

11 Verwood, Three Legged Cross, St Leonards, St Ives and West Moors Housing, Employment and Centres

Introduction

11.1 This Chapter covers the three main urban areas in the East of East Dorset, along with their surrounding rural areas.

Verwood

11.2 Verwood is situated on the eastern border of Dorset to the north of the main urban areas of East Dorset and the Bournemouth/Poole conurbation. The Town has expanded quickly over the past thirty years, although over recent years this has significantly slowed since the strategic growth identified in the 1980s was completed. Only about 300 homes remain un-built from this time, but these are unable to be completed as they are within 400 metres of protected heathland.

11.3 The population has grown rapidly from 2,820 in 1961 to 14,792 in 2008. About 27% of the population is over retirement age which is lower than that of the District, but higher than the National average.

11.4 Natural Environment

11.5 There are significant areas of protected heathland adjacent to the town therefore new housing areas of more than 50 homes must provide Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces. Additionally, Bugden's Copse which lies within the urban area is an SSSI.

11.6 The north and western edges of Verwood are identified as Areas of Great Landscape Value.

11.7 The River Crane that runs along the southern boundary of the town is subject to flooding.

11.8 Shopping, Facilities and Services

11.9 There are two shopping areas in the town. The main centre is based around Ferrett Green and offers a variety of shops, services and community facilities. The other shopping area is off Pennine Way and is made up of a large supermarket and associated smaller shops. This area had been planned as a new town centre for the growing town, but the designation of Bugden's Copse as an SSSI prevented this. There is potential for the supermarket to be expanded over the next few years.

11.10 Verwood is well served for medical services in relation to doctors' surgeries and dental practices and has a good, relatively new day care centre. The nearest hospitals are at Salisbury to the north and Bournemouth to the south.

11.11 The town has benefited from the completion of a large new community centre which is capable of providing a wide range of different functions. This is complemented by the Memorial Hall.

11.12 Verwood has three First Schools and a Middle School. Additional housing in the town and elsewhere will have significant implications for school provision. Verwood is the largest town in Dorset to have no secondary school provision. Children currently have to travel to Ferndown and Wimborne. The schools in these towns have limited or no capacity for additional pupils, so a secondary school may be required in Verwood.

11.13 Sport and Recreation

11.14 Indoor sports are provided for at the sports hall at Pennine Way, but this is limited in size and does not provide the range of facilities needed for the community. Outdoor sports are largely provided at Potterne Park. The Open Space and Recreation Survey identifies a need for allotments and extra facilities for children and young people.

11.15 Transport

11.16 Verwood does not suffer from congestion in comparison to other parts of the District. This is despite car ownership being very high and the limited bus services.

11.17 Housing

11.18 Most of the housing in the area is modern having being built since the Second World War. About 41% of households own their houses outright and a further 46% own them with a mortgage. There are only 7.5% of homes available as social housing and 5.7% are rented. A higher proportion of dwellings are detached than the rest of the District and fewer flats. 35% of dwellings are bungalows.

11.19 Employment

11.20 In 2008 there were about 4,700 people who worked in Verwood and there were about 730 businesses. The 2001 Census identified a working population of about 5,000 people which is likely to have increased by about 1,500 since then. In 2001 about 33% of the workforce lived and worked in the town.

Verwood Town Centre

11.21 The Town Centre in Verwood helps to serve the general needs of the community along with the major foodstore off Pennine Way. It has benefited from major investment over the past fifteen years to support a large increase in the population which resulted from 2,000 new homes being built from the early 1980s to the early part of this century. This includes the construction of Home Farm Way and the Potter's Wheel car park that enabled traffic calming and the provision of Ferrett Green. New shops have been built on the old Heynes Garage and April Cottage. Additionally, a new doctor's surgery, day care centre and The Hub Community Centre along with further car parking have been built alongside the Police and Fire Stations. This investment has helped to elevate the centre of Verwood from a small shopping and community area into a more dynamic centre. The Core Strategy aims to continue the promotion of the town centre with further improvements.

Relevant Evidence

- The Joint Retail Assessment (Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners 2008)

Policy VTSW1

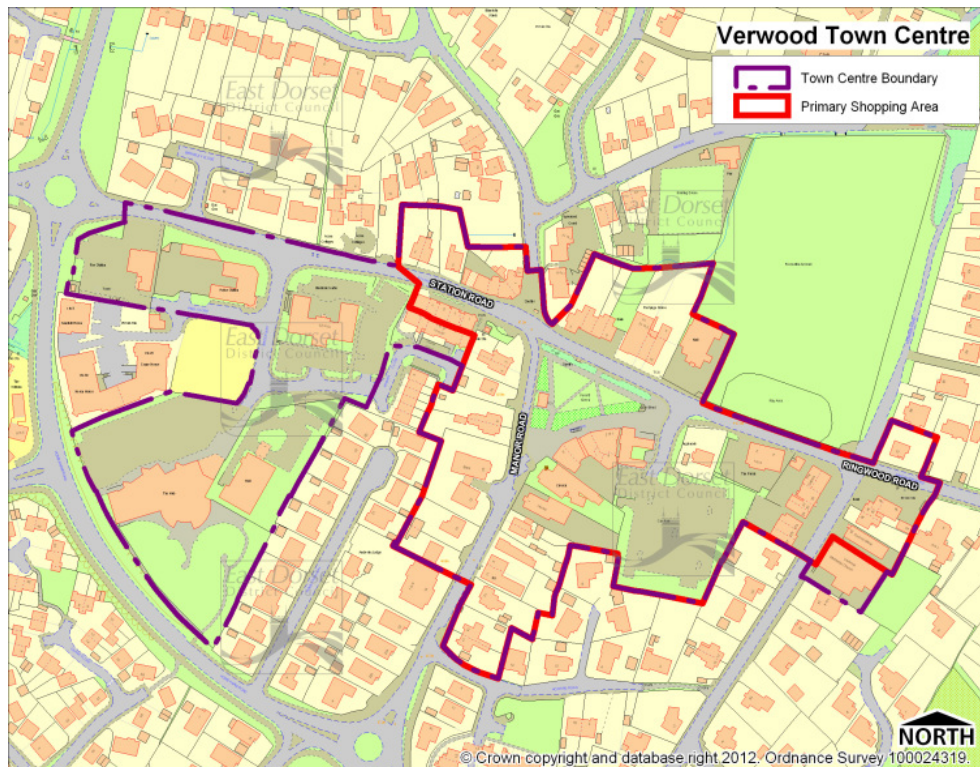
Verwood Town Centre

Our vision is that Verwood Town Centre will be a key town centre in East Dorset, providing a thriving busy centre to the local population and visitors. The town centre will continue to provide an attractive townscape, public transport routes will be supported, and facilities and services will continue to be located in this central location.

To achieve this vision:

1. The range of retail uses will be supported and improved to provide more comparison and convenience goods shops in small to medium size units to appeal to small independent shops.
2. Residents will continue to have access to a variety of community services and cultural facilities in the town centre, such as the Hub, the Memorial Hall and the Library. These will be retained, supported and, where possible, enhanced.
3. Evening economy uses such as restaurants, cafés and pubs will be supported in the town centre to enhance the vibrancy of the afternoon and evening economy of the town.
4. The townscape quality of the town centre will continue to be enhanced; only high quality development proposals that respect and enhance the local character of the centre, and improve ease of movement and legibility will be permitted.
5. Residential and commercial development will take place alongside the projected requirement for retail to provide for a balanced, mixed use environment.
6. In order to improve the vitality of the town centre and improve pedestrian safety around the town, traffic management and calming measures will be provided to reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflict.
7. To minimise congestion and air pollution, the use of sustainable modes of transport will be supported.

The Town Centre as defined by the Town Centre Boundary will be the focus for town centre uses including higher density residential, employment, retail, leisure and entertainment, offices, arts and culture and tourism development subject to compliance with other national and local policy.



Map 11.1 Verwood Town Centre

Delivery and Monitoring

11.22 This policy will be delivered by:

- The development management process.
- Close working with the landowners, other authorities and service providers.

11.23 The policy will be monitored through:

- Annual pedestrian footfall counts.
- An annual survey of town centre uses.
- Updates to the Retail Assessment.

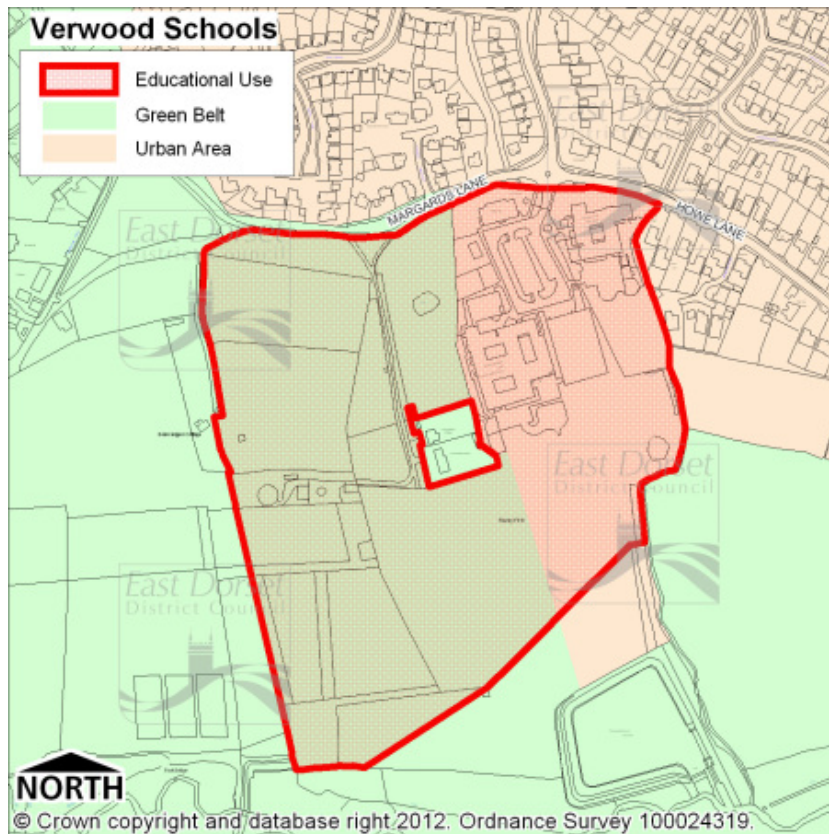
Verwood Schools

11.24 Verwood is the largest town in Dorset without upper school provision. Older school children currently have to be bussed to Wimborne and Ferndown which is a significant inconvenience. Increased numbers of schoolchildren throughout the District mean that the existing upper schools are unlikely to be able to accommodate them. Dorset County Council would therefore like to build a new upper school at Verwood to overcome this problem and provide a more convenient service for children in the Verwood and northern rural part of East Dorset.

Policy VTSW2

South of Howe Lane Education Allocation, Verwood

Land south of Howe Lane is identified for educational use to enable the provision of upper school accommodation. Implementation will require the completion of the Springfield Distributor Road and the agreement of a travel plan.



Map 11.2 South of Howe Lane Education Allocation, Verwood

Delivery and Monitoring

11.25 This policy will be delivered by:

- The development management process.
- The Architect's Panel will be used to inform decisions.
- Close working with Dorset County Council.

11.26 The policy will be monitored through:

- The Annual Monitoring Report.

Green Belt Policy - Land at Coopers Lane and Doe's Lane Verwood

11.27 This policy redefines the Green Belt boundary at Coopers Lane and Doe's Lane Verwood.

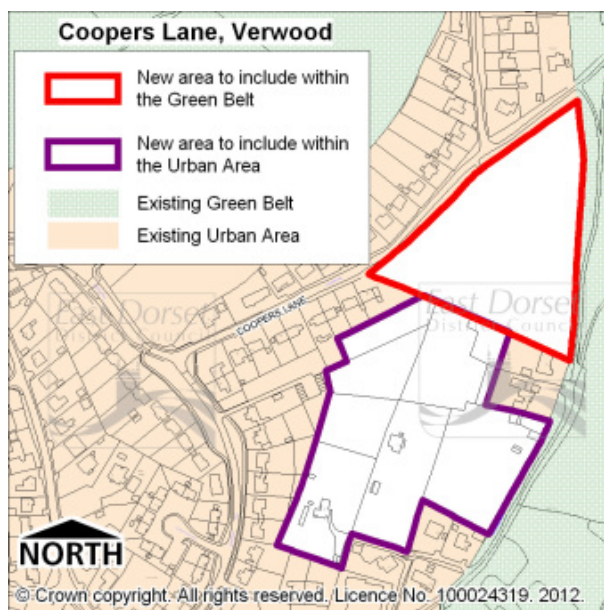
11.28 When the Green Belt was first defined these areas were left outside its boundary and allocated for housing development. The East Dorset Local Plan safeguarded the sites from development with this to be reconsidered when a review took place of the Plan. Subsequently, it

has become inappropriate to locate new housing within 400 metres of an internationally protected heathland, so this means these sites can no longer provide new homes. They are open countryside in character and therefore fulfil the key purpose of being Green Belt. As they are no longer capable of providing for new housing it is appropriate for them to be placed in the Green Belt.

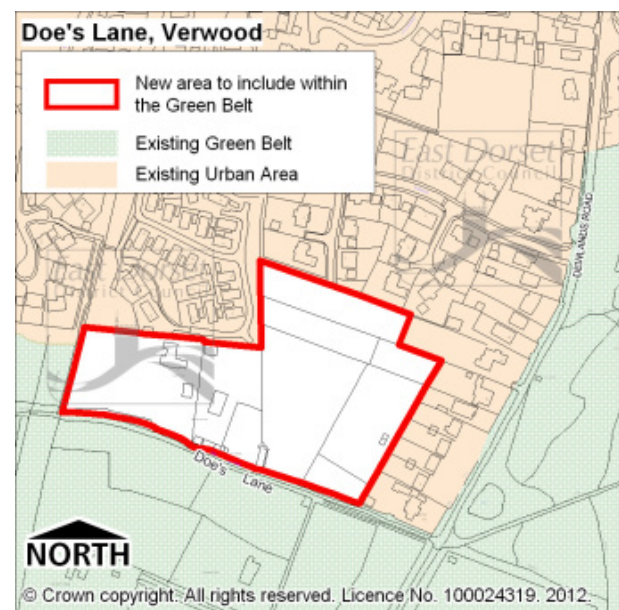
Policy VTSW3

Coopers Lane and Doe's Lane Green Belt Boundaries, Verwood

New Green Belt boundaries will be drawn to include land at Coopers Lane and Doe's Lane and shown on the proposals map. Further land at Coopers Lane will no longer be safeguarded from development and is included in the urban area.



Map 11.3 Coopers Lane Green Belt Boundaries



Map 11.4 Doe's Lane Green Belt Boundaries

New Neighbourhoods

11.29 Verwood is the second largest town within East Dorset. It has a strong base of facilities, services and employment opportunities and there are plans for these to be expanded, in particular in relation to schools, convenience shopping and sport, recreation and open space facilities. On this basis Verwood is considered a suitable location for New Neighbourhoods. The Council has undertaken a detailed Masterplan exercise to assess the suitability of sites which concludes that two areas can help provide new homes to meet the needs of the local community.

The North Western New Neighbourhood, Verwood

11.30 The Masterplan for this area focuses on two areas set within a substantial green framework. These areas are sheltered within the wider landscape. Nevertheless, a strong landscape structure will be needed. This is to be provided in conjunction with a strategy for the implementation of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces. It is expected that a large informal parkland area will be provided to the north of Edmondsham Road.

11.31 The sites are close to the town centre and good opportunities for cycle and pedestrian access exist. Vehicular access can be provided from Edmondsham Road.

Relevant Evidence

- The East Dorset New Neighbourhood Masterplan Reports.

Policy VTSW4**North Western Verwood New Neighbourhood**

A New Neighbourhood to the north west of Verwood is identified to provide about 230 homes. To enable this the Green Belt boundary will be amended to exclude the land identified for new housing.

Layout and design

- The new neighbourhood will be set out according to the principles of the masterplan.
- A design code will be agreed by the Council, setting out the required high standards.

Green Infrastructure

- A Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace strategy is to be implemented as part of the provision of the new housing as required by Policy ME3.

Transport and access

- Vehicular access is to be provided from Edmondsham Road
- Dedicated pedestrian and cycling links are to be provided throughout the housing area and link into the existing networks.



Map 11.5 North Western Verwood New Neighbourhood

Delivery and Monitoring

11.32 This policy will be delivered by:

- The development management process.
- The Architect's Panel will be used to inform decisions.
- Close working with the local community, landowners, other authorities and service providers.

11.33 The policy will be monitored through:

- Building for Life Assessments.
- The annual housing completions survey.

North Eastern Verwood New Neighbourhood

11.34 This is a small area well contained in the landscape by surrounding woodland. It offers the potential to provide much needed housing and can do this along with the setting out of a large area of open space. Access is to be taken from Ringwood Road.

Relevant Evidence

- The East Dorset New Neighbourhood Masterplan Reports.

Policy VTSW5

North Eastern Verwood New Neighbourhood

A New Neighbourhood to the north east of Verwood is identified to provide about 50 homes. To enable this the Green Belt boundary will be amended to exclude the land identified for new housing.

Layout and design

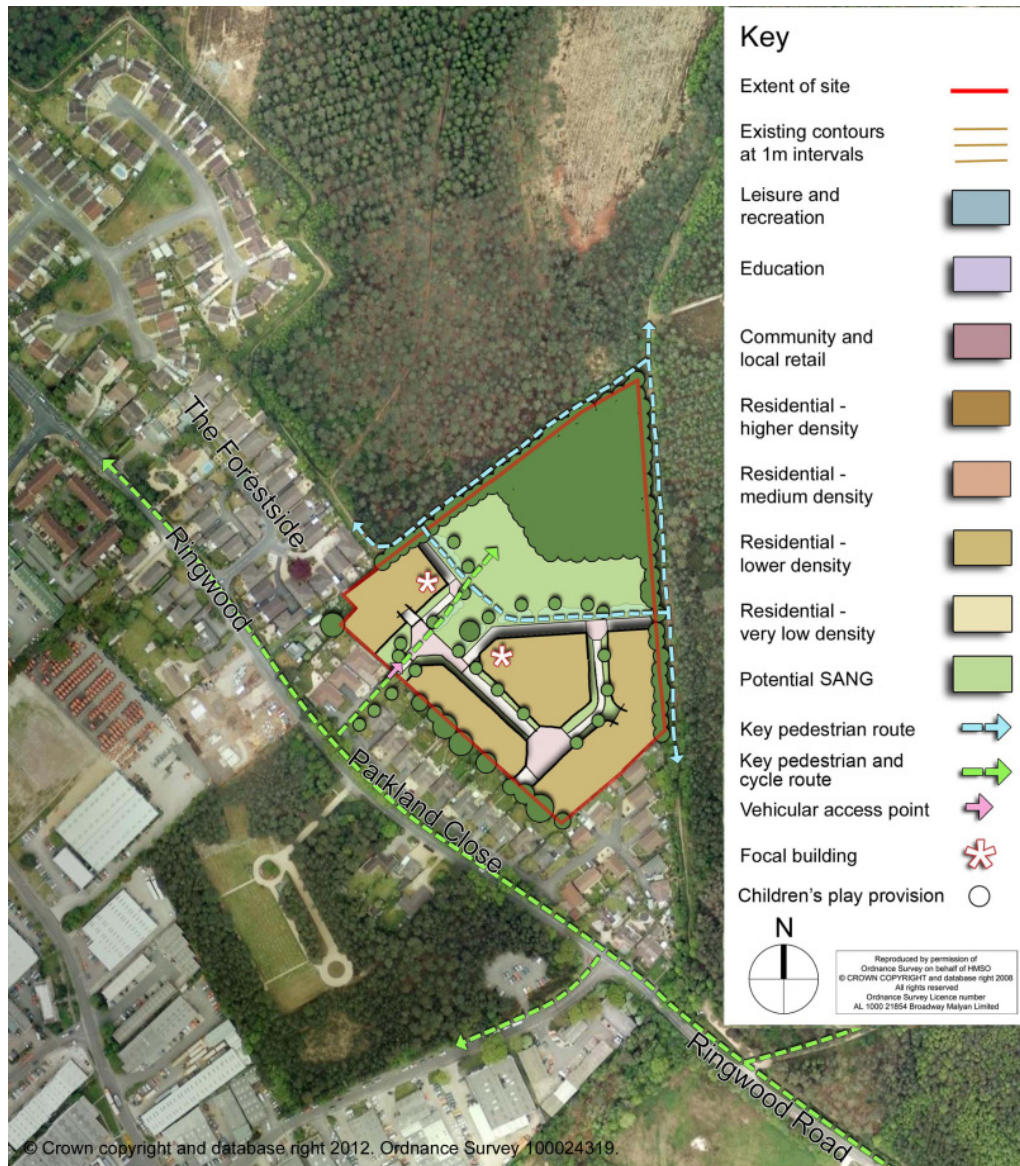
- The new neighbourhood will be set out according to the principles of the masterplan.
- A design code will be agreed by the Council, setting out the required high standards.

Green Infrastructure

- Approximately half of the identified land is to be set out as informal open space along with children's play.
- A Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace strategy is to be implemented as part of the provision of the new housing as required by Policy ME3.

Transport and access

- Vehicular access is to be provided from Ringwood Road
- Dedicated pedestrian and cycling links are to be provided throughout the housing area and link into the existing networks.



Map 11.6 North Eastern Verwood New Neighbourhood

Delivery and Monitoring

11.35 This policy will be delivered by:

- The development management process.
- The Architect's Panel will be used to inform decisions.
- Close working with the local community, landowners, other authorities and service providers.

11.36 The policy will be monitored through:

- Building for Life Assessments.
- The annual housing completions survey.

Woolsbridge Industrial Estate

11.37 At just over 15 hectares this is the second largest industrial estate in East Dorset, but there is no scope for further development within the existing site. The expansion of the Estate gives the opportunity to support economic growth by expanding the choice of location for employers. Development of the site will need to take into account areas subject to flooding and also ensure that the nature conservation quality of the Moors River SSSI is not harmed.

11.38 Relevant Evidence

- The East Dorset Employment Land Review
- The SE Dorset Workspace Strategy Update (2012)

Policy VTSW6

Woolsbridge Employment Allocation, Three Legged Cross

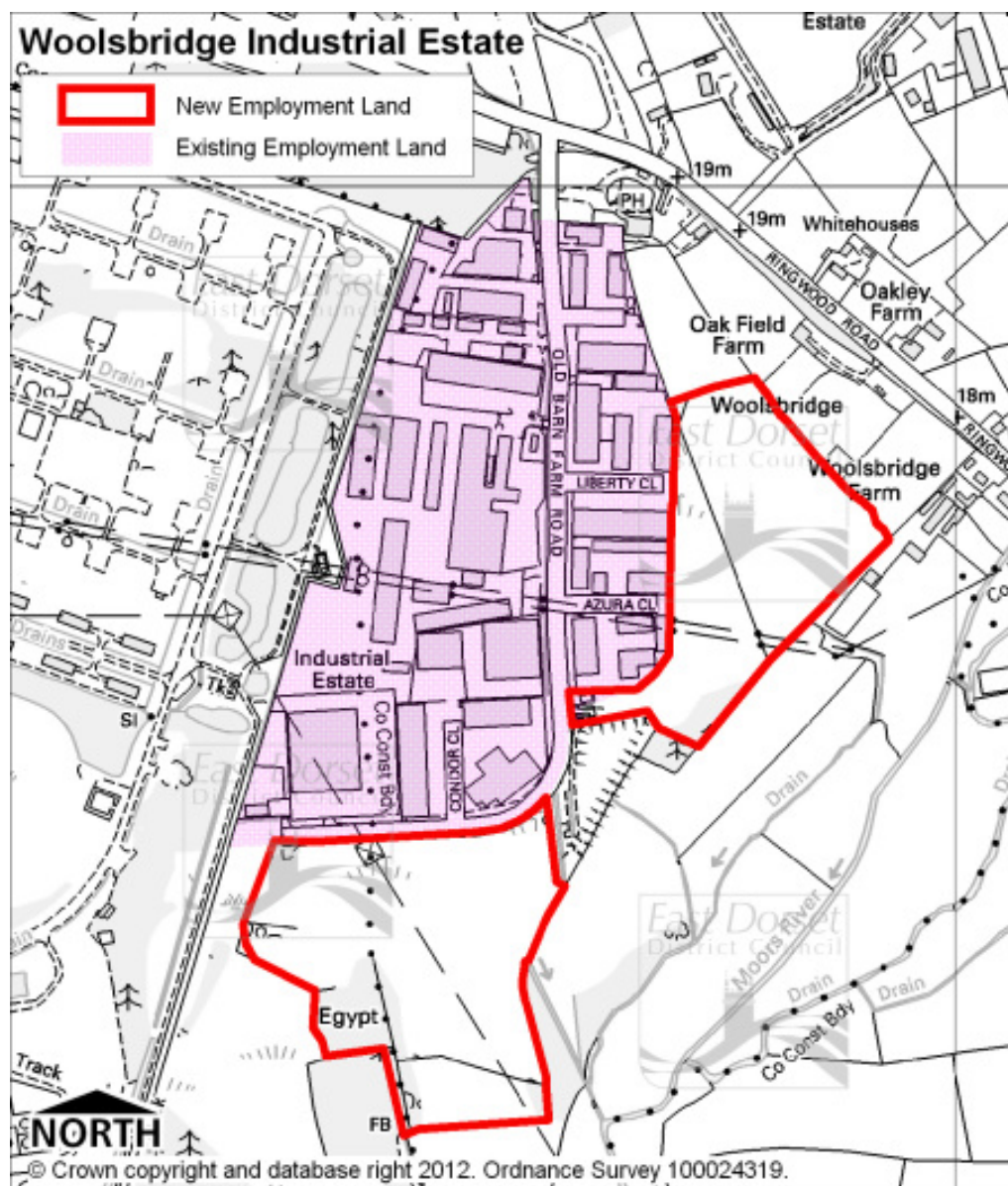
9.7 hectares of land at Woolsbridge Industrial Estate is removed from the Green Belt and developed for new employment.

This should involve:

- The provision of B1 (Office and Light Industry), B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Warehousing and Distribution) employment uses.

Prerequisites for development include:

- Approval of a development brief by the Council.
- Agreement of a comprehensive travel plan including the support of regular bus services.
- Provision of significant landscape buffers alongside the countryside edges of the site.
- A wildlife strategy to be agreed with the Council that ensures that no harm to the Moors River SSSI will derive from the Estate. Particular regard to the water environment will be needed and in this respect the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems to mitigate any potential impacts will be expected to form part of the strategy.



Map 11.7 Woolsbridge Employment Allocation, Three Legged Cross

Delivery and Monitoring

11.39 This policy will be delivered by:

- The development management process.
- Close working with the landowners, other authorities and service providers.

11.40 The policy will be monitored through:

- The annual employment completions survey.

St Leonards and St Ives

St Leonards and St Ives Key Characteristics and Issues

Communities <i>Population</i>	The population totalled 7,210 in 2009. A large proportion of households with elderly (42%) and small number of households with children (14%).
<i>Housing</i>	A very large number of homes are owned outright or with a mortgage. Only 4% are social rented. Over 60% of homes are detached bungalows and 30% are detached houses. Over 60% of homes have been assessed as under occupied (2008).
<i>Health</i>	There is one doctors practice in the parish along with St Leonards Community Hospital.
<i>Education</i>	St Ives has one first school and two private schools. Middle and upper school education is provided in Ringwood or Ferndown.
Economy	
<i>Key Employment Sites</i>	There is no dedicated employment area in the Parish, but the Woolsbridge Industrial Estate is on the border.
<i>Tourism</i>	Moors Valley Country Park is one of the biggest tourist attractions in the sub region and the Parish has several large camping and caravanning parks.
Environment <i>Biodiversity</i>	There are large areas of internationally protected heathlands and the River Avon Special Area of Conservation and Moors River SSSI river systems are highly sensitive protected environments.
<i>Landscape Character</i>	An area to the south of Avon Castle is designated an Area of Great Landscape Value.
<i>Built Character</i>	The built area is generally modern, with the large majority of development having taken place over the last 100 years. There are no conservation areas in the Parish. There are two Special Character Areas and housing is mainly built to very low densities.
<i>Water Environment</i>	The flood plains of the River Avon and Moors River system restrict development opportunities in the Parish and provide threat to some properties.
Cross Boundary Issues	The Parish lies adjacent to the County border with Hampshire and residents make use of good facilities in nearby Ringwood. The A31(T) provides very good east west access and the A338 provides a dual carriageway link to Bournemouth

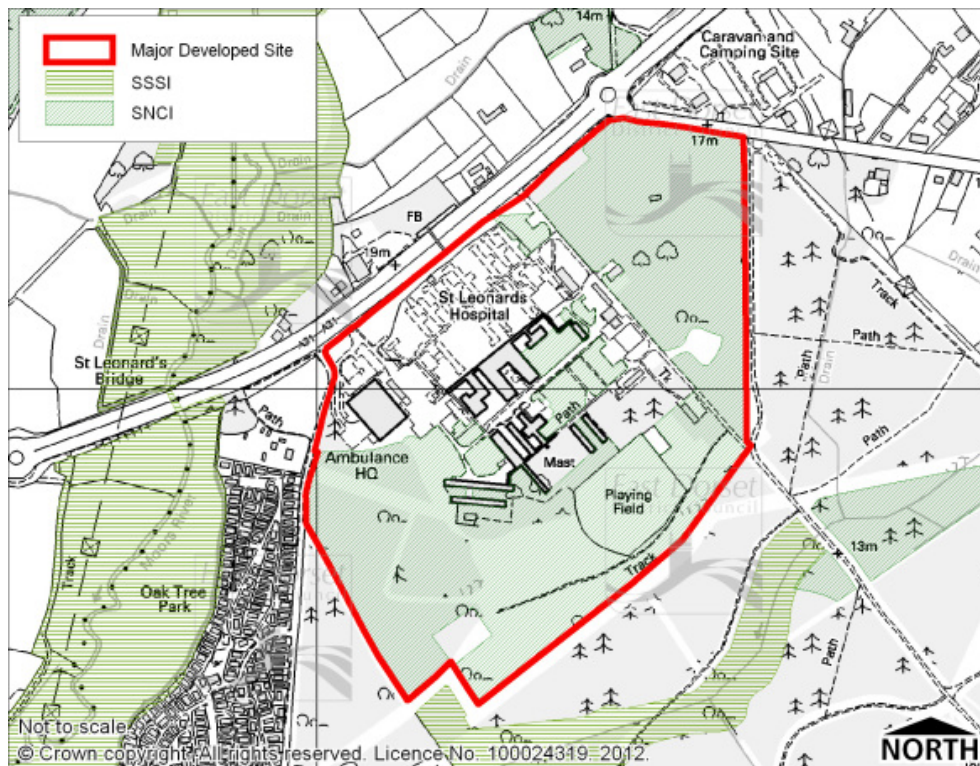
St Leonards Hospital

11.41 St Leonards Hospital is a large development in the Green Belt that is subject to demands for change. A planning permission has been granted to allow the development of a care village on part of the land, but this has not been implemented, as it has proved unattractive to the development industry. Further opportunities to make good use of the land are therefore likely to be investigated by the landowner.

Policy VTSW7

St Leonards Hospital Major Developed Site in the Green Belt

Land at St Leonards Hospital is identified as a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt, in accordance with the requirements of Annex C to Planning Policy Guidance Note 2.



Map 11.8 St Leonards Hospital Major Developed Site in the Green Belt

Delivery and Monitoring

11.42 This policy will be delivered through the Development Management process.

11.43 The policy will be monitored on an annual basis as part of the housing completions survey.

West Moors

West Moors Key Characteristics and Issues

Communities	
<i>Population</i>	West Moors has a population of about 7,400 people. It has an elderly profile with more than 40% over 60 years old and only 14% below 15 years.
<i>Housing</i>	Only just over 10% of dwellings are rented, of which only 3.5% are private. 59% of homes are privately owned with no mortgage. Over 45% of dwellings are bungalows and 41% of dwellings are considered to be under occupied.
<i>Health</i>	The village is well served by GP's. The closest hospital is St Leonards Community hospital at St Leonards and St Ives, although for more general health needs, the nearest hospital is in Bournemouth.
<i>Education</i>	There are two first schools in the village and a middle school. Upper school provision is available at nearby Ferndown.
Economy	
<i>Key Employment Sites</i>	These are the MOD Petroleum Depot and Gundrymoor industrial estate.
<i>District Centre</i>	There are 44 units within the village centre offering a variety of services. A secondary parade of shops is located to the far east of the village.
<i>Tourism</i>	Although the Parish does not have a major tourist attraction it does have some important caravan and camping sites.
<i>Transport</i>	The main road through West Moors is a busy route taking traffic from Verwood and the rural areas south towards the conurbation. A bypass was planned in the 1990's, but the transport authority no longer wish to proceed with the scheme. The busy A31(T) runs to the south of the village. The village does benefit from regular bus services.
Environment	
<i>Biodiversity</i>	There are internationally protected heathlands in the Parish, some of which adjoin the urban area. Additionally, the Moors River in an SSSI.
<i>Landscape Character</i>	There are no landscape designations within the Parish.
<i>Built Character</i>	West Moors is a relatively recent settlement and does not have a conservation area. There are some parts of the urban area that have been designated as Special Character Areas.
<i>Water Environment</i>	The Moors River and Uddens Water flow through the Parish and on occasion cause flooding.
Cross Boundary Issues	The Parish is not on the District border, but the A31(T) is a major road that links the conurbation with the major employment areas to the east and rural Dorset to the west.

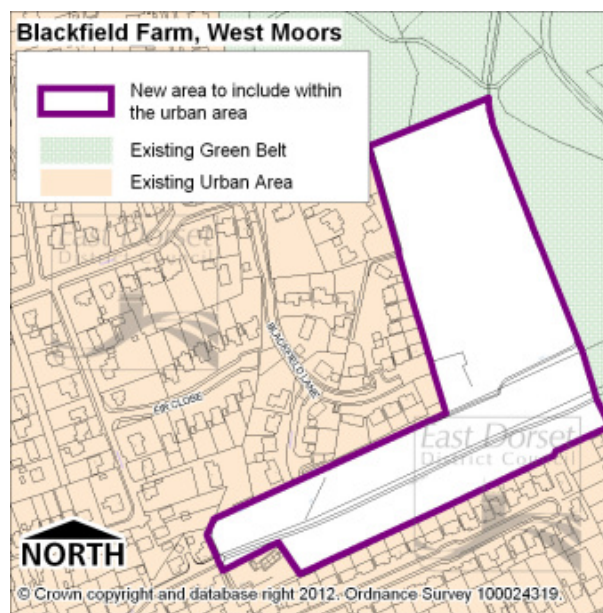
Green Belt Policy - Land at Blackfield Farm, West Moors

11.44 When the boundaries to the Green Belt were established land at Blackfield Farm was excluded and allocated to allow for housing development to meet local community needs. The housing allocation was subsequently removed and the land was safeguarded from development in the Local Plan and left outside the urban area and the Green Belt. Since then policies relating to the protection of the heathland have come into force preventing the development of general needs housing within 400 metres of a heath. The land is therefore no longer capable of being developed for this purpose. However, this does not mean the land is incapable of being developed for other uses, such as care facilities. The current Green Belt boundaries are considered to be defensible in terms of the National guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belt. The land is therefore to remain excluded from the Green Belt and included within the urban area.

Policy VTSW8

Blackfield Farm Green Belt Boundaries, West Moors

Land at Blackfield Farm will no longer be safeguarded from development and is included in the urban area.



Map 11.9 Blackfield Farm Green Belt Boundaries, West Moors

West Moors District Centre

11.45 The main shopping area in West Moors is situated on Station Road along with the library, village hall and a First School. The shops are comparatively small and there is no major foodstore, although there is one nearby on the edge of Ferndown. There are 44 shop and commercial units in the centre of which about 42% are used as shops.

11.46 It is important for the local community that the centre is supported to ensure that the existing services and facilities are maintained. However, there is very little scope for expansion of the centre.

Relevant Evidence

- The Joint Retail Assessment (Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners 2008)

Policy VTSW9

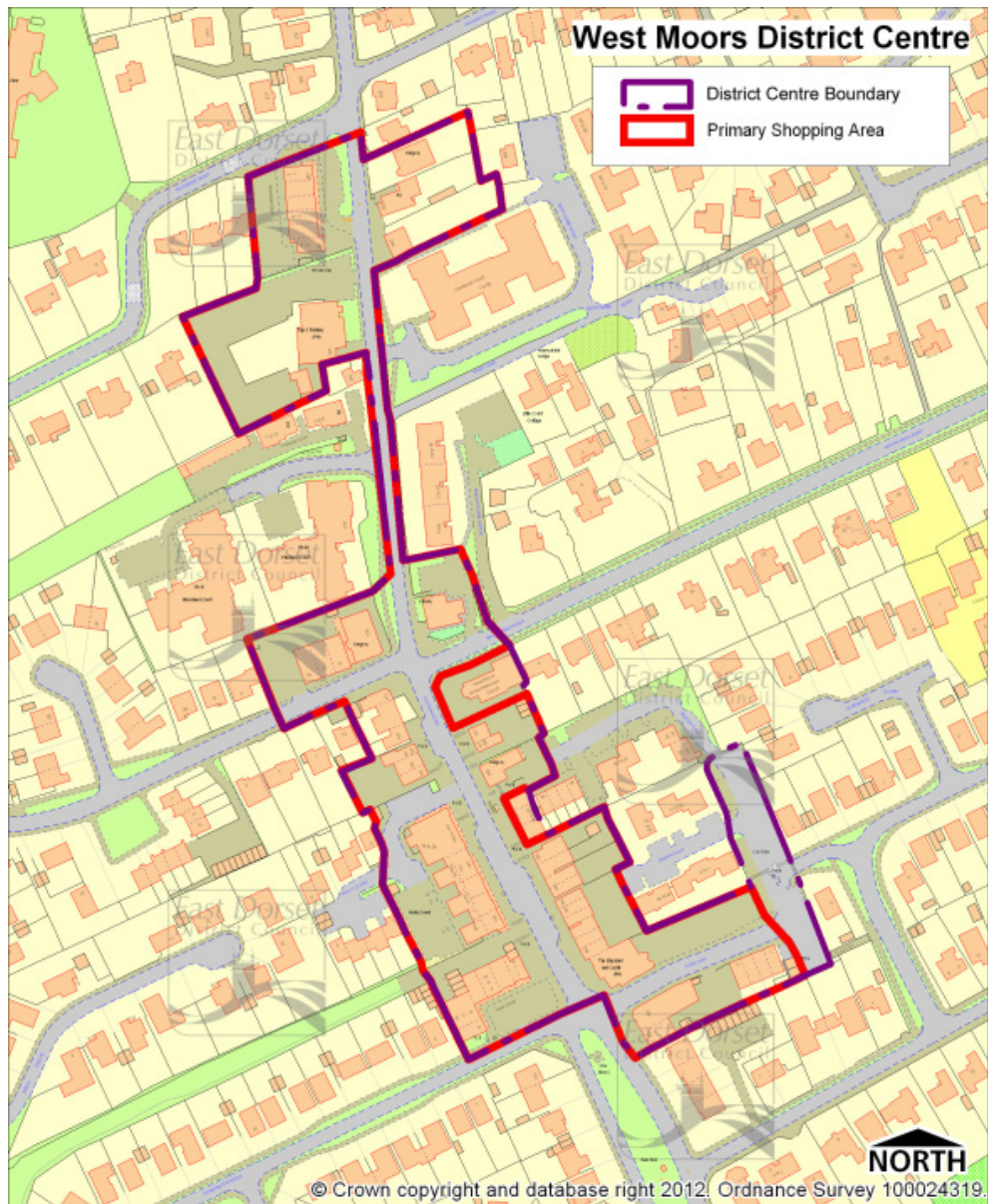
West Moors District Centre

Our vision for West Moors District Centre is that it will continue to act as a key District Centre in East Dorset, providing a central focus to the local population. The District Centre will be supported to provide an attractive townscape, public transport routes sustained, and facilities and services will continue to be located in this central location.

To achieve this vision:

1. The range of retail uses will be supported and improved to provide more comparison goods shops, in small to medium sizes to appeal to small independent shops.
2. Residents will continue to have access to a variety of community services and cultural facilities in the district centre, such as the doctors' surgeries and the Library. These will be retained, supported and, where, possible enhanced.
3. The promotion of evening economy uses such as restaurants, cafés and pubs will be supported in the district centre to enhance the vibrancy of the afternoon and evening economy of the town.
4. The townscape quality of the district centre will continue to be enhanced; only high quality development proposals that respect and enhance the local character of the centre, and improve ease of movement and legibility will be permitted.
5. In order to improve the vitality of the district centre and improve pedestrian safety around the town, traffic management and calming measures will be considered in Station Road to reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflict.
6. Residential and commercial development will take place alongside the projected requirement for retail to provide for a balanced, mixed-use environment.
7. To minimise congestion and air pollution, the use of sustainable modes of transport will be supported.

The District Centre as defined by the District Centre Boundary will be the focus for district centre uses including higher density residential, employment, retail, leisure and entertainment, offices, arts and culture and tourism development subject to compliance with other national and local policy.



Map 11.10 West Moors District Centre

Delivery and Monitoring

11.47 This policy will be delivered by:

- The development management process.
- Close working with the landowners, other authorities and service providers.

11.48 The policy will be monitored through:

- Annual pedestrian footfall counts.
- An annual survey of town centre uses.
- Updates to the Retail Assessment.