

Local Development Framework
Shaping the future of North Dorset

Employment Land Review: Review of Existing Sites

April 2007



**North Dorset District Council
Local Development Framework**

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1.0 Introduction

Scope and Purpose of the Review

- 1.1 In preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF), North Dorset District Council (the Council) has the opportunity to develop, with stakeholders and local communities, its aspirations for the District for the next 20 years to 2026. The Council's shared vision for the people of North Dorset is "where thriving and balanced communities in our market towns and surrounding villages build economic prosperity while safeguarding our unique and diverse environment"
- 1.2 The Council, in reflecting the wider aims of national objectives and its own vision, is committed to promoting a strong, stable and productive economy that aims to bring jobs and prosperity to all.
- 1.3 In order to achieve this objective an assessment of the demand for and supply of land for employment purposes, and the suitability of sites for future employment development will need to be made. This assessment will influence the safeguarding of the best sites from alternative uses and will also identify those sites which are no longer suitable for employment development.
- 1.4 National policy guidance, including PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPG3: Housing, PPG4: Industrial, commercial development and small firms and PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, indicate that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should periodically undertake local employment needs assessments in order to establish the quantity, type and quality of employment land required to deliver their stated economic objectives.
- 1.5 In light of this requirement and the detailed Government guidance *Employment Land Reviews: Guidance Note* (2004), the Council has prepared this document as Part 1 of 2 of its Employment Land Review (ELR). The completed ELR will be a technical document which will assist the Council in the preparation of policies to be contained within its LDF by applying a 'plan, monitor and manage' approach to the future allocation and development of employment land.
- 1.6 The detailed purpose of the ELR is to provide the Council with an effective tool with which to:
 - Assess the demand and supply of employment land in the district;
 - Assess the suitability of the current stock of employment land for that purpose;
 - Safeguard the best employment sites from pressure to develop for other uses;

- Identify employment sites which are clearly unlikely to be required; and,
- Predict where and how much new employment land should be planned for in the future.

1.7 The ELR is intended to complement established and emerging guidance documents, such as housing capacity studies and sub-regional studies, which will be produced jointly with the County Council. The end result will be the production of an up-to-date and balanced portfolio of suitable and well justified employment sites which are recommended for inclusion in the LDF.

1.8 In following the methodology set out in the ODPM's guidance, the ELR is limited to B1, B2 and B8 use classes (i.e. offices, light and general industry, wholesale and freight distribution) on sites of 2,500 m² land area or greater (or 500 m² of floor space or greater). Other commercial uses such as retail, entertainment, tourism and accommodation are excluded from this particular assessment, but subsequent studies, carried out by the Council, will review these uses.

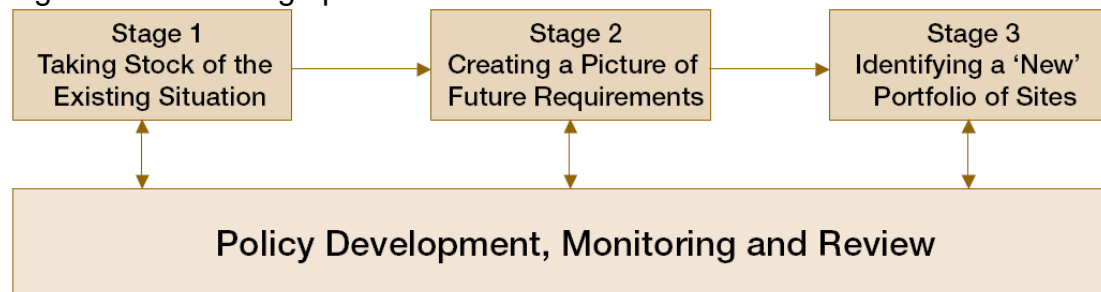
Structure of Review

1.9 The main objective of the ELR is to aid in the delivery of sustainable development by assessing the current and future suitability of sites for employment development. This Review will ensure that sufficient provision is made for future economic development, which is appropriately located in the District and which has a reasonable prospect of being realised for development.

1.10 The ELR process is divided into three stages (See Figure 1). This document comprises an initial assessment of employment sites boundaries (chapter 3), a general identification of employment land demand and supply (chapter 4) and Stage 1 'Taking Stock of the Existing Situation' (chapter 5) only.

1.11 Stages 2 'Creating a Picture of Future Requirements' and 3 'Identifying a 'New' Portfolio of Sites' will follow in a separate document, which, when read in conjunction with this document, will constitute the complete ELR for the District.

Figure 1: Three stage process for an ELR



- 1.12 Chapter 3 undertakes a review of employment boundaries in the District. This exercise reviewed the current employment boundaries, providing a more accurate picture of the current employment land situation in 2006. The ELR makes initial recommendations on the redrafting of these boundaries, which could be formally adopted through the LDF process.
- 1.13 Chapter 4 provides an introduction to the economic characteristics of the District, an identification of recent demand for employment land and premises, and an analysis of market demand and future requirements.
- 1.14 Chapter 5 contains a 'fitness for purpose' stock-take of employment sites in the District. This assessment identified 12 sites which are currently wholly or partly undeveloped and one site which has faced successive losses to non B1-B8 uses. These sites were appraised against a number of site appraisal criteria, which identified whether sites should be retained, investigated further or released as employment sites through the LDF process. Recommendations were made on whether these sites are 'fit for purpose' for employment uses now or whether they would be likely to be in the future.

Future Work

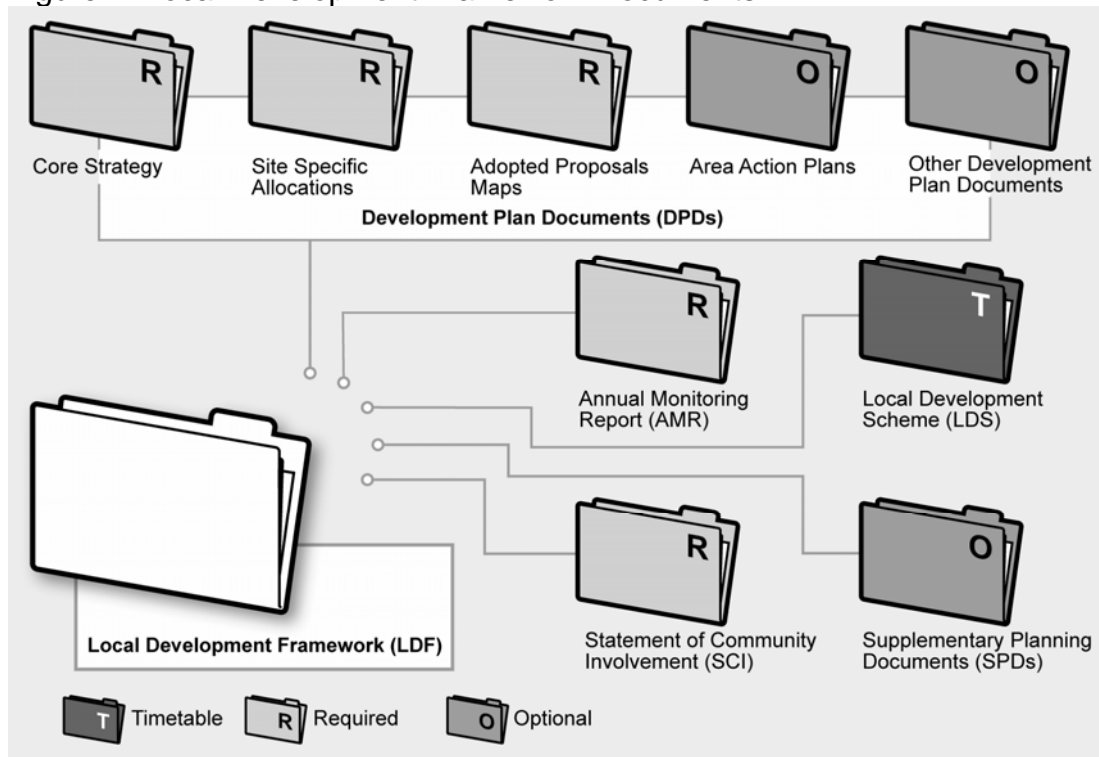
- 1.15 The second part of the ELR will contain Stages 2 and 3 and will identify future employment land requirements up to 2026. This work will be produced by the Council in partnership with Dorset County Council and will be informed by technical work produced by the Regional Planning Body for the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) submission in spring 2007.
- 1.16 Having established a robust picture of future requirements, a further, more detailed, review of the existing employment sites will be undertaken in order to make an appraisal of the 'gaps' in local employment land provision and to set parameters, if needed, for the identification of new sites. The final Part of the ELR will confirm which sites should be retained and released, provide a robust justification for altering employment land designations, and will help develop a policy regime that reflects the Council's overarching economic objectives.

2.0 Planning Framework and Policy Context

The Planning Framework

- 2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out a new framework for both regional and local planning. Each region is required to produce a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), which will replace Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) and County Structure Plans. Subsequently, each local planning authority is required to replace its Local Plan with a portfolio of Local Development Documents (LDDs) which will be collectively known as a Local Development Framework (LDF). The Council's LDF will deliver the local spatial planning strategy for the District and will need to be in general conformity with the regional strategy (See Figure 2).
- 2.2 The South West RSS was formally submitted to the Secretary of State on the 31st March 2006, and an Examination in Public is timetabled to begin in April 2007 which will last around nine weeks. The South West RSS will provide the broad development strategy for the region between 2006 and 2026; in parallel to this, the LDF will provide the local framework.
- 2.3 This Review will inform the LDF process by assessing the current employment land portfolio and where identified will be recommending the allocation or release of employment land through the LDF process. This Review will especially inform the plan making process, as part of the evidence base, for the District's emerging Core Strategy DPD.

Figure 2: Local Development Framework Documents



Relevant Guidance

2.4 National guidance and adopted regional, county and local plans provide the current policy framework against which this Review will be completed. Also, in this transitional period between RPG10 and the adoption of the RSS, the emerging strategies of the draft South West RSS will also need to be considered. The relevant policy guidance is summarised below.

National Guidance

2.5 National guidance in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG), Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and other guidance notes set out the Government's national policies on different aspects of land use planning. The guidance summarised below is relevant to the ELR process.

2.6 PPS1: *Delivering Sustainable Development* (2005) sets out the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the land use planning system. It states as one of its overarching objectives that sustainable development should be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment. This overarching objective of national policy is considered as fundamental to the delivery of sustainable communities in North Dorset.

2.7 PPS3: *Housing* published in 2006 promotes more sustainable patterns of development in order to allow everyone to have access to a decent home. The guidance in line with , recognise that many local authorities have allocations for employment land that may no longer be fulfilling their potential, and advocates the review of all non-housing allocations when a relevant development plan is replaced.

2.8 Paragraph 44 states that; '*In developing their previously-developed land strategies, Local Planning Authorities should consider a range of incentives or interventions that could help to ensure that previously developed land is developed in line with the trajectory/ies. This should include...Considering whether sites that are currently allocated for industrial or commercial use could be more appropriately re-allocated for housing development*

2.9 PPG4: *Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms* published in 1992 states that up to date and relevant plans are essential for the development needs of commerce and industry, in balance with the needs to protect the environment and the creation of sustainable local communities. PPG4 states that when considering proposals for new development, the compatibility with existing commercial and industrial activities needs to be respected.

2.10 PPS7: *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas* (2004) sets out four key objectives for rural areas, one of which is to promote the '*development of the English regions by improving their economic performance so that all are*

able to reach their full potential. The Statement recommends that where there is a lack of up to date and robust information on the rural economy and social conditions, surveys and assessments, such as this ELR, should be conducted.

- 2.11 PPG13: *Transport* (2001) aims to deliver an integrated transport policy to promote more sustainable transport choices for people as well as freight, to promote accessibility and to reduce the need to travel, especially by private car. The guidance advises that local authorities should promote development at the most accessible locations, especially in rural districts where it is acknowledged that access to public transport is more limited; these suitable locations are typically in or near local service centres and market towns.
- 2.12 ODPM Employment Land Reviews: Guidance Note (2004) sets out a framework for the undertaking of ELRs, based upon the 'plan, monitor, manage' approach.

Regional Guidance

- 2.13 RPG10 (2001): sets out the regional spatial plan for continued sustainable growth in the South West. Policy EC1 sets out the broad approach to economic development in the region, indicating that local authorities should accommodate further economic development in the most sustainable and accessible locations.
- 2.14 Draft South West RSS (2006): The spatial strategy was written alongside the South West Regional Economic Strategy (RES), using the adopted RPG10 as a starting point. The RSS identifies the scale and location of development throughout the region in order to deliver sustainable development. Section 8 identifies that authorities will need to base their allocations of employment land on their understanding of the functional role of towns and local economic circumstances and maintain a ready supply of sites and premises to meet local requirements for business expansion and inward investment.
- 2.15 The RSS's main objectives are to:
- Deliver successful and competitive businesses;
 - Deliver strong and inclusive communities; and,
 - Help deliver an effective and confident region.
- 2.16 The RSS recognises the need to balance the economic aspirations of the region with the need to respect the environment and meet the needs of the climate change agenda. Economic growth and development will need to be commensurate with the identified role, function, needs and potential of the

towns, villages and parishes in North Dorset, and this work will be undertaken as part of the evidence gathering stage for the Core Strategy DPD.

- 2.17 In terms of 'employment land provision and review', the RSS identifies that the context for provision and review of employment land has changed significantly since RPG10 was published, with greater emphasis on the need to provide a mix of sites for organic growth in the rural parts of the region. Draft Policies E1 and E3 set out the need for Local Authorities to "assess the supply of, and demand for, employment land... (and) maintain a ready supply of sites and premises to meet local requirements" on a three year rolling basis in order to continue to meet the longer term needs for economic development. The strategic objectives of the RSS will need to be implemented in North Dorset, with employment growth commensurate with the needs of the local and business communities and especially in sectors where employment growth is anticipated.
- 2.18 Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan (CSP28) (2001): In the development of the Structure Plan the strategic planning authorities involved used a Local Economy Forecasting Model to predict future requirements of the economy. The forecast determined that around 63,000 new jobs would be created between 1994 and 2011, with growth, restructuring and diversification of the economy leading to new requirements for land and infrastructure. The Plan identifies that it will not be sufficient for local planning authorities to identify already established employment sites to meet the Structure Plan requirements only, but instead to make a "*wide variety of sites available, capable of accommodating premises ranging from small starter units or office suites to major industrial facilities*"
- 2.19 Economy Policy A states that in North Dorset about 40ha of land should be developed for employment uses (B1 to B8) between 1994 and 2011, with a need to ensure adequate choice is available to provide for the needs of local firms and inward investment. Economy Policy B follows the Government's sustainable development objectives, stating that new employment development should be in the most sustainable and accessible locations.

The Local Plan

- 2.20 Adopted North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan (1st Revision) (2003): The Local Plan identifies both exiting employment areas and new allocations and sets out the local strategy for employment development. Policy 3.3 states that the change of use from employment to any other use will not be permitted. This policy currently protects employment land from losses to other uses, however the release of land which is identified as no longer required for such uses is supported by PPG3: *Housing* and is a material consideration in the determination of current planning applications. The loss

of employment land will only be supported by the Council on sites where development would no longer be viewed as supporting the creation of sustainable communities.

- 2.21 The creation of a well balanced and appropriate supply of employment land is critical for the economic and social well-being of the District. In producing an LDF that will implement the overarching objective of sustainable development, the employment strategy will have to satisfy the needs of the community as well as other regional and local policy objectives.

3.0 Reassessment of Employment Land Boundaries

Boundary Review

- 3.1 In order to undertake an effective ELR, an initial stock-take of the employment sites as identified in the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan 2003 is required in order to assess the current lawful uses of the land.
- 3.2 The Local Plan identified 'defined employment areas' where there was existing employment activity and 'proposed new employment allocations' identified to meet the needs of the population throughout the plan period. 33 sites were identified as existing developed employment areas and 7 sites were newly allocated, totalling 160.2ha of employment land.
- 3.3 Policy 3.3 of the Local Plan established the strategic need to maintain premises in employment use to maintain economic opportunities in the District. However, since the emergence and adoption of the Local Plan over the past decade, a small amount of employment land has been lost to non B1-B8 uses. Permissions have typically been granted for uses such as retail (A1), non residential institutions (D1) such as health centres and places of worship, leisure uses (D2) such as sports gyms and in some instances losses have been to residential dwellings (C3).
- 3.4 Due to cumulative employment land losses, there is now a need to reassess the existing and allocated employment sites. This part of the study assesses whether the current use(s) on the employment sites identified in the Local Plan remain within the B1-B8 use classes definition. Where a site or premises does not fall within a B1-B8 use class, an assessment on whether the employment boundary should be redrawn was made.
- 3.5 Where it was found that there was a concentration of non-conforming uses (non B1-B8), particularly on the edge of a defined or allocated employment site, and/or with a separate access; the employment boundaries have been redrawn to exclude this land. However, where a single or small number of non-conforming uses were identified, but which still retain the character of a business use, and/or are accessed through a defined or allocated employment site; the employment boundaries have typically not been redrawn to exclude these sites.
- 3.6 This exercise has provided a more accurate picture of the current employment land situation within the District and will be used in the evidence base for the LDF. It will also be used as evidence in the determination of future planning applications where there is the proposed change of use of land or premises from a B1-B8 use to a non B1-B8 use.

3.7 This exercise did not redraw boundaries around motorcar showrooms as they are a Sui Generis use and therefore if a site became redundant the lawful use would revert back to a B1-B8 use.

3.8 Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the designated employment sites and identify where employment land losses have occurred, with a commentary below on each site where a loss was identified. The locations of the sites where losses have been identified are illustrated in Appendix A.

Table 1: Sites identified as existing employment sites in the Local Plan

Settlement	Site ref.	Location	Local Plan Area (Ha)	Reassessed Area (Ha) Aug 2006
Blandford	E/2/1	Sunrise Business Park	5.55	5.55
Blandford	E/2/2	Blandford Heights & Clump Farm	13.62	13.62
Blandford	E/2/3	Holland Way	7.52	7.52
Blandford	E/2/4	The Brewery	11.34	8.18
Blandford	E/2/5	Stour Park		
Bourton	E/3/1	Former Unigate factory	0.88	0.88
Durweston	E/10/1	Old Brewery Workshops	0.37	0.37
Gillingham	E/15/1	Station Road	6.3	4.28
Gillingham	E/15/2	Brickfields Business Park	29.78	29.78
Gillingham	E/15/3	Tomlins Lane	0.15	0.15
Gillingham	E/15/4	Gillbury Yard	0.53	0.53
Hazelbury Bryan	E/17/2	M. Richards / F.Martin	0.64	0.64
Hinton St. Mary	E/19/1	Bartlett's Yard	0.61	0.61
Hinton St. Mary	E/19/2	Old Estate Yard / White and Sons Ltd/Nicholsons Yard	0.59	0.59
Kings Stag	E/23/1	Holwell Road	0.29	0.29
Milborne St. Andrew	E/30/1	Blandford Road	1.88	1.88
Motcombe	E/33/1	Case & Sons	1.54	0.34
Okeford Fitzpaine	E/34/1	Faccenda Ltd	0.82	0.82
Pimperne	E/35/1	Down Road	0.34	0.34
Pimperne	E/35/2	Blandford Road	1.32	1.32
Pulham	E/36/2	Pulham Saw Mills site	1.8	1.8
Shaftesbury	E/37/1	Longmead Industrial Estate	8.38	7.06
Shaftesbury	E/37/2	Wincombe Business Park	6.52	6.52
Shaftesbury	E/37/3	C B Morgan Ltd.	1.24	1.24
Shaftesbury	E/37/5	Blackmore Creamery	0.96	0.96
Shillingstone	E/38/1	St Patricks Industrial Estate	2.03	1.67
Stalbridge	E/40/1	Station Road	7.82	7.82
Stalbridge - Gibbs Marsh	E/41/1	Gibbs Marsh Trading Estate	7.58	7.58
Sturminster Newton	E/47/1	Butts Pond Industrial Estate	5.8	5.8
Sturminster Newton	E/47/2	North Dorset Business Park (Formerly Rolls Mill)	7.33	7.16

Sturminster Newton	E/47/3	The Creamery Site	1.13	1.1
Sturminster Newton	E/47/4	Manston Road	0.49	0.49
Winterborne Kingston	E/57/1	North Street	0.68	0
Total			135.83	126.89

Table 2: Sites allocated in the Local Plan

Settlement	Site ref.	Location	Local Plan Area (Ha)	Reassessed Area (Ha) Aug '06
Blandford	E/2/6	Shaftesbury Lane	5.12	5.12
Bourton	E/3/2	South of Lilac Cottage	0.58	0.58
Gillingham	Site I	Peacemarsh	3.42	2.66
Gillingham	Site L	Park Farm	4.58	4.16
Gillingham	Site K	Higher Ham Farm	1.56	1.56
Okeford Fitzpaine	E/34/2	Poultry Houses	2.89	2.89
Shaftesbury	E/37/4	South of A30	6.2	6.2
Total			24.35	23.18

3.9 It was identified that a total of 10.11ha of employment land (8.94ha of existing employment land and 1.17ha of allocated land) was found to have been lost from B1-B8 uses since its identification in the Local Plan. It should be noted, however, that not all of this land has been lost to other uses – in some cases the ‘losses’ identified have resulted from the more accurate drawing of employment site boundaries. These sites are summarised below:

Existing Employment Sites

Blandford

The Brewery and Stour Park

- 3.16ha of employment land lost.
- Land has been removed on the Stour Park site due to the current A1 retail use by the TESCO store.
- The boundary has been redrawn to exclude the Homebase site and the cluster of residential dwellings on the north side of Bournemouth road.

Gillingham

Station Road

- 2.02 ha of employment land lost.
- The original four plots centred around the traffic lights on the Le Neubourg Way have been the subject of a number of piecemeal planning applications for alternative uses resulting in a loss of employment land.
- The boundary has been redrawn to exclude the Focus retail site, the health gym adjacent to Newbury Gardens and the residential dwellings on the Oakwoods and Staddleston Hall sites.

- This site has been identified as facing successive losses to non B1-B8 uses and therefore will be assessed in Stage 1 of this Review.

Motcombe

Case & Sons

- 1.2ha of employment land lost.
- A recent planning approval for the redevelopment of the derelict factory site has resulted in the major redistribution of employment land. Modern business units on 0.34ha of land will be built on the south of the site.

Shaftesbury

Longmead Industrial Estate

- 1.32ha of employment land has been lost.
- Two plots of land have been removed from the employment designation; one on the north of the site where there is a mixture of non B1-B8 uses and the Veterinary Centre on Little Content Lane.

Shillingstone

St Patricks Industrial Estate

- 0.36ha of employment land lost.
- A recent permission for a D1 use has been granted to the rear of the site adjacent to the redundant railway line.

Sturminster Newton

North Dorset Business Park

- 0.17ha of employment land lost.
- The original employment boundary included part of the Newton Gate residential site, the new boundary has been drawn excluding this land.

The Creamery

- 0.03ha of employment land lost.
- The boundary has been amended to exclude the residential dwelling on the western boundary.

Winterborne Kingston

North Street

- 0.68ha of employment land lost.
- The boundary has been removed from this site in its entirety due to the identification of this site as a mixture of retail and agricultural uses, with no provision for B1-B8 uses.

Allocated Employment Sites

Gillingham

Peacemarsh

- 0.76ha of employment land lost.
- The boundary has been redrawn around the medical centre and doctor's surgery (D1) uses on the southeast boundary of the site.

Park Farm

- 0.42ha of employment land lost.
- The development of the roundabout off of the B3081 has resulted in the loss of land available for employment development.

3.10 This initial assessment has identified a series of employment land losses where the land affected is unlikely to be reinstated for an employment use in the short or medium term. Sites such as those at Stour Park, Blandford and Motcombe have been found to have been considerably altered by planning permissions granted since the adoption of the Local Plan, and the redrawn boundaries give a better reflection of the current uses of land within the District.

3.11 Station Road, Gillingham faces particular threats from non B1-B8 uses and therefore will be assessed in Stage 1, in order to identify whether it should continue to be allocated as an employment site or be recommended for release through the LDF process.

4.0 Employment Land Demand and Supply

Property Market Analysis

- 4.1 North Dorset is a predominantly rural district, with a relatively sparsely located population, based around a number of market towns and smaller local service centres.
- 4.2 Office/B1 market: North Dorset is not a well-established office location, and does not have a significant office market. The majority of offices are small in nature and often occupy space above shops in the main market towns, rather than being located on employment designated land. However, there are a small number of purpose built offices in the District, including those at Stour Park, Blandford and Wincombe Business Park, Shaftesbury. Other public sector office users are located mainly in Blandford, with the District Council offices, the Dorset County Council Highways Authority, the Environment Agency and Signpost Housing Association all having offices within the town. The remaining and vast majority of office-type premises, greater than 0.25ha or 500m² floorspace, are ancillary to the industrial uses located throughout the District.
- 4.3 Industrial B1, B2, B8 market: The industrial and warehousing sector is far more significant with over 700 premises located within the District in 2005. Vacancy rates in the majority of established locations are low and space that comes onto the market is generally occupied quickly.
- 4.4 Table 3 identifies the overall number of commercial and industrial premises and the total floorspace in the District by market segment, based on data from the Valuation Office Agency based on all properties which business rates can be charged.

Table 3: Commercial and industrial floorspace

Type	Number	Floorspace (m ²)	Average Floorspace (m ²)
Commercial Offices	188	22,000	117
'Other' Offices	60	14,000	233
Factories	527	261,000	493
Warehouses	206	100,000	485
Other Bulk	117	27,000	231
Total	1,098	423,000	306
(Retail)	(557)	(83,000)	(145)

Source: Commercial and industrial floorspace and rateable value statistics (2005) (www.statistics.gov.uk)

- 4.5 There are a total of 1,098 employment premises (B1-B8 use classes) in the District, comprising of 423,000m² of floorspace. Retail has been included in this table but has been excluded from the total as it is not within the remit of

this Review. It was found that over two thirds of commercial and industrial premises are either factories or warehouses, constituting over 85% of the identified employment land take.

- 4.6 Table 4 identifies the location of the identified employment premises by *Super Output Area* (SOA). There are eight SOAs within the District - SOAs 7, 1 and 3 cover the general boundaries of Blandford Forum, Gillingham and Shaftesbury respectively, while the other SOAs cover the rest of the District (See Appendix B).

Table 4: Identified B-class premises and floorspace by SOA (2005)

SOA	Offices		Factories		Warehouses		Other Bulk	
	Number	Floorspace (m ²)	Number	Floorspace (m ²)	Number	Floorspace (m ²)	Number	Floorspace (m ²)
001 'Gillingham'	52	5,000	74	48,000	27	10,000	12	3,000
002 'North'	6	x	32	10,000	18	6,000	11	2,000
003 'Shaftesbury'	63	8,000	77	26,000	22	7,000	13	3,000
004 'Wider Sturminster'	39	4,000	109	38,000	44	31,000	20	8,000
005 'A350 Corridor'	8	1,000	46	13,000	14	4,000	14	2,000
006 'East'	19	x	54	44,000	27	17,000	16	3,000
007 'Blandford'	52	10,000	86	53,000	37	18,000	14	3,000
008 'West'	9	1,000	49	29,000	17	7,000	17	3,000
Total	248	36,000	527	261,000	206	100,000	117	27,000

Source: Commercial and industrial floorspace and rateable value statistics (2005) (www.statistics.gov.uk)

- 4.7 The majority of B class floorspace in North Dorset consists of factory and warehousing space, with less than 10% of floorspace being classed as B1(a) office use. However, in terms of the number of units within the District, B1(a) offices make up around 23% of the total B class stock, with clusters in the Gillingham, Blandford Forum, Shaftesbury and the wider Sturminster Newton SOAs.

Employment Land Take Up

- 4.8 The identification of demand for both employment land and premises within the District is not a particularly simple task to undertake on a local scale. Forecasts for the quantity of additional land required for employment needs was developed for the Structure Plan 1994-2011, in which North Dorset was required to deliver 40 additional hectares of land.
- 4.9 Yearly monitoring by Dorset County Council identified that as of 31st March 2006, 35.85 hectares of land for employment uses had been developed in

North Dorset, of which over 55% was in the four market towns (Table 5). Monitoring of employment land between 1994 and 2004 was recorded from the 1st October to the 30th September, however in 2004 monitoring changed from 1st April to 31st March to be consistent with other monitoring work undertaken by the County Council. Completions in Table 5 are from 1st October 1994 to 31st March 2006.

Table 5: Employment completions by general location 1994-2006

	Completed (Ha)												Completed (Ha)
	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	Oct 04/Mar 05	April 05/Mar 06	1994-06
Blandford Forum	0.40	0.26	0.42	0.55	0.50	0.25	0.65	0	0	0	0	0	3.05
Gillingham	0.07	0	3.92	0.45	0	1.30	0.93	0	1.04	0.55	0.28	2.50	11.04
Shaftesbury	0.79	0.66	0	0	0.85	0.96	0.61	0.34	0.44	0.08	0	0.02	4.75
Sturminster Newton	0	0.02	0	0	0	0	0	0.18	0	0.46	0.36	0	1.02
Rural	0.18	1.80	0.67	2.24	0.29	1.23	1.54	2.08	0.05	2.15	1.52	2.24	15.99
Total	1.44	2.74	5.01	3.24	1.64	3.74	3.73	2.6	1.53	3.24	2.18	4.76	35.85

Source: Dorset County Council, Employment Monitoring

4.10 Table 6 identifies completions on sites identified in the Local Plan (Committed and Allocated) and those that were completed on other sites (Other). The majority of completions (61%) took place on existing employment sites, while only 7% of employment completions have occurred on land newly allocated in the Local Plan.

4.11 69% of all employment completions in the Rural areas were on sites not identified in the Local Plan. The majority of these completions were of small farm diversification developments of, on average, less than 0.3ha in size.

Table 6: Employment completions by location (Hectares)

Location		Completed 1994/95	Completed 1995/96	Completed 1996/97	Completed 1997/98	Completed 1998/99	Completed 1999/00	Completed 2000/01	Completed 2001/02	Completed 2002/03	Completed 2003/04	Completed Oct 04/Mar 05 (6 Months)	Completed April 05/Mar 06	Total 1994-06
Blandford Forum	Committed	0.4	0.26	0.42	0.55	0.5	0.25	0.65	0	0	0	0.02	0	3.05
	Allocated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gillingham	Committed	0.07	0	3.92	0.45	0	1.14	0.93	0	1.04	0.55	0.28	0	8.38
	Allocated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.5	2.5
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0.16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.16
Shaftesbury	Committed	0.79	0.57	0	0	0.85	0.96	0.61	0.34	0.44	0.08	0	0.02	4.66
	Allocated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Other	0	0.09	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.09
Sturminster Newton	Committed	0	0.02	0	0	0	0	0	0.18	0	0.36	0.36	0	0.92
	Allocated	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	0	0	0.1
Rural	Committed	0.18	0.19	0.62	1.33	0	1.15	0.17	0.27	0	0.92	0	0.1	4.93
	Allocated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Other	0	1.61	0.05	0.91	0.29	0.08	1.37	1.81	0.05	1.23	1.52	2.14	11.06

Source: Dorset County Council, Employment Monitoring

Identified Market Demand

4.12 Dorset County Council as part of the Bournemouth, Dorset, Poole Economic Partnership (BDPEP) uses a commercial property and client management system – Evolutive – to monitor supply and demand enquiries across the county. Evolutive can be used as a gauge for the demand of land within a defined area and illustrates the general demand for employment land and premises within North Dorset.

4.13 Table 7 identifies enquiries made between 1st January 2000 and the 31st December 2005, with the District divided into four areas surrounding the four main market towns. This data is not intended to illustrate the precise level of demand within North Dorset over this period but reflects the general size and type of sites that employment users have required, and therefore is an indication of demand categorised into market segments.

Table 7: Revealed market demand by market segment, January 2000 to December 2005

	Blandford Forum (m ²)		Gillingham (m ²)		Shaftesbury (m ²)		Sturminster Newton (m ²)		Total (m ²)	
	Enquiries	Area	Enquiries	Area	Enquiries	Area	Enquiries	Area	Enquiries	Area
Craft/Studio/Workshop	46	24,621	41	11,011	41	10,185	48	13,636	176	59,453
Industrial	70	54,647	50	17,653	50	17,457	60	25,722	230	115,479
Land	2	1,394	0	0	2	1,022	1	465	5	2,881
Light industrial	57	37,952	43	14,447	44	14,698	45	24,593	189	91,690
Office	41	21,431	31	6,944	35	12,885	27	11,998	134	53,258
Serviced Land	0	0	1	279	0	0	0	0	1	279
Serviced Office	6	1,022	9	2,564	7	2,100	7	3,252	29	8,938
Start-up	2	93	1	93	1	93	1	93	5	372
Storage Land	2	2,044	1	858	3	2,694	1	1,858	7	7,454
Warehousing	41	38,729	30	11,291	30	11,142	42	26,267	143	87,429
Total	267	181,933	207	65,140	213	72,276	232	107,884	919	427,233

Source: BDPEP – Evolutive Database

4.14 There were just over 900 enquiries in total which were generally evenly spread throughout the four areas of the District. Floorspace requirements were highest in Blandford, with the lowest floorspace demand in Gillingham. The greatest amount of enquiries were for Industrial and Light Industrial premises and land, followed by Workshops and Warehousing.

Employment Vacancies

4.15 An assessment of vacancy rates in the District can also be used to construct an overview of recent market demand. The DCLG (formerly the ODPM) produced in July 2006 a report titled *Commercial and Industrial Property Estimated Vacancy Statistics: England, 2004/05*, which estimated vacancy rates of commercial and industrial premises.

4.16 These statistics are derived from the amount of relief given on business rates for both empty and partially empty properties as reported from non domestic rates returns. As these vacancy rates are estimated they have been used with caution as they may not reflect actual vacancy rates in North Dorset, however they do provide a good illustration of vacancy trends.

4.17 Table 8 identifies that vacancy rates in the District are slightly higher than the Dorset CC Area average, but are equal to the average vacancy rate for the South West region and are lower than the England average. Excluding the year 1998/99 vacancies in the District have remained relatively static, which is similar to the general trend in the Dorset CC Area.

Table 8: Estimated percentage of vacant commercial and industrial premises
1998-2005

Area	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Christchurch	5	5	5	5	5	4	6
East Dorset	4	4	3	3	5	4	3
North Dorset	2	5	5	7	6	7	6
Purbeck	2	3	3	2	3	3	3
West Dorset	5	6	5	4	4	4	4
Weymouth & Portland	27	11	11	7	8	8	8
Bournemouth	6	6	5	4	3	5	2
Poole	4	4	5	4	6	5	6
Dorset CC Area	8	6	5	5	5	5	5
South West	6	6	5	6	6	7	6
England	7	7	7	8	8	9	9

Source: DCLG – Commercial and Industrial Property Estimated Vacancy Statistics

Business Needs and Future Market Requirements

4.18 The North Dorset Profile published in November 2004 by Dorset County Council in association with North Dorset District Council identified that employment growth is forecast to be weaker in rural Dorset than in the Bournemouth/Poole conurbation over the next decade, with an average growth rate of 0.4%. High skill level occupations are forecast to increase strongly within the District, while low skill level occupations are set to fall, in line with national trends.

4.19 The Profile identified 11 sectors which are significant to the District in terms of employment, productivity, business stocks or local specialisms. Of the 22,100 employees in North Dorset, over 80% of people work in the sectors identified in Table 9.

Table 9: Key sectors for employment in North Dorset

Public administration, education and health	Growth is expected to continue in the future, with most growth amongst managers and professionals and personal and customer service occupations. One in three people in North Dorset work in the public sector (around 6,500 people).
Distribution	This is an important sector in terms of employment with 17% of people in the District working in this sector; growth is expected to grow however productivity is low.
Tourism	The tourism sector is anticipated to fall slightly over the next five years. About one in 15 people in the District work directly in the tourism industry.
Food and Drink	Employment has steadily declined and is forecast to decline further, however it continues to be an important sector for North Dorset.
Construction	This sector is vulnerable to cyclical economic changes. Over the next five

	years, overall development is expected to decline slightly. About 1 in 20 people in the District work in the construction industry.
Engineering	This sector has steadily declined over the past decades and even faster decline is anticipated in the next five years. However, due to economic pressures relocation to lower-cost areas of the County is becoming increasingly attractive. North Dorset has over 800 people working in the engineering sector.
Agriculture and land based industries	Diversification into non-farming activities is a key growth sector while agricultural reforms continue to lead to job losses. North Dorset has over 2,000 people working in this sector.
Professional services	This sector includes real estate activities, rental and some research and development. The last decade has seen strong growth and this is expected to continue over the next 5 years. Currently 500 employees work in this sector
Computing and related services	This sector has seen large growth over the past decade and strong growth is anticipated in the future. There are roughly 300 employees in this sector within the District.
Printing and publishing	Over the past decade employment has grown slightly and is expected to continue in the future. About 200 people currently work in this sector.
Banking and insurance	Modest growth is anticipated in the next five years with about 200 employees working in this sector.

4.20 The Distribution, Food and Drink, Engineering, Professional Services, Computing and Printing sectors identified above are likely to be located primarily within employment premises. Where growth is predicted in market segments, the future requirements of these industries will need to be identified, in order to maintain suitable and adequate land for employment in the most sustainable locations.

4.21 The study titled *Sectoral change in the Bournemouth Dorset & Poole Sub-Regional Economy, 2000-2004* published in April 2006 by the BDPEP examined changes in employment and output within the County over the five year period up to December 2004.

4.22 The estimated level of employment growth in North Dorset was found to be higher than that of the overall Dorset CC Area. However, changes in employment are below the average for the South West region, where it was estimated that there was an 8% growth in jobs over the same period (Table 10). The report also estimated the change in GVA (Gross Value Added) over the same period, which identified that the economy of North Dorset grew faster than the overall growth of the Dorset CC Area and the sub region as a whole (Table 11).

Table 10: Changes in employment by authority (2000-2004)

Area	+/- in Key Sectors	% Change in Key Sectors	+/- Whole Economy	% Change Whole Economy
Christchurch	-199	-2	-955	-5
East Dorset	-455	-3	1786	7
North Dorset	552	5	1055	5
Purbeck	673	7	1137	7
West Dorset	1118	5	1819	5
Weymouth & Portland	-1207	-12	-1337	-7
Bournemouth	2758	7	2387	3
Poole	339	1	254	0
Dorset CC Area	182	0.2	3504	3
Total - Sub Region	3279	2	6145	2

Source: BDPEP, 2006

Table 11: Changes in GVA by authority (2000-2004)

Area	GVA 2000 (£'000s)	GVA 2004 (£'000s)	Change	% Change
Christchurch	596,400	658,161	61,761	10
East Dorset	854,318	1,147,988	293,670	34
North Dorset	640,262	814,633	174,371	27
Purbeck	564,882	746,555	181,673	32
West Dorset	1,079,560	1,361,419	281,859	26
Weymouth & Portland	551,154	629,260	78,106	14
Bournemouth	2,240,608	2,821,076	580,468	26
Poole	2,163,151	2,553,095	389,944	18
Dorset CC Area	4,286,410	4,371,939	85,529	25
Total - Sub Region	8,690,366	10,732,351	2,041,985	23

Source: BDPEP, 2006

4.23 Tables 12 and 13, below, illustrate the sectoral changes within the District over the same period. In terms of employment change, half of the key sectors showed a decrease in the number of people employed, however overall there was an increase of 1,055 jobs within North Dorset.

4.24 The greatest economic growth (GVA) has been in the 'energy and water' and 'construction' industries. 'Agriculture and fishing', 'manufacturing and distribution', and 'hotels and restaurants' sectors remained relatively static, while the 'transport and communications' sector fell by 9%.

Table 12: North Dorset – Employment change by key sectors

Industry	2000	2004	Change +/-	% Change +/-
1. Agriculture and fishing	790	783	-7	-1
2. Energy and water	71	93	22	31
3. Manufacturing	3,840	3,505	-335	-9
4. Construction	1,367	1,621	254	19
5. Distribution, hotels and restaurants	5,333	5,208	-125	-2
6. Transport and communications	779	644	-135	-17
7. Banking, finance and insurance, etc	1,941	1,851	-90	5
8. Public administration, education and health	5,746	6,582	836	15
9. Other services	670	1,306	636	95
Total	20,538	21,593	1,055	5

Source: BDPEP, 2006

Table 13: North Dorset – GVA changes by sector

Industry	GVA 2000 (£'000s)	GVA 2004 (£'000s)	Change +/-	% Change
1. Agriculture and fishing	26,789	29,699	2,910	11
2. Energy and water	14,051	26,877	12,826	91
3. Manufacturing	150,293	170,427	20,134	13
4. Construction	53,173	90,231	37,058	70
5. Distribution, hotels and restaurants	112,992	128,273	15,281	14
6. Transport and communications	35,064	32,055	-3,009	-9
7. Banking, finance and insurance, etc	91,670	114,096	22,426	24
8. Public administration, education and health	134,191	171,481	37,290	28
9. Other services	22,038	51,494	29,456	134
Total	640,262	814,634	174,372	27

Source: BDPEP, 2006

4.25 The above analysis of current employment sectors in the District will be used to indicate future employment land and premises requirements, as part of the latter stages of this ELR. This work will be undertaken by the Council in partnership with Dorset County Council, the SWRA and the SWRDA.

4.26 In the next chapter, current employment sites in the District will be assessed in order to identify those sites which are not currently seen as 'fit for purpose'.

5.0 Stage 1: Taking Stock of the Existing Situation

- 5.1 The main objective of this Stage is to make a simple assessment of the existing employment land portfolio as identified in the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan, in order to identify employment sites to be retained and those that should clearly be released for other uses.
- 5.2 Stage 1 comprises 5 steps:
 Step 1: Devise brief for Stage 1;
 Step 2: Collate data on land stock and revealed demand;
 Step 3: Devise and apply site appraisal criteria;
 Step 4: Undertake preliminary site appraisal
 Step 5: Confirm brief for Stages 2 and 3.
- 5.3 Steps 1, 3 and 5 are procedural steps which have been developed in consultation with the other Local Authorities in Dorset. Steps 2 to 4 will assess the employment sites which have been designated in the Local Plan.

Preliminary Site Appraisals

- 5.4 The adopted Local Plan identified 33 existing developed employment sites and 7 new employment allocations. The objective of this stage of the ELR is to appraise those sites which have been identified as performing poorly, i.e. those which are either wholly or partly undeveloped. Of these 40 employment sites, 12 were identified as being wholly or partly undeveloped, and one other site – Station Road, Gillingham – was also included in the assessment due to it being identified as facing successive losses to non B1-B8 uses. These sites are listed in Table 14. The remaining 27 sites were identified as being well occupied, and will not be the subject of further analysis at this stage of the ELR.
- 5.5 The 13 sites have been assessed against the criteria listed in Table 15 in order to identify those sites which are no longer suitable for employment use and which are recommended for release. The results of this assessment are presented in Tables 16 and 17.

Table 14: Sites appraised against the assessment criteria

LP Site Ref.	Site name	Settlement	Size (Approx.)	Type
E/2/4	The Brewery	Blandford	8.18	Existing
E/3/1	Former Unigate factory	Bourton	0.88	Existing
E/15/1	Station Road	Gillingham	4.28	Existing
E/15/2	Southern Plot Brickfields Business Park (11.7ha)	Gillingham	11.7	Existing
E/17/2	Plot rear of Back Lane	Hazelbury Bryan	0.41	Existing
E/47/2	North Dorset Business Park	Sturminster Newton	7.16	Existing
E/47/3	The Creamery Site	Sturminster Newton	1.1	Existing
E/2/6	Shaftesbury Lane	Blandford	5.12	Allocated

E/3/2	South of Lilac Cottage	Bourton	0.58	Allocated
Site I E/15/5	Peacemarsh	Gillingham	2.66	Allocated
Site L E/15/6	Park Farm	Gillingham	4.16	Allocated
E/34/2	Poultry Houses	Okeford Fitzpaine	2.89	Allocated
E/37/4	South of A30	Shaftesbury	6.2	Allocated

5.6 Please note:

- E/15/1 Station Road, Gillingham has been included in this stage of the Review as it faces particular threat from applications for other non B1-B8 uses.
- E/15/2 Southern Plot at Brickfields, Gillingham refers to the 11.7ha (approx.) of vacant greenfield land to the south of the existing employment site.
- E/17/2 Plot rear of Back Lane relates to the southern plot only which is currently vacant.

Table 15: Site appraisal criteria

Market Attractiveness Factors
Has the site been formally identified for employment for at least 10 years?
Has there been any recent development activity, within the last 5 years?
Is the site being actively marketed as an employment site?
Is the site owned by a developer or another agency known to undertake employment development?
Is the site in multiple ownership/occupation?
Is the site owned by an organisation likely to bring it forward for employment development?
Is there a valid permission for employment development, likely to meet market requirements? Or for an alternative use?
Would employment development on this site be viable, without public funding to resolve infrastructure or other on-site constraints?
Has there been any recent market activity? (this could include enquiries, sales or lettings?)
Is the site immediately available?
Sustainable Development Factors
Would the site be allocated today for employment development, measured against present sustainability criteria (including public transport and freight access, environmental impacts and brownfield/greenfield considerations)?
Is employment the only acceptable form of built development on this site (e.g. because of on-site contamination, adjoining uses or sustainable development reasons)?
Classified as brownfield?
Strategic Planning factors
Is the site within an area identified as of strategic importance to the delivery of the RSS/RES?
Is the site identified or likely to be required for a specific user or specialist use?
Is the site part of a comprehensive or long term development or regeneration proposal, which depends on the site being developed for employment uses?
Is there public funding committed (or likely to be provided) sufficient to overcome infrastructure or on-site constraints to make employment development viable?
Are there any other policy considerations, such as emerging strategic objectives or spatial vision, which should override any decision to release the site?

Table 16: Market attractiveness assessment

Site	The Brewery	Former Unigate Factory	Station Road, Gillingham	Southern Plot Brickfields Business Park (11.7ha)	Plot rear of Back Lane	North Dorset Business Park	The Creamery Site	Shaftesbury Lane	South of Lilac Cottages	Peacemarth	Park Farm	Poultry Houses	South of A30	
Market Attractiveness Factors	Has the site been formally identified for employment for at least 10 years?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	
	Has there been any recent development activity, within the last 5 years?	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
	Is the site being actively marketed as an employment site?	No	No	N/A	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
	Is the site owned by a developer or another agency known to undertake employment development?	No	No	N/A	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
	Is the site in multiple ownership/occupation?	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	
	Is the site owned by an organisation likely to bring it forward for employment development?	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Is there a valid permission for employment development, likely to meet market requirements? Or for an alternative use?	No	No	N/A	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
	Would employment development on this site be viable, without public funding to resolve infrastructure or other on-site constraints?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Has there been any recent market activity? (this could include enquiries, sales or lettings?)	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
	Is the site immediately available?	No	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Part	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

(Sites in bold are recommended to be released through the LDF process)

Table 17: Sustainable development and strategic planning factors assessment

Site	The Brewery	Former Unigate Factory	Station Road, Gillingham	Southern Plot Brickfields Business Park (11.7ha)	Plot rear of Back Lane	North Dorset Business Park	The Creamery Site	Shafesbury Lane	South of Lilac Cottages	Peacemash	Park Farm	Poultry Houses	South of A30	
Sustainable Development Factors	Would the site be allocated today for employment development, measured against present sustainability criteria (including public transport and freight access, environmental impacts and brownfield/greenfield considerations)?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Is employment the only acceptable form of built development on this site (e.g. because of on-site contamination, adjoining uses or sustainable development reasons)?	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
	Classified as brownfield?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Strategic Planning Factors	Is the site within an area identified as of strategic importance to the delivery of the RSS/RES?	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Is the site identified or likely to be required for a specific user or specialist use?	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
	Is the site part of a comprehensive or long term development or regeneration proposal, which depends on the site being developed for employment uses?	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Is there public funding committed (or likely to be provided) sufficient to overcome infrastructure or on-site constraints to make employment development viable?	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Are there any other policy considerations, such as emerging strategic objectives or spatial vision, which should override any decision to release the site?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

(Sites in bold are recommended to be released through the LDF process)

5.7 This assessment provides a general overview of the 12 sites which are currently partly or wholly vacant and the Station Road, Gillingham site. The total vacant land on these sites is approximately 42ha, with the largest vacant land remaining located on the Brickfields Business Park, Gillingham. Taking the market, sustainability and strategic factors into account, and the assessment of future employment needs in the District, it can be concluded that there is limited scope for releasing many of the vacant sites.

Sites to be Retained

5.8 The sites below should be retained as employment sites as they meet the market, sustainability and strategic assessment factors assessed in this Review. Although these sites are currently vacant in some part, it has been identified that these employment sites are of at least local importance and would contribute to the Council's sustainable development objectives. These sites have the potential to fulfil the strategic employment development target of the District as set out in the Structure Plan and are likely to be supported by the Regional Spatial Strategy; therefore they should not, at this stage, be considered for release:

- Southern Plot Brickfields Business Park, Gillingham
- North Dorset Business Park, Sturminster Newton
- Shaftesbury Lane, Blandford
- Peacemarsh, Gillingham
- Park Farm, Gillingham
- South of A30, Shaftesbury
- South of Lilac Cottages, Bourton

Sites Requiring Further Investigation

5.9 Three sites were identified as having particular issues with their current designation and are recommended to be assessed through the LDF process, for their potential as mixed use, regeneration schemes:

- The Brewery, Blandford
- Station Road, Gillingham
- The Creamery, Sturminster Newton

The Brewery, Blandford

5.10 The owners of the site are currently in the early stages of negotiation with the Council and are consulting with the local community on the future role of the site. The majority of the site is currently vacant since the recent closure of the canning and bottling plant. As an edge of town centre this site scores well in terms of the sustainability test and has the potential to provide a well designed, mixed-use development promoting the vitality and viability of the town in terms of employment, retail, leisure and residential uses. This site is

recommended for further assessment and consideration in the LDF process, potentially as a mixed use site.

Station Road, Gillingham

- 5.11 Nearly a third of the original employment allocation in the Local Plan has been identified as being lost to B1-B8 uses. This site scores well in terms of the sustainability test and continued employment activity would be supported. However, the mixed uses on site, especially the residential element on the former Oakwoods site, mean that the potential acceptable employment uses are diminished due to likely amenity issues. This site is recommended for further assessment and consideration in the LDF process, potentially as a mixed use site.

The Creamery, Sturminster Newton

- 5.12 The site currently has an outstanding planning permission for storage and distribution (B8) however the site is currently vacant. This site scores well in terms of the sustainability test and an employment use would be acceptable on this site. However, this site should be assessed further through the LDF process as it is an edge of town centre site and has the potential to complement the Livestock Market scheme, as a mixed use site.

Sites Recommended to be Released as Employment Sites

- 5.13 Four sites were identified as scoring poorly in the assessment, especially in terms of their ability to meet market requirements and the fact that if these sites were assessed today, in the light of current national, regional and local guidance, they would be unlikely to be designated for employment uses. The four sites should be released at this stage as they should no longer be identified as sustainable and acceptable sites for future B1-B8 employment uses:

- Former Unigate Factory, Bourton
- Plot rear of Back Lane, Hazelbury Bryan
- Poultry Houses, Okeford Fitzpaine

Former Unigate Factory, Bourton

This site has a recent planning history, concerning a proposal for mixed use development of the whole site. However the site scores very poorly on accessibility and sustainability grounds and it would be highly unlikely that this site would be identified for employment uses in a future Local Development Document (LDD).

Plot rear of Back Lane, Hazelbury Bryan

This greenfield site has been identified for over 10 years and there has been no planning history or market interest for employment uses. Currently the site houses two agricultural sheds and it can be concluded that there is no

B1-B8 employment use occurring on this land. The site is a considerable distance from the A and B road networks and does not meet the sustainability test.

Poultry Houses, Okeford Fitzpaine

This site was allocated for the specific relocation of the factory off Higher Street, Okeford Fitzpaine, currently operated by Faccenda Ltd. However, there have not been any further negotiations with the company concerning this relocation. The site scores poorly in terms of the sustainability test, having poor access to the A or B road network and being a greenfield site.

Summary

- 5.14 The ELR cannot formally change the planning designation of any site; this can only take place through the statutory plan making process. This part of the ELR has, however, identified those sites that the Council recommends for release as employment designated land. The sites at Hazelbury Bryan, Bourton and Okeford Fitzpaine have been identified as performing poorly against the assessment criteria, and are recommended for eventual release through the relevant documents of the LDF. Their proposed 'release' as employment sites, however, does not in any way imply that other forms of built development, including residential development, would be appropriate.
- 5.15 Of the 40 sites identified in the adopted Local Plan, 27 were not assessed as they were identified as being well established and performing well as sites for employment. The remaining 13 sites were assessed to identify those sites that should be retained, assessed further, or recommended for release during the LDF process (Table 18). It is recommended that three sites should be released from their current employment use through the LDF process and a further three should be assessed for their potential to accommodate mixed use development.

Table 18: Summary of recommendations

LP Site Ref:	Site name	Settlement	Area (ha)
Sites to be Retained			
Part E/15/2	Southern Plot Brickfields Business Park (11.7ha)	Gillingham	11.7
E/47/2	North Dorset Business Park	Sturminster Newton	7.16
E/2/6	Shaftesbury Lane	Blandford	5.12
E/15/5	Peacemarth	Gillingham	2.66
E/15/6	Park Farm	Gillingham	4.16
E/37/4	South of A30	Shaftesbury	6.2
E/3/2	South of Lilac Cottages	Bourton	0.58
Sites Requiring Further Investigation			
E/2/4	The Brewery	Blandford	8.18
E/15/1	Station Road, Gillingham	Gillingham	4.28
E/47/3	The Creamery Site	Sturminster Newton	1.1
Sites to be Released			
E/3/1	Former Unigate Factory	Bourton	0.88
Part E/17/2	Plot rear of Back Lane	Hazelbury Bryan	0.41
E/34/2	Poultry Houses	Okeford Fitzpaine	2.89

5.16 The concluding stages of this ELR will be contained within a second document which will apply the information identified in this document to the identified future employment needs in the District. This work will be undertaken by the Council in partnership with Dorset County Council, as the countywide strategic planning authority.

6.0 Glossary

Core Strategy		The main DPD that sets out the long-term spatial vision and strategic objectives for the local planning authority's area, with core policies to implement that vision.
Development Plan		The Council has regard to the development plan when determining planning applications. It is comprised of the District-Wide Local Plan, and both the County-Wide Structure Plan and Minerals and Waste Plan
Development Plan Document	DPD	A spatial planning document prepared by the local planning authority and subject to extensive public consultation and independent examination, which forms part of the LDF.
Employment Land Review	ELR	A review of current and future employment needs relevant to the District, which will be used as part of the evidence base for the LDF.
Gross Value Added	GVA	Gross value added is the difference between output and <i>intermediate consumption</i> for any given sector/industry. That is the difference between the value of goods and services produced and the cost of raw materials and other inputs which are used up in production.
Local Development Document	LDD	Any adopted document making up part of the LDF.
Local Development Framework	LDF	Comprises the portfolio of documents prepared by the local planning authority. It sets out a framework for the spatial strategy of the area. It will consist of a LDS, a SCI and a number of LDDs.
Local Plan		The adopted North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan, 2003
Planning Policy Guidance note	PPG	Set out the UK Government's national policies on different aspects of planning.
Planning Policy Statement	PPS	Set out the UK Government's national policies on different aspects of planning. They are gradually replacing the Planning Policy Guidance notes.
Regional Spatial Strategy	RSS	Regional policy prepared by the Regional Assembly which is the regional planning body.
Structure Plan		CSP 28 Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan, 2001
Super Output Area	SOA	A relatively new geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are now widely used by the local government sector instead of the local ward boundaries.
Use Classes Order		Sets out various classes of uses for the purpose of determining the lawful use of land or premises and clarifies when a change of use requires planning permission.

Appendix A – Site Boundaries Review



Sites E/2/4 and E/2/5
The Brewery and Stour Park
Blandford



Scale: 1:2,700

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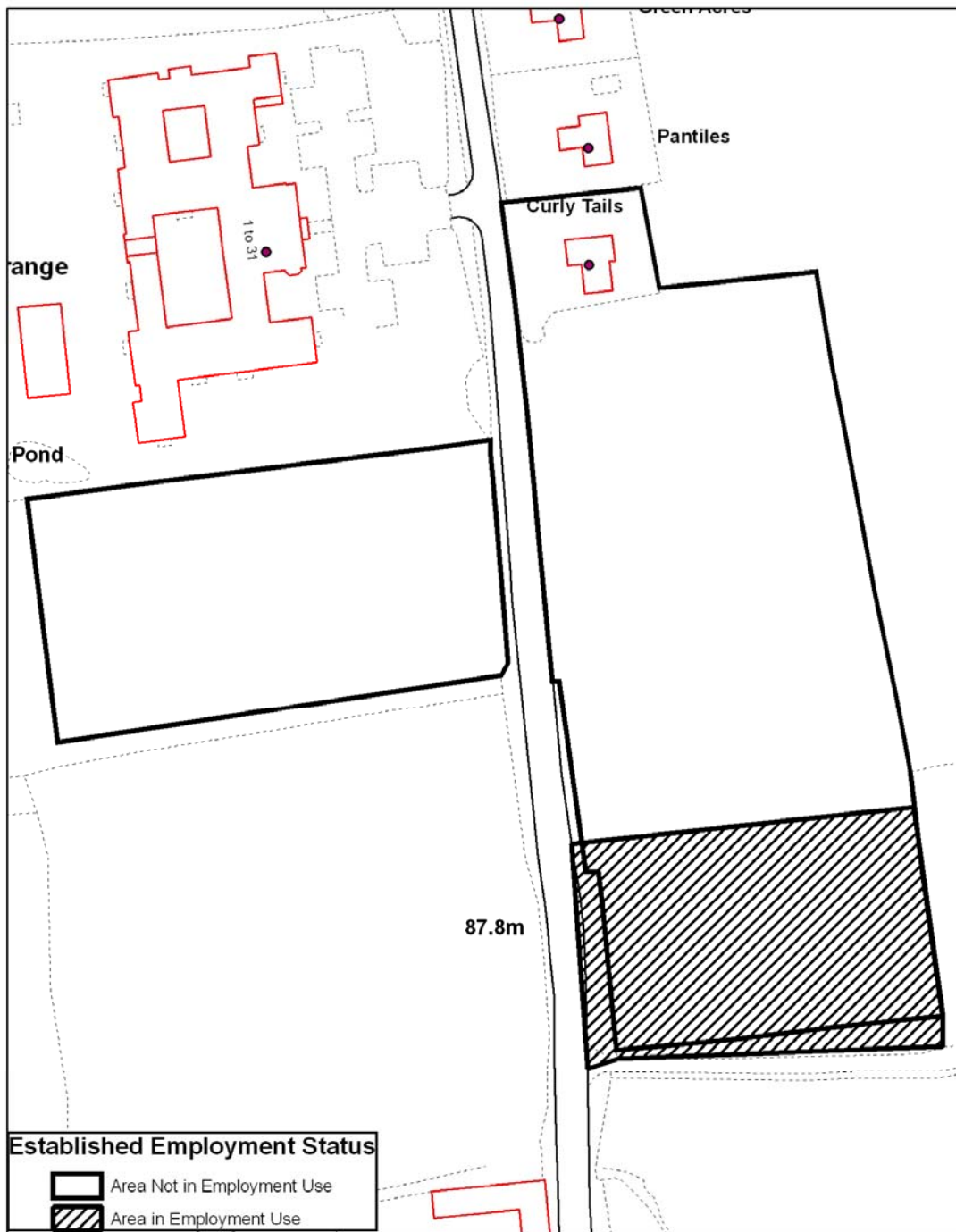
Site E/15/1
 Station Road
 Gillingham



Scale: 1:2,400

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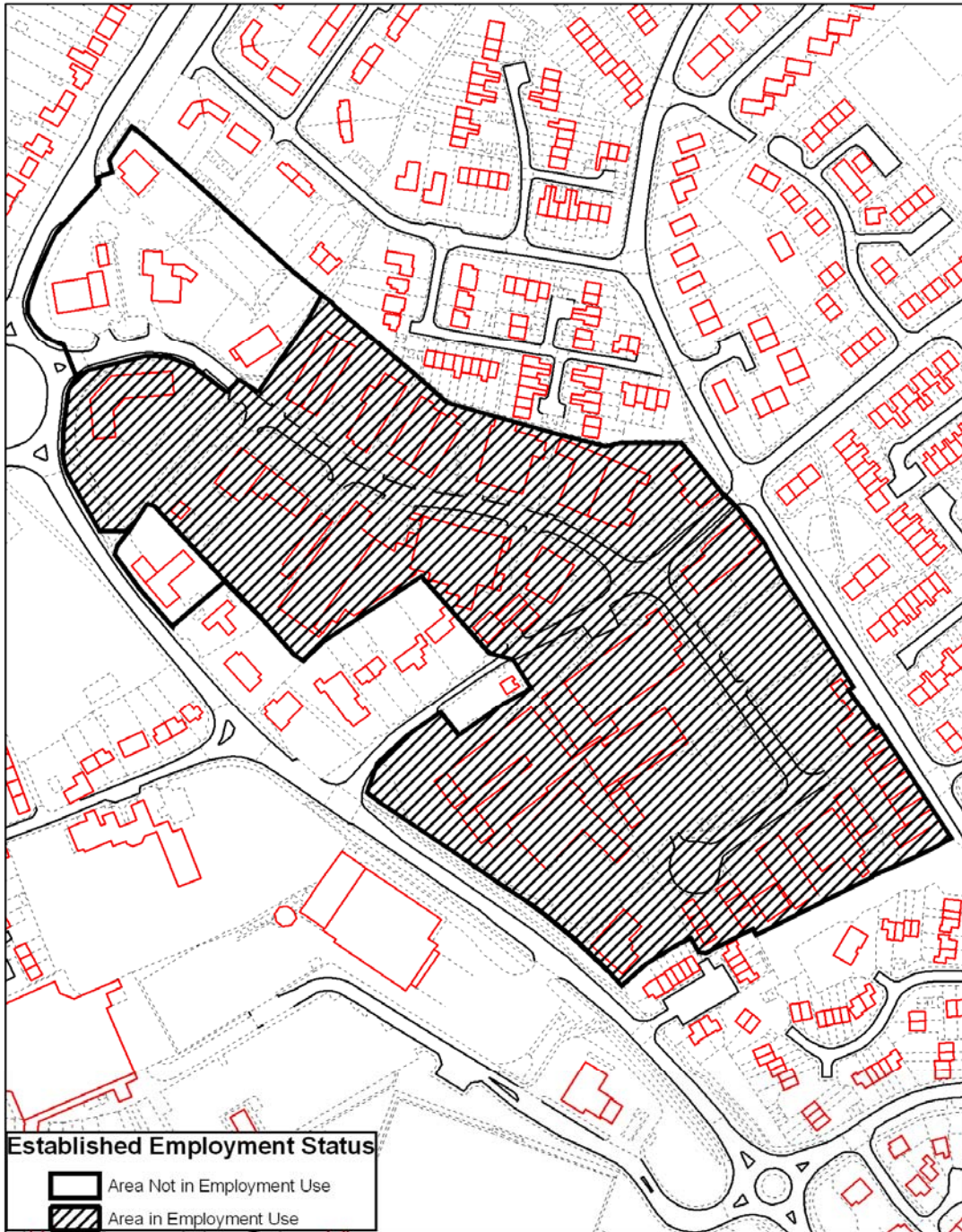
Site E/33/1
Case & Sons
Motcombe



Scale: 1:1,000

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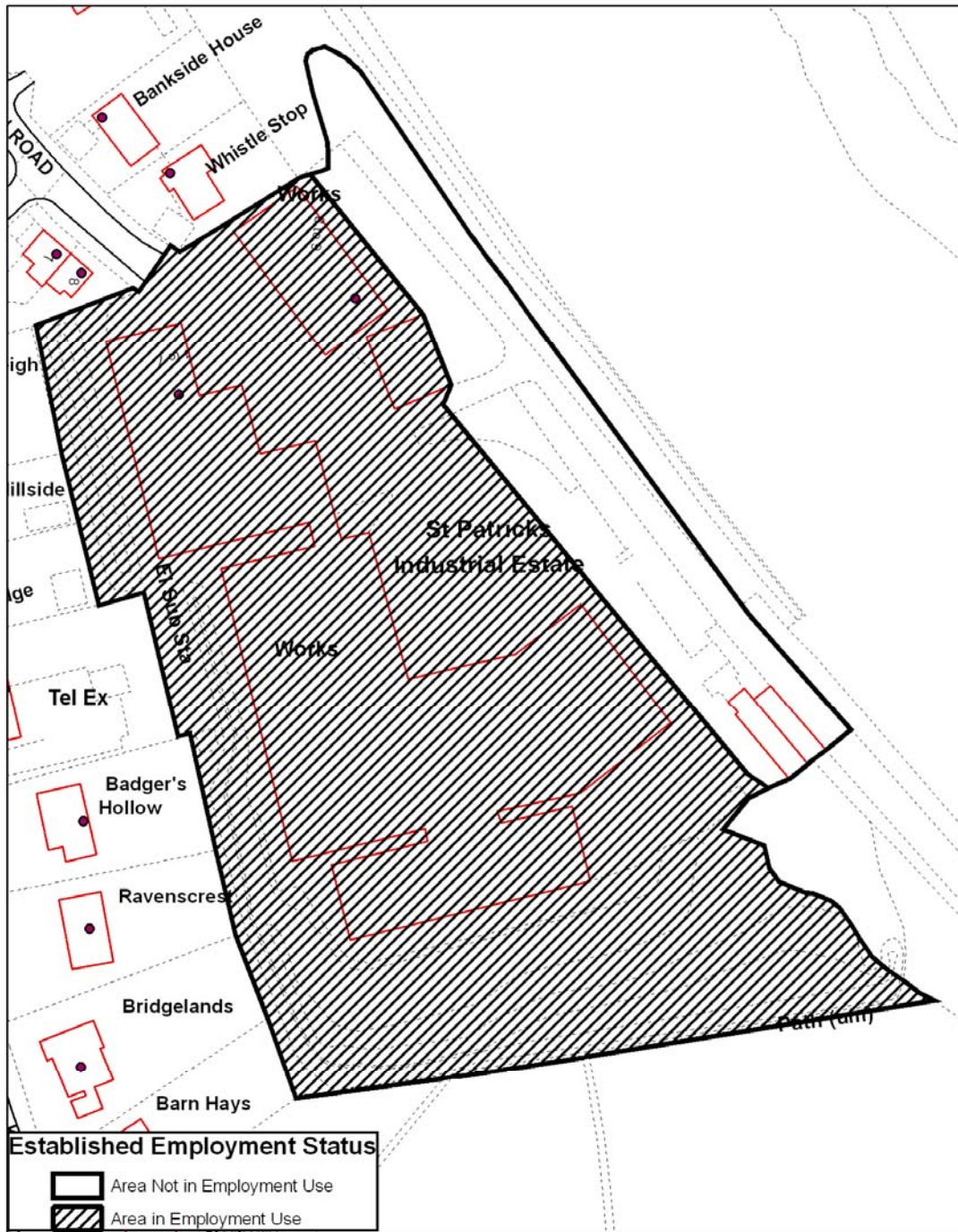
Site E/37/1
 Longmead Industrial Estate
 Shaftesbury



Scale: 1:2,500



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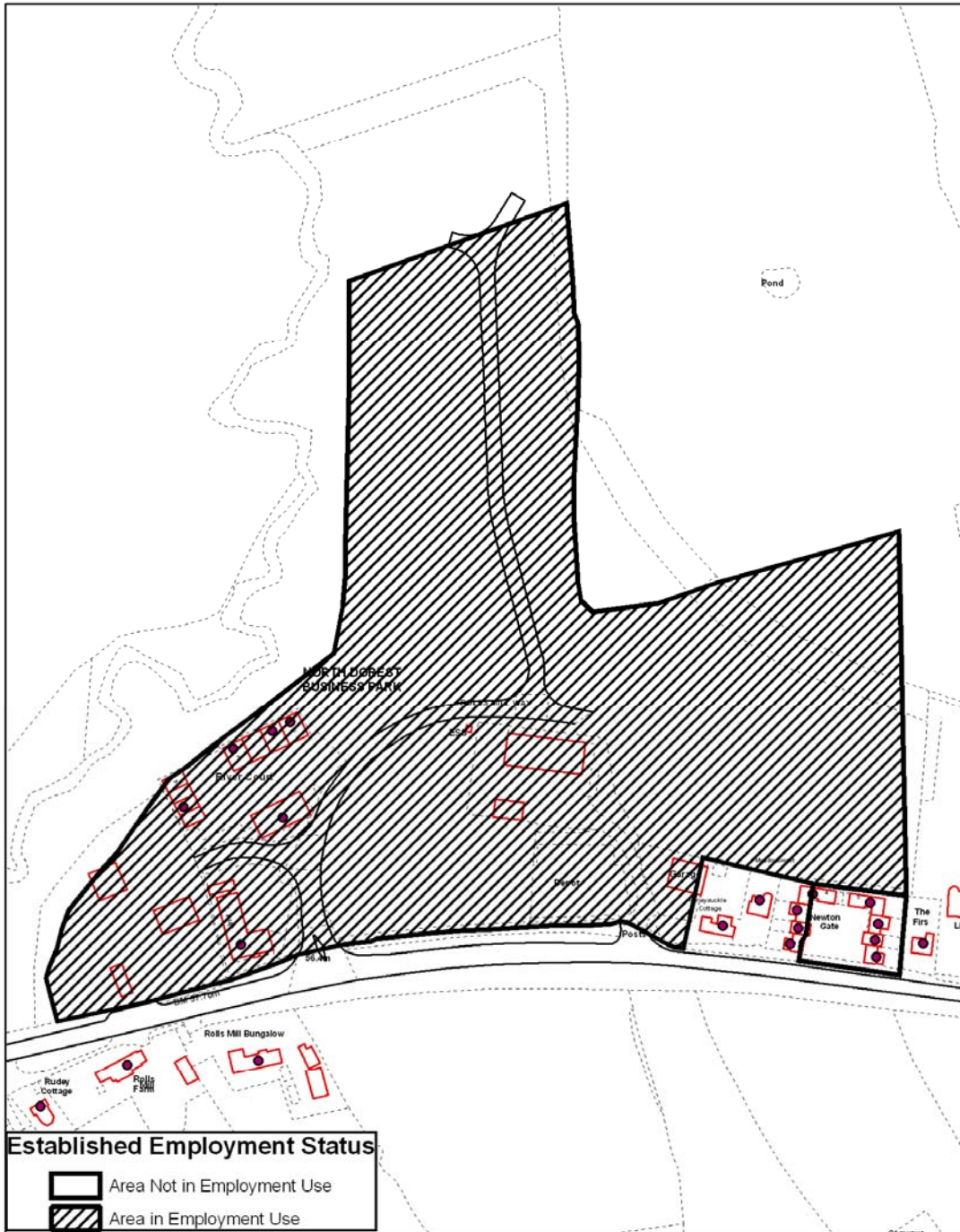


Site E/38/1
 St. Patricks Industrial Estate
 Shillingstone



Scale: 1:1,000

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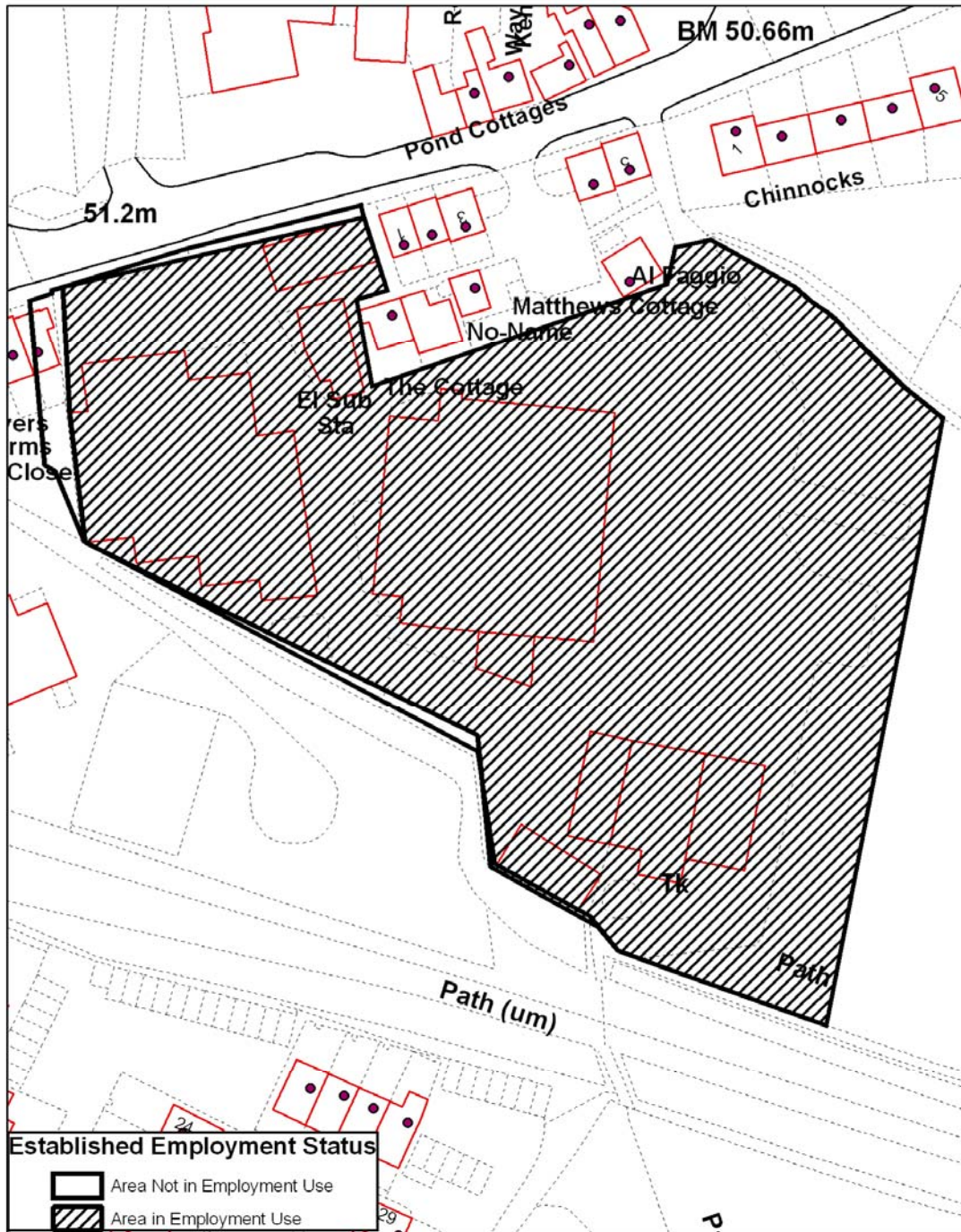
Site E/47/2
 North Dorset Business Park
 Sturminster Newton



Scale: 1:2,300

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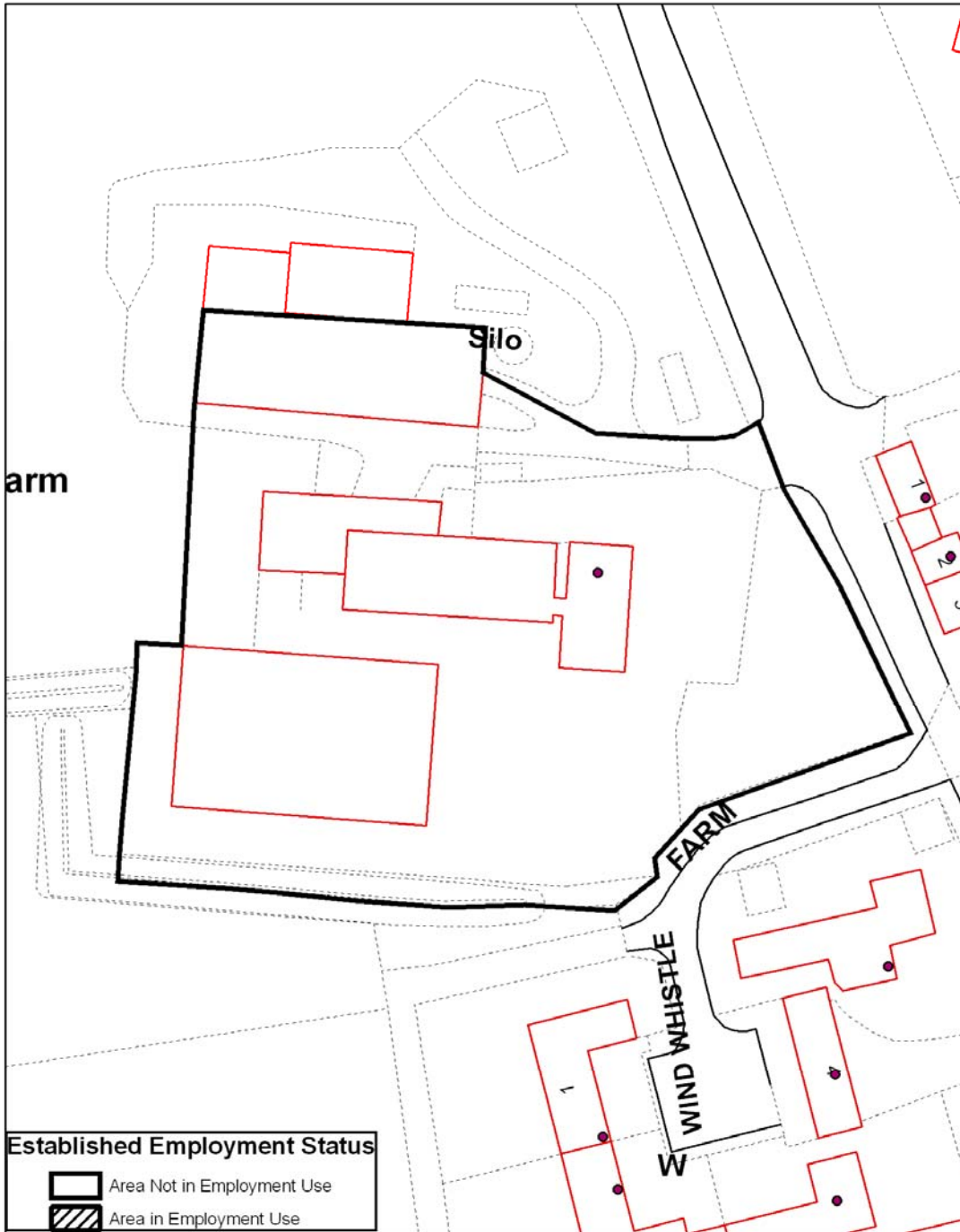
Site E/47/3
 The Creamery Site
 Sturminster Newton



Scale: 1:800

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Site E/57/1
 North Street
 Winterborne Kingston



Scale: 1:700

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Site I
Peacemarsh
Gillingham



Scale: 1:1,400

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Site L
Park Farm
Gillingham

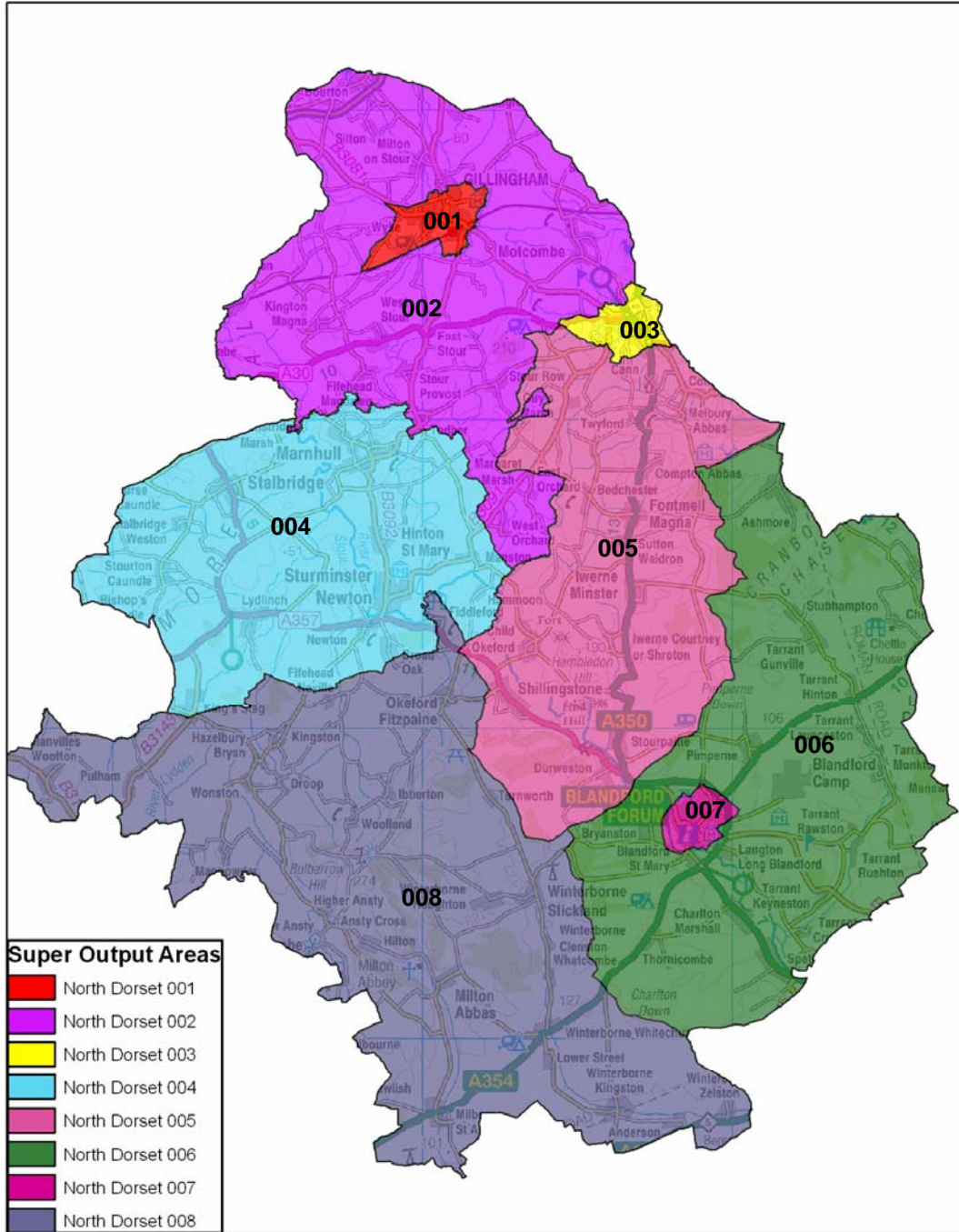


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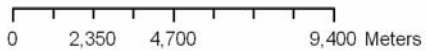
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Appendix B – Super Output Areas



North Dorset - Super Output Areas



Scale: 1:158,758



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www.north-dorset.gov.uk

The logo for North Dorset District Council, featuring the words "North Dorset" in a stylized, cursive font above the words "DISTRICT COUNCIL" in a simple, uppercase sans-serif font. A horizontal line is positioned below the text.