

12 Strategic Allocations in the East Dorset Rural Areas

Introduction

12.1 This chapter only considers strategic allocations and does not deal with all things relevant to the rural areas. Overarching policies are contained in the Key Strategy and chapters 13 to 16. More detailed allocations will be considered in a following Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document.

Key Characteristics of The East Dorset Rural Area

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| Communities <i>Key Settlements</i> | The key rural settlements are Sixpenny Handley, Cranborne, Sturminster Marshall and Alderholt. |
| <i>Population</i> | The four key rural settlements have a combined population of 6,962 (2001 Census) and the total population 5,613 for the smaller villages. The age profile for the rural area is younger than for the District as a whole. On average only 20% of households in each rural ward include children. |
| <i>Housing</i> | Holt has the largest proportion of households who own their home outright (55%). Both the Crane and Handley wards have very high proportions of private rented accommodation (31%). This is due to the presence of large country estates. Between 42% and 58% of dwellings were assessed as being under occupied in 2008. |
| <i>Health</i> | The smaller villages do not have doctor's surgeries but the larger villages such as Sixpenny Handley have a surgery even if on a part time basis, serviced by a practice in a larger settlement. |
| <i>Education</i> | The key rural settlements have first schools, along with a few of the smaller villages. Cranborne has a middle school, but some children in the rural areas travel to the larger East Dorset settlements. Upper School provision is provided in Wimborne, Ferndown and Broadstone. |
| Economy | A larger proportion of the rural population is economically active compared to East Dorset as a whole. Broadband connection is poor in the rural area which may inhibit homeworking and rural businesses. |
| <i>Key Employment Sites</i> | In the rural area only Baillie Gate at Sturminster Marshall, at 7.74 ha is large enough to be included in the Christchurch and East Dorset Employment Land Review Stage 1 Report. |
| <i>Tourism</i> | Tourism is a major part of the rural economy, including accommodation, hospitality trades and attractions. |
| <i>Transport</i> | Car ownership is very high and higher than the District as a whole. Public transport is very poor, with infrequent buses and no trains. |
| Environment <i>Biodiversity</i> | The rural area has some significant nature conservation sites, including heathlands, ancient woodlands and unimproved grasslands. |
| <i>Landscape Character</i> | The Wiltshire and Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covers a large proportion of the East Dorset rural area. In total it covers over 40% of the District. A significant area adjoining the Area of Outstanding Beauty has been designated an Area of Great Landscape Value. |

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| <i>Built Character</i> | The rural area is largely characterised by small ancient settlements. There are 17 conservation areas. |
| <i>Water Environment</i> | The rural area is crossed by a number of rivers and streams, the most significant being the Stour, Allen, Uddens and Moors rivers. They largely flow through open countryside, but there are flooding problems associated with Sturminster Marshall in particular. Sixpenny Handley and Wimborne St Giles and other smaller settlements are affected by Winterbournes which rise when groundwater levels are high. A large proportion of the rural area, associated with chalklands are a Groundwater Protection Zone. |
| Cross Boundary Issues | The East Dorset rural area interacts with adjoining rural areas of North Dorset, Wiltshire and Hampshire. The southern and eastern rural areas are closely associated with the Bournemouth/Poole conurbation, in terms of the provision of employment, services and facilities. |

Bailie Gate Employment Site, Sturminster Marshall

12.2 This land is allocated for employment to meet the future needs of businesses throughout East Dorset, but particularly the rural areas of East and North Dorset. The Industrial Estate is a long standing successful employment area which has seen a series of recent developments to improve its quality. The owners wish to expand the Estate to meet demands and the Council agrees that it provides a valuable opportunity to deliver a choice of employment location and a place where rural companies are within easy access of where they conduct their business.

12.3 The allocated land was originally used for storage as part of the Sturminster Marshall Dairy and Cheese Factory, which was the forerunner of the industrial estate. The site is flat in nature and is enclosed by strong hedgerows that can form good defensible boundaries for the Green Belt.

Relevant Evidence

12.4 The East Dorset Employment Land Review.

12.5 The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy Update (2012).

Policy RA1

Bailie Gate Employment Allocation, Sturminster Marshall

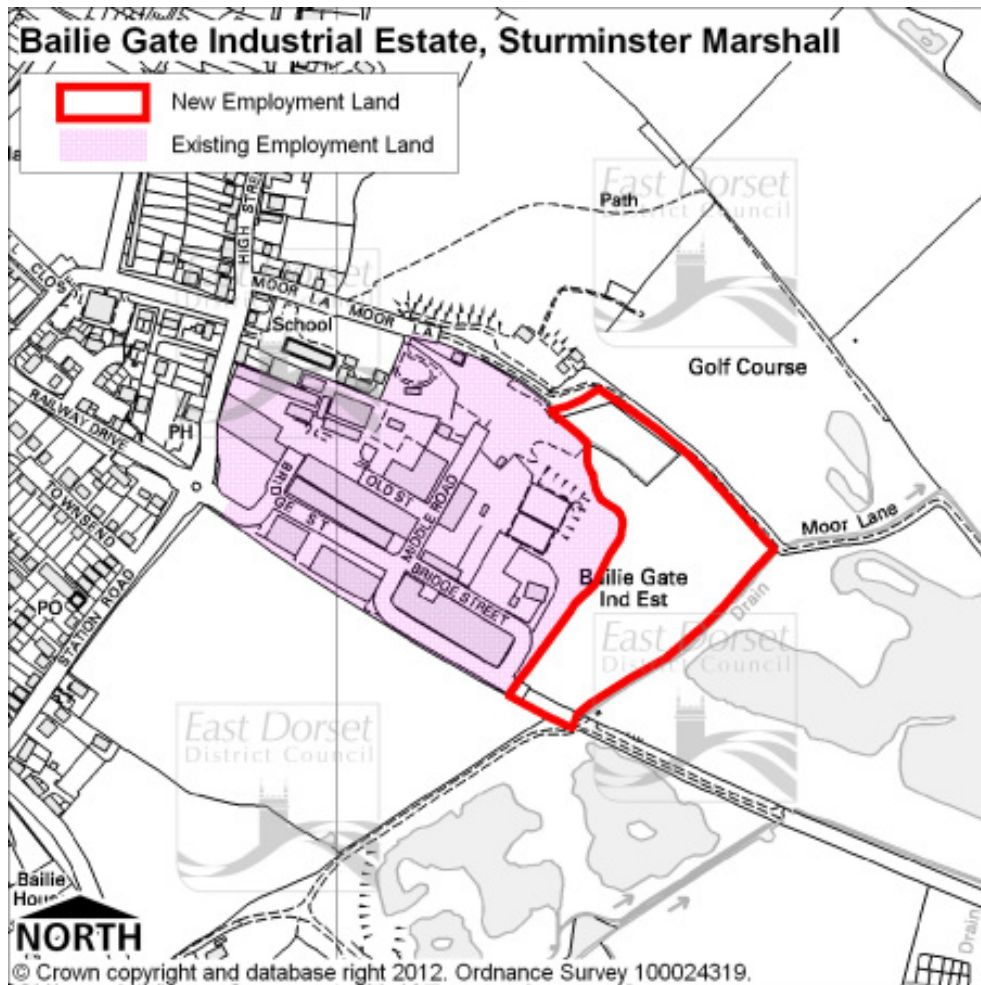
3.3 hectares of land at Bailie Gate, Sturminster Marshall should be removed from the Green Belt and developed for new employment.

This should involve:

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

Prerequisites for development would include:

- Approval of a detailed development brief, subject to public consultation.
- Agreement of a comprehensive travel plan including the support of regular bus services and scope to provide footway/cycleway links towards village facilities.
- Provision of significant landscape buffers alongside the countryside edges of the site.
- A Sustainable Drainage System to mitigate any potential impacts.



Map 12.1 Bailie Gate Employment Allocation, Sturminster Marshall

Delivery and Monitoring

12.6 This policy will be delivered by:

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

12.7 The policy will be monitored through:

- The annual employment completions survey.

The Council Offices, Furzehill

12.8 This policy amends the village envelope for Furzehill to reflect its built form and allow for a change of circumstances in relation to the Council and its use of the Offices. During the lifetime of the Core Strategy there is potential for the Council to relocate its offices as it now works in partnership with Christchurch Borough Council. This could involve relocation of services to the Allendale area in Wimborne, set out in policy WMC2. It is therefore important that the future use of the existing Offices is clarified. The nature of any redevelopment must reflect the sites location within the Green Belt. It should also respect and retain the attractive wooded areas, ensuring that they remain publicly accessible. Redevelopment of the site should also provide for a community hall as the relocation of the Council Offices will remove the opportunity for public meeting. Finally, Furzehill suffers from

road safety problems as a result of heavy goods vehicles and speeding traffic along the village road where there are no pavements. Redevelopment of the site should help to fund traffic calming measures to alleviate this problem.

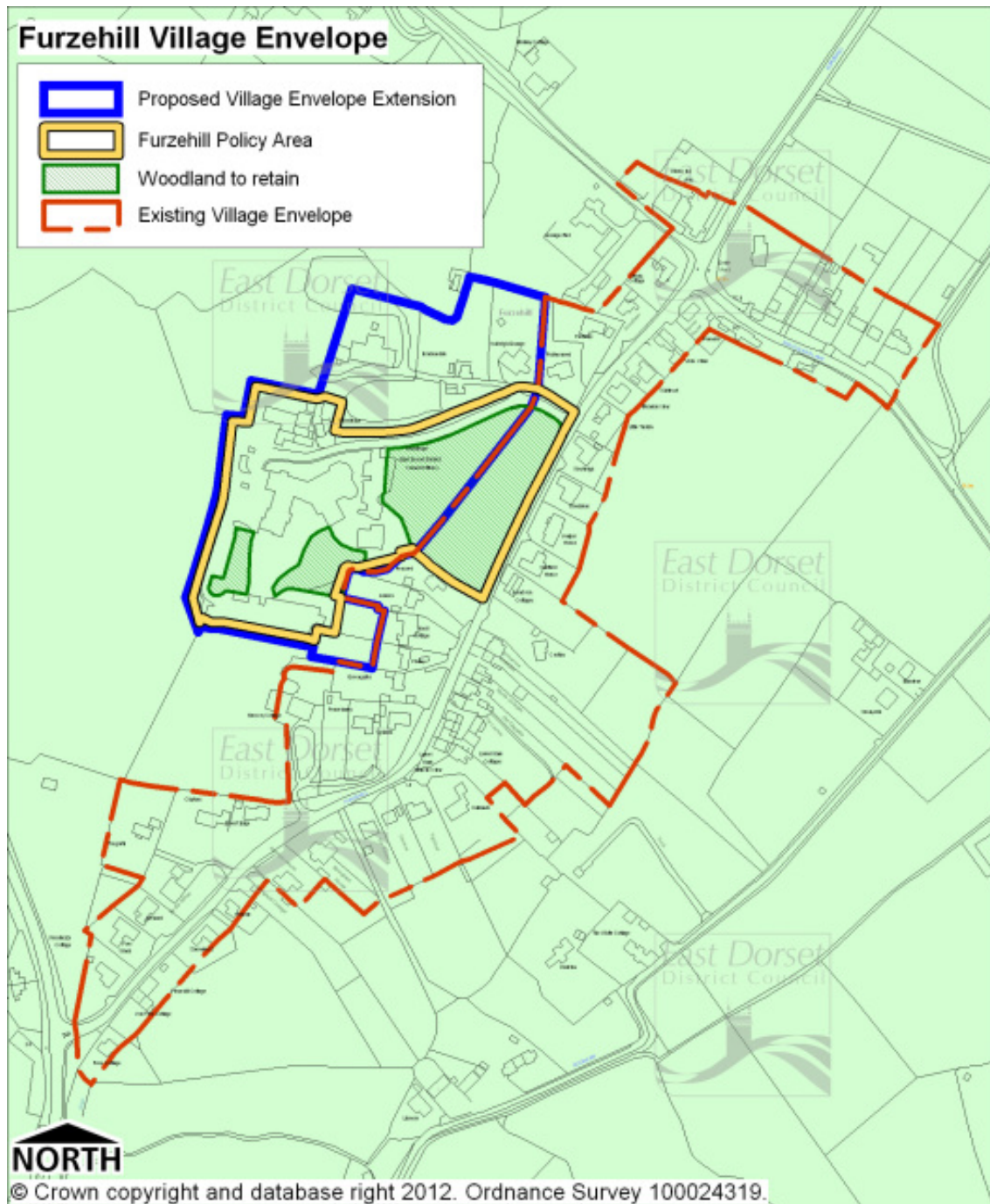
Policy RA2

Furzehill Village Envelope

The Village Envelope will be amended at Furzehill to include the Council Offices and neighbouring buildings.

Redevelopment of the site for residential, offices, residential institutions, non residential institutions, hotel and/or community uses will be acceptable to support the provision of new Council Offices elsewhere. The following requirements must be met:

- a) Replacement buildings will not exceed the current floorspace of existing buildings and will not exceed their height.
- b) The wooded areas of the site should be retained.
- c) A landscape screen should be provided on the western edge of the site, so that views from the wider countryside, including the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are not harmed.
- d) Redevelopment of the site should provide a community hall for the village.
- e) Redevelopment should support the implementation of traffic calming measures through the village.



Map 12.2 Furzehill Village Envelope

Delivery and Monitoring

12.9 This policy will be delivered by:

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

12.10 The policy will be monitored through:

- The annual housing and employment completions survey.

