

**CHRISTCHURCH AND EAST DORSET CORE STRATEGY EXAMINATION
DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

CHRISTCHURCH AND EAST DORSET CORE STRATEGY VISION

1 GENERAL

- 1.1 The Core Strategy Vision contains the following reference to a Christchurch Bypass:

“Christchurch Borough Council will continue to press for the development of a Christchurch Bypass as a long term solution to the town’s traffic problems.”

- 1.2 The concept of a bypass or outer relief road for Christchurch has been discussed for many years, and possible routes were set out in the draft Christchurch Borough Local Plan in 1995.
- 1.3 Proposals for the bypass did not progress into the deposit local plan, and have not formed part of any development or transport plan since, primarily due to cost and environmental implications, as well as changes in Government policy towards road building.

2 THE WORDING OF THE CORE STRATEGY VISION

- 2.1 Despite the absence of any proposals, there is strong public and political support locally for some form of transport solution to traffic congestion in Christchurch. This has been reinforced by the findings of the South East Dorset Transport Study which identified Christchurch town centre as one of the most congested parts of the South East Dorset conurbation.
- 2.2 The Council recognises the financial and environmental constraints which affect progress of an outer relief road for Christchurch, but nevertheless wish to demonstrate an aspiration to see the town’s traffic problems resolved.
- 2.3 The wording of the Vision is intended to indicate the Council’s aspirations to explore long term solutions.

3 NATURAL ENGLAND’S CONCERNS

- 3.1 As part of their representations, Natural England has raised objection to the reference to the bypass in the Core Strategy Vision.
- 3.2 Natural England believe that specific reference to a Christchurch Bypass is unsound because it supports a proposal which has not been subject to any detailed Habitats Regulations Assessment.

- 3.3 Natural England has however proposed alternative wording of this sentence as follows:

Christchurch Borough Council will continue to press for the development of a ~~Christchurch Bypass~~ as a long term solution to the town's traffic problems.

- 3.4 Natural England has approached the Council to seek agreement on revised wording as a proposed modification to the Vision which would then remove their objections.

4 AGREED REVISED WORDING

- 4.1 Following some further discussion, the Council has proposed the following revised wording of this sentence:

Christchurch Borough Council will continue to press for the development of options for a ~~Christchurch Bypass~~ as a long term solutions to the town's traffic problems beyond the plan period, including the possible future provision of a by-pass, subject to any options proposed at that time meeting the necessary local and national policy requirements .

- 4.2 This wording has been agreed with Natural England, and Dorset County Council as Transport Authority.
- 4.4 The Council will now add this to a draft list of major modifications for the Inspector to consider.