dental provision. There should be adequate library/cultural provision in, or easily accessible to, all villages;
- Key villages within the District need to plan for local facilities to improve their self-containment. Therefore, local small-scale retail facilities and community facilities to support the self-containment of larger villages should be planned for and supported by the Core Strategy;
- Retail is not cost effective in villages. Large stores need to be situated within easy reach of residents on good roads minimising travel journeys to reduce carbon emissions.

4.7. Transport

4.7.1. 73% of respondents supported the provision of more demand-responsive bus services in their village or community. Comments include suggestions for good passenger collection points:

- Demand responsive services are fine where they work well. Woodmead Hall car park, Anning Road, Holmbush car park and entrance to Fairfield Park are usually places where coach trips pick up;
- Support for responsive bus services especially serving the eastern side of Lyme Regis and linking/serving Uplyme and Charmouth;

- People need to use them or they are not viable. Drop off points could be Digby Road or Culverhayes Park to encourage use of small shops in centre of the Sherborne (2 responses);
- Support for real time passenger information to be installed on key routes like 31 and X53 having, at least at main stops as uncertainty deters people from using buses;
- Passenger collection points should be at existing bus stops and other locations convenient to local shops/facilities;
- A service like the "Nippy Bus" operated in Yeovil would be useful for connecting with trains. Perhaps taxi firms could be encouraged to offer a service of clustering people onto pre-booked mini-buses, since they have a good idea of the patterns of movement in demand;
- Considered not suitable for Chickerell but might be useful elsewhere;
- A potential 4 - acre development site in Longburton could include such a facility resulting in increased bus usage;
- Can be supported only if demand and usage justifies the expense;
- The Stratton and Bradford Peverell Halt should be reinstated as a request stop;
- There is a viability issue. A more regular bus service to link with Crewkerne Station and Yeovil (Hospital) as well as Bridport (Hospital) and Dorchester (Hospital) might be used more and random pick ups would need some consideration. Timing will undoubtedly affect viability into Beaminster to link with service to Bridport;
- Large businesses that employ large numbers of people and hospitals could use a bus to collect workers from outlying villages.

4.7.2. 79% of respondents said that they would support a permanent Park and Ride facility in Dorchester. 38 respondents (49% of those who answered) said they would use park and ride in other towns if provided. Suggested locations were at Lyme Regis (16 responses), Bridport (7), Sherborne (2), at Chickerell – Cumberland Drive and Budmouth Technology College to Weymouth (2), Yeovil (2). Other comments included that existing provision should be extended.

4.7.3. Suggested locations for Park and Ride in Dorchester were:

- Not on greenfield land, perhaps continue use (weekday) of football ground and use school hard standing on Saturdays;
- Monkeys Jump or Kingston Maurward and could combine with recycling centres;
- Somewhere off the southern bypass, not where it is currently located, which is already overburdened with traffic. Maybe Poundbury and Charlton Down;
- On southern edge of town within the A35 to reduce impact on AONB.

4.7.4. There was very little support for limiting the amount of parking provided through developments throughout the district, promoting good design and good use of land, but more support for limiting the amount of parking provided through developments where there is access to facilities and other forms of transport.

4.7.5. Most suggestions for alternatives to reduce car use related to better / more facilities for cyclists including cycle paths, on-road cycle lanes, cycle parking (21 responses); and public transport – needs to be more flexible/ regular/ affordable and needs to be able to carry bicycles and children's pushchair/buggies (19 responses).

4.7.6. Other respondents considered that in a rural area such as West Dorset public transport will never be able to meet all needs affordably. It was suggested that we must avoid excessive carbon emissions and wasted fossil fuels from drivers struggling to find somewhere to park and that there should be very adequate parking provision. Eight

respondents pointed out that Lyme Regis becomes congested with cars cruising around looking/waiting for a space and that the use of intelligent signs directing to vacant parking spaces would be helpful; also integrated transport system - Park & Ride, local bus, county bus/train and enforcement of regulations would assist.

4.7.7. Other suggestions for transport alternatives to reduce car use included:

- More park and ride (5 responses);
- Share car trips (4 responses);
- Better planning of public transport interchanges;
- Greater use of railway. Increase the number of trains from present 8 a day on Bristol-Weymouth line;
- Low speed tram from West Bay to Bridport, higher taxes on gas-guzzlers to be ring-fenced to subsidise public transport, cheap fares for students;
- Restricted parking needs to be in tandem with provision of alternatives. There should be more services linking the X53 Jurassic coast route, which is excellent. A couple more later buses on the westbound route of the X53 would be useful, since 17.45 is too early to connect with trains when returning from far away. More buses that link up well with railway stations; joint integrated tickets (2 responses);
- Build more affordable housing in the centre of towns so people who work locally can walk to work and can walk to the shops (2 responses);
- The present levels of parking provision seem broadly adequate (throughout the district) to handle present levels of car use. Hence there is no need to reduce car use - simply hold at present level;
- Parking charges should be used even in areas with high amounts of parking;
- Large businesses that employ large numbers of people and hospitals could use a bus to collect works from outlying villages;
- Green Travel Plans for WDDC, DCC and County Hospital staff.

4.8. Design and Sustainable Construction

4.8.1. There was very strong support for new development continuing to reflect the traditional character and distinctiveness of towns and villages. 72% of all those who submitted a questionnaire answered this question; 90% of those agreed.

4.8.2. Some respondents pointed at that there should be more use of thatch and local stone and that 'local' requires definition for the LDF, for example, neither Purbeck stone nor Ham stone are local to Chideock. Local character and distinctiveness depend substantially on the landscape character and type, and this varies across the different areas of the District. The local stone is fundamental to this, but new supplies would require small-scale quarrying at the local level of each landscape area.

4.8.3. Other respondents considered that local/traditional materials can be used in new building designs and that some innovative and sustainable designs may also be acceptable.

4.8.4. 74% of respondents considered that the council should provide more guidance on what makes places in the district safe, attractive, interesting and pleasant to live in.

4.8.5. A range of additional comments related to design were submitted, including that variety is needed and that new styles should be allowed to evolve whilst still maintaining the quality of Conservation Areas and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Poundbury style is considered not appropriate for everywhere in West Dorset. Dorset County Council refers to the Dorset Strategic Partnership, which is a Champion for Design and Heritage; the

Culture and Environment Theme Groups are seeking a countywide approach to ensure that the issues of quality planning, the importance of heritage, and the enhancement of the environment are maintained within the priorities of the community strategy. Other comments included support for reference to the provision of adequate privacy and the quiet enjoyment of residential properties.

- 4.8.6. 88% of respondents considered that the Core Strategy should require the highest levels of sustainable construction within all new developments, with the aim of achieving zero carbon emissions from new buildings by 2016.
- 4.8.7. One respondent considered that the Core Strategy should reflect the guidance within the RSS and, therefore, the Council's policy should be to encourage new development to achieve BREEAM standard Very Good or above or at least Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. Several respondents considered that the policy guidance within the Core Strategy will need to be made clear that the provision of sustainable construction may have an impact on the viability of a scheme and its ability to provide a range of benefits including affordable housing.
- 4.8.8. There were some detailed suggestions regarding improving sustainable construction including:
- There should be greater emphasis on reclamation and architectural salvage;
 - It should be compulsory for builders to recycle, especially big companies - waste is appalling;
 - We should ensure that buildings are built properly, not shoddily;
 - There should be greater use of timber; use of pre-formed timber framework building accelerates construction, and reduces overall costs. Rustic brick is a very high energy consumer;
 - Substantial materials with good thermal mass are preferable to lightweight construction;
 - Sustainable construction should encompass (a) use of local material, (b) use of recycled material, (c) use materials that can be recycled, (d) use of low energy materials;
 - Include features such as cool larders on the north side of houses (to replace fridges), conservatories on south sides (to increase passive solar gain), chimneys to enable biomass stoves to operate and thermal mass to regulate temperature must be prioritised;
 - Use of rainwater to flush toilets, etc should be incorporated, where possible, in new buildings.

4.9. Developer Contributions

4.9.1. There was a good response to this question. Respondents were asked to show what order of priority they would give to twelve types of benefits that could potentially be funded as part of development. The highest priority was given to affordable housing, with public transport second. This is consistent with opinions given at the earlier informal consultation events.

4.9.2. The priorities given were:

- 1 Affordable housing
- 2 Public transport
- 3 Education provision
- 4 Sustainability and renewable energy provision
- 5 Youth facilities

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|----|--|
| 6 | Social services, libraries, other community services |
| 7 | Nature conservation |
| 8 | Walking/ cycling facilities |
| 9 | Open space |
| 10 | Community halls |
| 11 | Highway improvements |
| 12 | Tree Planting |

4.9.3. Some respondents considered that the ranking is too simplistic; all benefits are important, and relative priorities will change and will vary between different places. Also, a hierarchy does not reflect guidance in Circular 05/05 Planning Obligations. However, the responses do give a helpful indication. Some respondents consider that some of the items in the list would be difficult to reasonably relate to many forms of development and that it is vital that this is tested against the issues of viability and the impact that such requirements may have on the attractiveness of any development proposal particularly where regeneration and employment facilities are being sought as these tend to generate less value. Concern was expressed that contributions push up the cost of housing.

4.10. Any other comments

4.10.1. These included:

- The strategy must include expanding the present health and education provision to cope with an increased population. Despite large developments at Poundbury and Charlton Down there has been no additional hospital or GP provision and the schools appear to be oversubscribed;
- Dismayed to see no reference to the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers, also travelling showpeople;
- Would like the Core Strategy to support the creation of sustainable communities through the concept of Green Infrastructure. "Green infrastructure is a network of green spaces in and around towns, and between urban and rural areas. It may include open spaces, parks, water bodies and nature reserves as well as street trees and woodlands. Trees and woodlands – from a country park to an urban street – are a very important element";
- Encourage development of small communities for retired people with facilities for recreation, etc. This could release many single occupancy properties for use by families;

4.11. Additional consultation with local businesses

4.11.1. In September/October 2007, as part of the Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation, WDDC officers attended four Business Club meetings to lead facilitated discussions on the implications of planning on businesses and employment. In total approximately 60 businesses were consulted with through this process.

4.11.2. A summary of the points raised in the discussions follows:

4.11.3. *Employing People*

- Affordable housing – young people cannot afford to stay in the area which makes it hard to find staff;
- Public transport – the lack of public transport makes it hard to get staff, particularly for rural businesses;

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- Lack of facilities – young people do not want to stay in the area as it cannot compete with the facilities in the cities;
 - Training – there are not enough places locally that offer training facilities.

4.11.4. ***Live - work***

- In the more rural areas, live/work units could keep people in the villages;
- Positives and negatives to working at home – some support but also some people like the separation of their home and workplace;
- Local estate agent had not received any requests for live/work units.

4.11.5. ***Location of employment***

- Parking is a problem in town centres for staff and customers;
- Present policy discriminates against those who want to live or work outside of towns.

4.11.6. ***Future business expansion***

- A number of businesses were looking for a larger office – one step up from a starter unit;
- Hard to expand existing businesses – land values for residential are so much higher than employment that it is hard to get landowners to agree to employment land;
- Need more places for 'unneighbourly' uses – e.g. noisy or unsociable hours;
- Local estate agent had been asked for industrial properties with commercial units;
- Being in business parks/industrial estates helps businesses and it provides good support;
- Shortage of small affordable office units with parking;
- It is hard to locate in some areas because the transport system is so bad, takes a long time to get anywhere;
- Need more starter units;
- Local opposition to lorries and delivery vehicles, provide a barrier to business growth.

4.11.7. ***Other issues***

- Mobile telephone reception is a big issue for businesses – can be difficult as masts cause local opposition.

4.11.8. Officers then asked businesses to think ahead 20 years and using the Core Strategy draft vision as a prompt to think about what they would like the District to be like in 2026. Comments included:

- More environmentally friendly businesses and growth in the renewable energy sector – e.g. wind turbines;
- Tourism is and will be vital to West Dorset economy;
- More people will work from home but there will still be a place for business parks e.g. for storage space;
- People should be able to walk/cycle to work;
- Local centres need to improve to provide the facilities that people want;
- Need a better evening economy (Dorchester);
- Rural areas need development to keep their vitality.

5. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

5.1. Publicity and distribution of this report

- 5.1.1. This document will be reported to the District Council's Policy Development Committee on 1 April 2008, made available in the District Council offices at Dorchester, Sherborne and Bridport and on the Council's web site at www.dorsetforyou.com.

5.2. Taking comments forward

- 5.2.1. The comments and opinions expressed will be taken into account in the preparation of the Preferred Options for the Core Strategy. There will be further consultation at this stage.
- 5.2.2. Relevant comments will be forwarded to other council divisions for their information.

6. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: consultation up to June 2007

Appendix 2: overall responses to the Issues and Options Paper

Appendix 3: summary of responses from individuals to the Issues and Options Paper

Appendix 4: summary of responses from groups to the Issues and Options Paper

Appendix 5: summary of responses from, or on behalf of, landowners/ commercial interests to the Issues and Options Paper