

Core Strategy

10 Managing the Natural Environment Background Paper

Pre-Submission Consultation
2nd April – 25th June 2012



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East Dorset District Council

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1 Introduction

1.1 This background paper is one of a number of papers produced as part of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Development Framework (LDF) to inform the Pre – Submission Core Strategy. This particular paper sets out the refinement of policy options for the Core Strategy Managing the Natural Environment chapter following consultation undertaken between October 2010 – January 2011 on the Core Strategy ‘Options for Consideration’ document. Specifically, the Managing the Natural Environment chapter sets out policy options associated with protecting the natural environment, climate change and sustainable development.

1.2 Preparation of the Pre - Submission Core Strategy Managing the Natural Environment chapter has involved consideration of the following:

- National and local policy;
- Core Strategy ‘Options for Consideration’ consultation and ongoing engagement;
- Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment, Health Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment;
- The Local Development Framework Evidence Base;
- Infrastructure delivery and viability.

1.3 This background paper also identifies, where appropriate, strategic infrastructure requirements to support the policy options within the Managing the Natural Environment chapter which feeds into the wider Core Strategy infrastructure delivery plan and preparation of the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.

1.4 This paper should be read in conjunction with the following key issue papers prepared in refining Core Strategy options from initial issues and options consultation undertaken in March 2008 to the ‘Options for Consideration’ consultation undertaken from October 2010 – January 2011.

- **Key Issue Paper 01: Managing and Enhancing the Natural Environment**
- **Key Issue Paper 02: Climate Change and Sustainable Development**

2 Formation of Pre Submission Options

2.1 This section provides a critical assessment of the options put forward for consultation in the Managing the Natural Environment chapter of the 'Options for Consideration' Core Strategy and provides recommendations for the policy approach to be adopted in the Pre-Submission Core Strategy. The assessment process examines the consultation response received to the 'Options for Consideration' document and key issues arising from this engagement process. The formation of Pre-Submission policy options also considers any recent changes in national policy and updates to the evidence base which supplements the policy and evidence review undertaken within the key issue papers listed in the introduction. The assessment below also takes into account key conclusions of the sustainability appraisal, habitats regulations assessment, health impact assessment and equalities impact assessment undertaken for the 'Options for Consideration' Core Strategy. A summary of all the proposed Pre-Submission policy options for the Managing the Natural Environment chapter is set out at the end of this paper.

Issue and Options Identified in 'Options for Consideration' Core Strategy:

Managing and Enhancing the Natural Environment

2.2 Issue: How can we continue to protect sensitive habitats and species from the pressures of development?

Preferred Option ME 1

Criteria-based development assessment for Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The Core Strategy policy will be based upon the principle of avoiding adverse affects to designated sites of biodiversity or geological importance within and adjoining Christchurch and East Dorset that may occur as a result of development. Policy will aim to protect, maintain and enhance the condition of nature conservation sites through the development process. In doing this, the policy should reflect the commitment to the Dorset Biodiversity Principles, with those specifically relevant to the Core Strategy:

- Reflect targets identified for local areas for species and habitat protection.
- Help raise awareness of the need for biodiversity conservation in the local context.
- Look for opportunities for conservation and enhancement of the whole biodiversity resource.
- Provide a basis for monitoring progress in biodiversity conservation.

Applicants will need to demonstrate that any proposed development will not result in adverse impacts on any internationally, nationally or locally designated site. To determine the likelihood of harm occurring, the following criteria should be addressed when development is proposed:

- Assess if any existing habitats, species and/or features of nature conservation importance are likely to be affected by the development, and to carry out a survey to document the results. The method of survey and level of detail will vary according to size and type of development, whether any protected species or habitats exist on site and may involve consultation with Natural England.
- Informed by the initial survey information, avoid existing sensitive habitats and species through careful site selection, development design and phasing of construction work.
- Site layout and design should retain existing habitats and features of interest and provide buffer zones around sensitive areas
- Provide new benefits to biodiversity by enhancing existing habitats or creating new ones, with consideration of the priority habitats referred to in the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy and the Strategic Nature Areas identified on the South West Nature Map.
- Where harm is likely to result, developments will be expected to provide measures to adequately avoid or mitigate that harm. If adequate mitigation cannot be provided, development may be refused.
- Provision must be made for the appropriate management of the retained and new features. Species and habitats should also be monitored for a suitable time period after the development to indicate any increases or declines in species numbers or habitat quality. Any declines would require corrective measures to halt or reverse the trend.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 1	9	4	0	13

Table 2.1

2.3 General support was recorded for this option including from the RSPB. Those comments that objected related to the apparent lack of inclusion of local communities in the decision making when determining the balance between the natural environment and development, and the inclusion of specific nature conservation details within the option.

2.4 Natural England

- Object to there being no clear policy framework to inform potential developers of expectations in relation to SSSI and SNCI conditions generally, as there is through the framework developed for recreational pressures on heathland SSSIs. Policy measures should be expanded such that development is expected to provide for the recovery of SSSI and SNCI to favourable conditions where the context is appropriate, either as part of the development package or through contributions to off-site measures.
- The option should also refer to compensation such as habitat re-creation in circumstances where harm cannot be fully mitigated for and considerations for the development outweigh those for the site designation.
- The Core Strategy should contain a positive policy for habitat creation and re-creation.

2.5 Response: Contributions to off-site measures may be dependent on what is possible in the emerging CIL and s106 regulations in terms of what can be asked for. However the Natural Environment White Paper suggests voluntary biodiversity offsetting that could cover this issue. There are also links to what may be delivered through the SE Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy which has as a theme habitat creation and restoration. Option ME6 - Landscape scale biodiversity does also cover the issue of habitat creation / re-creation.

2.6 Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT)

- Wish the Core Strategy to reflect the desire to protect natural assets/habitats and species strengthened to protect.
- Clarification required of the source of the Dorset Biodiversity Principles as the 'Key Biodiversity Principles as set out in the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy'.
- Would like added 'and other features of nature conservation importance' to the option wording regarding the the principle of avoiding adverse affects to designated sites in Christchurch and East Dorset.
- The Dorset Biodiversity Protocol and Bat/Barn Owl Protocols are recommended to be followed when carrying out surveys on proposed development sites. Surveys should also cover the complete site where change is proposed, including SANGs, landscaping areas or neighbouring areas likely to be effected.
- The Dorset Nature Map is now better to refer to than the South West Nature Map, as with the proposed abolition of the RSS and regional planning generally, going forward, local evidence for Dorset will become more relevant.
- Suggested rewording of penultimate bullet point to 'Where harm is likely to result, developments will be expected to provide adequate measures to avoid or mitigate that harm. If adequate mitigation cannot be provided, development will be refused'.
- Query how the monitoring and management will be enforced. Suggest it is difficult to achieve unless handed over to a suitable organisation and funded.

2.7 Response: Clarification to option wording is noted. The Dorset Biodiversity Protocol, introduced in April 2011, is used by East Dorset.

2.8 East Dorset Environment Theme Action Group (ETAG)

- Support option but with following conditions:
 - Any survey work should be carried out over a 12 month period to take account of all seasons
 - Surveys must be independent and adequately target relevant habitats and species

- Buffer zones around features of interest should be of sufficient size to allow for gradual development between development and natural habitats
 - Support need for ongoing maintenance of sites, undertaken by people fully qualified to do the work. Suggest EDCMS (East Dorset Countryside Management Services) are best placed to do this in East Dorset.
 - Amendment to penultimate bullet point, 'Where harm is likely to result, developments will be expected to provide measures either to avoid or to mitigate that harm adequately.'
 - Support proposal to refuse development consent where it cannot mitigate its impacts, which is essential for progress in establishing a coherent and resilient ecological network.
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- With regards the natural environment, recommend it should be valued for its own sake and for the contribution it makes to people's health and well-being.
 - Recommend that the distinctive and varied natural habitats of East Dorset should be conserved and enhanced through extension, linkage, and positive management. Particular attention should be given to those habitats of principal importance listed under section 41 of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities Act 2006
 - Note the findings of the independent review panel chaired by Professor Lawton and published by DEFRA.
 - Core Strategy should contain more detail from PPS1, particularly with regards the limits of the environment to accept further development without irreversible damage and to take account of the protection of groundwater from contamination, light pollution and the conservation of soil quality.

2.9 Response: Some of the conditions referred to such as buffer zones and length of survey would better fit within either more detailed subsequent Development Plan Documents or supplementary guidance to support the broader Core Strategy policies. The issues raised in Lawton's independent review and subsequent government advice and covered in the section 'Consideration of Evidence and Policy' below, as well as through the preferred options relating to Green Infrastructure and landscape-scale biodiversity, which it must be ensured are taken forward into the draft policies within the Pre-Submission Core Strategy.

2.10 Environment Agency

- Support this and the suite of preferred options to protect the natural environment. For ME1, suggest text supporting Otters should be included, in particular in relation to new and improved road schemes which will need to adequately mitigate for any potential impacts on them.
- In general terms, the chapter should look to incorporate the recommendations contained within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 for Christchurch and East Dorset and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 for Christchurch only.

2.11 Response: The Strategic Flood Risk Assessments are referred to in the section 'Consideration of Evidence and Policy' below, but in summary the assessments identify areas susceptible to flooding. These areas have the potential for some recreational uses as well as for biodiversity improvement, which through specific management could improve flood storage capabilities. Details regarding the impacts on Otters may be better placed in more site specific Development Plan Documents or through accompanying supplementary guidance.

2.12 Hurn Parish Council

- Object and wish to ensure that any habitat re-creation does not infringe on existing robust natural / semi-natural areas identified by local communities for recreational use and not be to the detriment of other natural species, the loss of productive forestry operations or contrary to government objectives at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It should also be undertaken in consultation with local communities.
- Acknowledge importance of robust areas to support fragile habitats, which should be identified by local communities and displayed on a map.
- Ensure statutorily registered common land remains with unrestricted access.

2.13 Response: Fully acknowledge the need to include local communities in the decision making process when such sites are formally identified, particularly through their local knowledge of how sites are currently used, and what might be needed for future areas to ensure projects are a success. This detail will come out of subsequent work from the Core Strategy, including the identification of such sites on a map.

2.14 Woodland Trust

- The Trust would like to see the option reflect the biodiversity need for and benefits from native woodland and are specifically promoted for positive new expansion. The opportunity to provide new compensatory woodland creation is noted in response to the deforestation of wooded heathland sites where there is a return to open habitats.

2.15 Response: Creation of new native woodland is encompassed within landscape biodiversity improvements (option ME6) and the emerging Nature Improvement Areas.

2.16 General Comments

- A definition of biodiversity was requested at the outset of the chapter.
- No mention of Hurn Parish Plan in the chapter.
- Sixpenny Handley with Pentridge Parish Council were concerned that the wider rural area to the north of East Dorset shouldn't be overlooked as this option and the chapter generally appear to almost entirely focus on the sensitive coastal and heathland habitats. They acknowledge though that these areas are important.
- The issues of light pollution and effects on wildlife was raised, particularly in relation to the new neighbourhoods and urban extensions proposed.
- Insufficient weight given in the Strategy to the desirability of maintaining, protecting, and wherever possible restoring both rivers and their corridors including the River Stour, River Allen and Moors River System.
- Developing secondary woodland is also valuable for biodiversity, carbon retention and landscape. Impacts experienced on heathland sites are also of relevance to other habitats, including and perhaps especially, woodland.
- There is a requirement to balance the sometimes conflicting demands of human habitation and SSSIs. For example the slopes and top plateau of St Catherine's Hill.
- Planning Policy should not prohibit development in the countryside - a mix of housing and employment opportunities are essential for the sustainability of rural communities.
- The section of the Core Strategy needs better to reflect best practice and contain a spatial expression of the policy intent.

2.17 Response: At the time of preparing the background work for the Core Strategy Options document, the Hurn Parish Plan was in progress but not complete. It is referred to below under 'Consideration of Evidence and Policy'.

2.18 River corridors are referred to in the South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy, but it is noted that greater emphasis is need in this section to refer to them.

2.19 Greater use of mapping is expected to be used in the Pre-Submission and Submission Core Strategy documents to better represent the draft policies they will contain.

2.20 The issues of light pollution are fully noted, but likely best dealt with in more detail at subsequent stages following the Core Strategy.

2.21 Natural Environment Focus Group

- Ensure information to work from is up to date when identifying sites.
- Potential inaccuracies in current data sources, i.e. Strategic Nature Areas (SNA).
- There is a need to safeguard future areas that have the potential for habitat re-creation

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

Natural Environment White Paper. The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature, 2011. HM Government.

2.22 The paper is Government's broad response to the Lawton Report (Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network, 2010. Professor Sir John Lawton) that concluded nature in England was highly fragmented and unable to respond effectively to new pressures such as climate and demographic change. The report set out a series of recommendations that included ecological networks, including areas for restoration are identified and protected through local planning.

2.23 It proposes a new Biodiversity Strategy for England, which is now published. It also proposes establishing cross boundary Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs), which in Dorset is likely to take on and expand the role that is currently undertaken by the Dorset Biodiversity Partnership (a Dorset LNP bid submitted in October 2011 is currently being considered by Government). Outcomes from these partnerships are expected to be reflected in local plans. They are also encouraged to establish strong links with the emerging Local Enterprise Partnerships. Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs) will be created, delivered by local partnerships which will work in a similar way to the Strategic Nature Areas (SNAs) that were highlighted on the South West Nature Map. These are large areas of opportunity for habitat improvement and reconnection. A new voluntary approach to biodiversity offsets will be established.

2.24 The White Paper also pushes for greater links between economic growth and the natural environment, whether it be directly through food, timber and energy or indirectly through climate regulation, water purification and soil productivity.

2.25 The close links between public health and the natural environment are reinforced, particularly through the designation of new Local Green Areas and Green Infrastructure partnerships.

UK National Ecosystem Assessment (2011). The UK National Ecosystem Assessment: Synthesis of the Key Findings. UNEP-WCMC.

2.26 This document provides the first analysis of the UK's natural environment in terms of the benefits it provides to society and economic prosperity. It places emphasis on the role of ecosystems in relation to the services it provides to the population. The key findings suggest that biodiversity and its constituent ecosystems are critically important to the populations well-being and economic prosperity, but are undervalued by conventional economic analysis and decision making. Many of the the UK's ecosystems are in long term decline. A combination of population growth and climate change are expected to place further pressure on ecosystem services (these are the services provided by the natural environment that can clean air and water; enables society to produce food, fuel and raw materials from the land and sea; regulates climate, flood waters and filters pollution. It also provides personal benefits to health and happiness.)

2.27 A move to sustainable development will require an appropriate mixture of regulations, technology, financial investment, education and changes in individual behaviour.

Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (DEFRA, 2011)

2.28 The strategy both builds on the Natural Environment White Paper and provides a picture on how EU commitments are being implemented in response to the recent endorsement of the EU Biodiversity Strategy. The aim is to halt overall biodiversity loss, support well-functioning ecosystems and establish ecological networks, through a more integrated large-scale approach, greater community involvement, reducing environmental pressures and improvement of knowledge. Planning and development are seen as ways as reducing environmental pressures through changes to the planning system.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2010 (Amended 2011).

2.29 The Habitat Regulations 2010 update and replace the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 and make provision for implementing the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) and certain aspects of the Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC).

Dorset Biodiversity Strategy - Mid Term Review Summary (2010).

2.30 This refresher document that sits alongside the main strategy provides an assessment of actions taken or still to be taken since the document launch, alongside suggestions for new actions up until 2015.

2.31 The landscape-scale approach is the mechanism considered to offer the best chance to wildlife adapting to climate change. This is by increasing the resilience of the landscape to support it, primarily through increasing habitat connectivity.

2.32 In terms of land-use planning, priority areas for action revolve around the revised objective of ensuring the spatial planning system provides for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity to provide a resilient environment in the face of climate change.

2.33 Other actions points to note either not implicitly covered by the original strategy document or have been re-emphasised include:

- maintain the current extent and distribution of woodland pasture, parkland and veteran trees and promote their protection through the planning process
- heathland re-creation and alternative greenspace provision must continue to be given due regard in emerging planning documents.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.34 Relevant to the natural environment, its objectives include conserving and enhancing the natural and local environment by:

- protecting valued landscapes
- minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible
- preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of land, air, water or noise pollution, or land instability.

2.35 As with current central Government policy, there is continued emphasis on local authorities setting criteria based policies to judge proposals that affect protected wildlife sites or landscape areas. Distinctions should still be made between international, national and locally designated sites.

2.36 Take account of the need to plan biodiversity at the landscape scale and map the local ecological network that along with the designated sites, includes areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation. There should also be the promotion of the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and priority species, that are linked to national and local targets.

2.37 The draft framework set out a series of points to be taken into account when determining planning applications in accordance with the Local Plan, which includes taking the presumption that if harm from a new development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

2.38 Development likely to have a significant effect on sites protected by the Birds and Habitats Directives would not be sustainable under the terms of Government's presumption in favour of sustainable development.

South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy

2.39 The strategy for south east Dorset sets out a series of objectives and principles for the variety of functions it can provide for in south east Dorset. This includes conserving and enhancing wildlife and habitats. The strategy has three key roles:

- To promote the multi-functional approach of green infrastructure across a wide range of agendas
- To set an overarching strategy to deliver, manage and maintain current and future green infrastructure assets
- To guide a joint approach towards strategic green infrastructure for councils preparing local development framework documents

2.40 Outcomes, themes and frameworks specific to the natural environment chapter include increasing the potential for the green infrastructure to provide space and corridors for wildlife. This is in part by identifying the themes such as habitat creation and restoration, greening the urban environment, as well as identifying those zones on a map. For Christchurch and East Dorset this includes restoration zones for:

- Woodland - north east of Wimborne and west of Holt Heath
- Lowland heath - centred on existing designated heathland sites and forestry blocks north of Bournemouth Airport
- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh - River Allen as far south as Wimborne Minster and River Avon including Christchurch Harbour

2.41 The strategy also proposes key strategic projects, those most relevant to Christchurch and East Dorset's natural environment being the

- Lower Stour Valley project
- Greenway, Coast and Chine project
- Moors Valley extension
- Avon Heath enhancement
- Woodland restoration project
- Heath restoration project

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 for Christchurch and East Dorset (2008) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 for Christchurch only (2009)

2.42 A key driver for the documents is the Water Framework Directive that is the most substantial piece of European Community (EC) water legislation to date. It requires all inland and coastal waters to reach "good ecological status" by 2015.

2.43 Future flood risk areas derived by the documents to be used for the application of the sequential test.

Additional evidence and policy

2.44 Dorset Biodiversity Protocol. To ensure planned developments protect species and habitats in line with PPS9 and NERC Act 2006 this protocol was developed by Natural England and Dorset County Council. For planned developments of greater than 0.1 hectares that are not currently in use as a residential or business premises, or if it will affect any known ecological interests, such as designated sites (SSSI/SNCI/nature reserves etc.) or semi natural habitat such as woodland, heath, reedbed/fen, downland, ponds, rivers and streams etc., then a Phase 1 ecological survey is required.

2.45 Even if a site does not support biodiversity interests, a Biodiversity Mitigation Plan must still be completed to ensure appropriate enhancement measures are secured through a planning condition. The Biodiversity Mitigation Plans will include measures that will be retained in perpetuity once the development is completed. For example, bird/bat boxes, replacement hedges, ponds etc.

2.46 The protocol is used by East Dorset. A similar protocol is in place specifically for development proposals effecting bats.

2.47 Artificial Light in the Environment, 2009. The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution. It is recommended that there should be explicit consideration of light in planning policy, and suggests guidance is made available to local authorities in order for them to assess the likely ecological impacts of the amount and quality of artificial light. Light should be provided at an intensity no greater than the minimum necessary to deliver the intended benefits and directed only at those areas which are intended to be illuminated. Take account of trials of turning off street lighting in quieter areas of the road network. PPS1 requires development plan documents to take account of environmental issues, which along with a series of factors includes mitigation of the effects of light pollution.

2.48 Hurn Parish Plan, 2010. Relevant actions for the natural environment and this background paper include:

- Public Open Spaces, Nature Reserves and Wildlife. The Parish Council to ensure that residents’ views regarding retention of forest and woodland in the Parish are made known in relevant consultations, and to keep residents updated regarding proposed Ramsdown heathland mitigation scheme, via the Parish Newsletter.
- The Green Belt and Rural Environment. The Parish Council to reflect residents’ overwhelming view of preserving the Green Belt and wooded environment, in any consultation, on any issue.

‘Options for Consideration’ Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 1
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Strong Positive Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Positive Impact
5: Reduce the need to travel	Positive Impact
7: Improve health	Positive Impact
9: Social cohesion and access to services	Positive Impact

Table 2.2

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.49 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that it should help to mitigate potential effects of new development on the European sites. This option does not result in development in itself.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.50 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impact on good quality natural environment.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.51 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 1.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.52 This option does not have any infrastructure requirements.

Conclusions

2.53 Along with positive impacts recorded by the SA, the preferred option received general support to the principles it contains, however some rewording and re-emphasis is likely to be required either within the policy or supporting text to take in to account emerging central Government policy (i.e. Local Nature Partnerships and Nature Improvement Areas) as well as changes to local procedures. Issues relating to habitat re-creation will also be covered by option ME6 unless the options are combined in to a single draft policy. Consideration of how specific impacts, habitats or features are dealt with by the Core Strategy will need to be considered, along with more specific references to the South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy. Issues not previously mentioned in the Core Strategy include the specific impacts of light pollution on the natural environment and the importance of grassland habitats both in terms of its biodiversity importance and its function as a carbon store. These and other points raised are likely better suited to more detailed future documents or supplementary guidance that follows on from the Core Strategy.

2.54 A further issue also to consider in the supporting text and policy wording is whether there is specific reference to conserving biodiversity in its own right and for the services it can provide to society, not just linking it to new development. This could be exemplified through reference in the supporting text to links to initiatives from local wildlife trusts or the emerging Local Nature Partnerships.

Preferred Option ME 2

Internationally and nationally designated sites

With regard to heathland Special Protection Areas, the emerging Dorset Heathlands Joint Development Plan Document will specify the types of development affected by option ME1 and will identify a mix of appropriate mitigation and avoidance measures, their nature, scale, location and design. In accordance with the advice from Natural England, no residential development is permitted within 400m of protected heathland and any residential

development within 400m and 5km of these areas will provide mitigation as set out below. Where adequate mitigation measures cannot be provided on-site as part of the development, a financial contribution to the Councils will be required. The Dorset Heathlands Joint Development Plan Document will provide the type of development circumstances and a list of projects which will be funded by developer contributions and the calculated contribution amounts as they apply to different types of development. Projects delivered through the Interim Planning Framework/Development Plan Document will include Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs), heathland access and management, wardening, education, habitat re-creation and other appropriate measures. Due to their significance to the successful delivery of development, the Core Strategy will identify key SANGs of strategic importance such as those required to mitigate the pressures resulting from development at the options for new neighbourhoods. This includes:

- North of the Railway Line for the Christchurch urban extension
- Cuthbury allotments and south of Ferndown / West Parley, which may also include the proposed Stour Valley Country Park which would also serve the wider south east Dorset area.
- North of Wimborne
- North and west of Corfe Mullen
- South of Leigh Road, Wimborne
- South of Verwood
- North east of Verwood

Detailed specifications for the SANGs will be provided through the Joint Heathlands Development Plan Document.

In addition, and in recognition of the function of the New Forest National Park, the Core Strategy will carefully consider any adverse impacts on the New Forest as a result of development. Specific options to achieve this are proposed through Chapter 6 *Christchurch Urban Extension* and Chapter 7 *Bournemouth Airport and Business Park*.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 2	11	6	0	17

Table 2.3

2.55 Although the majority of respondents supported this option including the RSPB, the Environment Agency, Amphibians and Reptiles Conservation Trust and New Forest National Park Authority, 35% objected for the reasons outlined below.

2.56 Natural England

- Whilst supporting the overall aims of the option, they object as further consideration is needed on how mitigation for the proposed new developments will be provided.
- The larger developments must not rely on making contributions to the Heathlands IPF/DPD, but should provide mitigation that is specific to the particular issues and problems that each would generate. They should be an integral part of the new neighbourhoods.
- The Core Strategy should contain a policy for the protection of the SANGs once they have been established.

2.57 Response: Mitigation for specific new neighbourhoods and urban extensions will be contained in the relevant area chapters, and based on background master planning work where relevant. The protection of SANGs once established is a consideration which would also need to be taken forward in site specific documents and the proposals maps alongside any overarching policy in the Core Strategy.

2.58 RSPB

2.59 Whilst supporting this option, they object to Preferred Option HE 13 (Creating High Quality and Distinctive Environments) that proposes pooling contributions for Heathlands with Green Infrastructure, which could undermine the IPF and its objective.

2.60 Response: With the emerging Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regulations which look to pool certain contributions from development, this subject area will need to be reviewed.

2.61 Dorset Wildlife Trust

- Detailed specifications of SANGs should come forward as part of the design and specification of each of the new neighbourhoods, informed by biological survey.
- As the option refers to national and international sites, the opportunity should be taken to consider non-heathland sites such as the Moors River System in relation to mitigating the effects of development in its catchment.

2.62 Response: The relevant area chapters of the Core Strategy informed by background master planning work would provide the broad context and requirements for the SANGs, with further detail coming during the lead up to a planning permission should any of the sites progress to this stage. Natural England must also be satisfied with proposals for SANGs at these stages too. Reference to the Moors River System could better fit under a revised policy based on preferred option ME1.

2.63 East Dorset Environment Theme Action Group (ETAG)

- Ownership of SANG sites should be passed to the LPA and commitment be made that the land is protected from development in perpetuity.
- Appropriate funding and staffing for the management of SANGs is essential.

2.64 Response: The funding of the ongoing management of the SANGs along with the type of management are both critical issues to ensure the success of them. Much of this detail would need to be dealt with as part of the planning application should any of the sites progress to this stage.

2.65 Hurn Parish Council

- Object to the option and would want to see the protection of existing environmentally robust areas currently used for recreation or 'SANGs' and to be shown on a map, identified by local communities.
- Greater consultation with local communities required with the issues outlined in the option, including location of SANGs, how heathland access and management may occur, the potential for local volunteers for wardening, and how habitat re-creation might affect areas already used by local communities for recreation.

2.66 Response: Please see comments under ME1.

2.67 General Comments

- Object to option as the use of SANGs is untested and no evidence currently available to support the theory, so concern that the Core Strategy is based on the assumption that it will work.
- Object to option as the 400 metre boundary provides insufficient protection to the designated heathland sites.
- Concern on sufficient finance available to contribute to all necessary infrastructure in addition to on-site SANGs.
- Clarification that larger developments need to provide their own mitigation measures rather than relying on contributions to the IPF.
- Need to identify SANGs in relation to new neighbourhoods on key diagram.
- Natural habitats are a key component of green infrastructure and it is important to ensure that development plays a positive role in supporting their ability to promote biodiversity.

2.68 Response: Natural England will ultimately need to be satisfied whether or not proposals satisfy the Habitat Regulations through provision of adequate mitigation.

2.69 Comment relating to specific sites. Several comments received related to specific sites that were either referred to in the option wording or not included. This includes:

- Support south of Ferndown / West Parley, particularly in relation to the links with a Stour Valley Park.
- Objection to land north of railway in relation to Christchurch's urban extension on the grounds that it is premature to identify sites relating to a specific development.
- A SANG to the west of Corfe Mullen would be favoured to those located to the north of the settlement.
- Support for SANG to north east of Verwood as part of proposed development.

2.70 Natural England one-to-one meeting, 13 December 2010.

- Developments of more than 50 dwelling should provide their own SANG.
- The policy should specify what the functions of the SANG should be and set out the criteria that would enable it.

- In terms of a minimum size of a SANG, the view is the closer to a heathland area, the larger it should be. Although they consider 16 hectares per thousand population, it should be used flexibly. The size is based on the the average dog walking length of 2.1km, so therefore any SANG should look to accommodate this.
- Consideration should also be given to strategic SANGs, which may not immediately be adjacent to sites but can meet the needs of both the proposed and existing populations.

2.71 Response: Some balance will be required between ensuring there is sufficient detail in the Core Strategy against what will be covered in the emerging Heathlands Joint DPD.

2.72 Natural Environment Focus Group

- The running and maintenance of SANGs is best undertaken by the relevant local authority along with community involvement.
- SANGs in flood zones needs to be properly addressed in terms of certain areas being waterlogged or submerged for periods during winter.
- Money collected for heathland and Green Infrastructure should remain separate.
- Either proposed new SANGs or areas for search for future SANGs should be shown on the Core Strategy's key diagram / proposals maps

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

2.73 In addition to the details below, please see the evidence and policy summarised for Preferred Option ME1.

South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy

2.74 Along with the local authority Local Development Framework documents, the Joint Heathland DPD is seen as one of the key delivery strategies for the South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy.

- Part of the strategy's vision also looks to ensure there are no adverse impacts on the heathlands through new development and specifically identifies the provision of SANGs as one of the ways of alleviating the recreational pressures.
- Theme 5: Green Space Creation and Enhancement suggests as a priority area for action those settlements most reliant upon heathlands and other sensitive habitats for their green space provision.
- Key strategic schemes relevant to Christchurch and East Dorset which could contribute towards the provision on SANGs or heathland mitigation generally include
 - Lower Stour Valley
 - Castleman Trailway
 - Moors Valley Extension

‘Options for Consideration’ Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 2
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Strong Positive Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Positive Impact
5: Reduce the need to travel	Positive Impact
7: Improve health	Positive Impact
9: Social cohesion and access to services	Positive Impact

Table 2.4

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.75 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that it should help to mitigate potential effects of new development on the European sites. This option does not result in development in itself; instead it relates to criteria specifically defined to help protect the Dorset Heathland and New Forest designated sites.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.76 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impact on good quality natural environment.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.77 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 2.

Infrastructure Requirements

Site	Infrastructure	Timing	Funding	Responsibility
Urban Extension and New Neighbourhood requirements for SANGs	Provision of SANGs	Phased ready for	s106	Developer

Site	Infrastructure	Timing	Funding	Responsibility
		use ahead of new developments being occupied		
Strategic Green Infrastructure sites - heathland mitigation element of Lower Stour Valley Project	Provision of SANGs and circular walks for the purposes of heathland mitigation	Lifetime of Plan	CIL developer contributions	Heathland Officer and Executive Groups and equivalent GI Steering Groups
Strategic Green Infrastructure sites - heathland mitigation element of Castleman Trailway	Provision of circular routes for the purposes of heathland mitigation	Lifetime of Plan	DCC, CIL developer contributions	Heathland Officer and Executive Groups and equivalent GI Steering Groups
Strategic Green Infrastructure sites - heathland mitigation element of Moors Valley extension	Provision of SANGs, circular walks, etc. for the purposes of heathland mitigation	Lifetime of Plan	CIL developer contributions	Heathland Officer and Executive Groups and equivalent GI Steering Groups

Table 2.5

Conclusions

2.78 The option recorded positive benefits identified in the SA. The consideration of other national sites such as the Moors River System SSSI are likely to be best covered in a revised ME1 that would look to cover all designated sites.

2.79 Along with the strategic GI projects, it should be considered identifying strategic SANGs on the key diagram. This would be in addition to those expected to be delivered with the new neighbourhoods. The issue of their protection through designation where SANGs are established should also be included, although this may also follow through more detailed, site specific documents.

2.80 Final wording of this policy will need to ensure that all mitigation methods are referred to, as well as clarification of the split of the size of proposed housing sites, with the larger ones (this includes the new neighbourhoods) required to provide their own bespoke mitigation measures and SANGs. Wording should also include the key requirements the SANGs should include.

Preferred Option ME 3

Locally Designated Sites

All sites protected by policies within the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plans will continue to be identified under the Core Strategy and their present designation, which includes Sites of Nature Conservation Interest, Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites, Local Nature Reserves, will remain the same. Option ME2 will apply to all these sites.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 3	11	2	0	13

Table 2.6

2.81 General support was received for this option, including Natural England, RSPB, Environment Agency and Amphibians and Reptiles Conservation Trust.

2.82 Dorset Wildlife Trust

- Strong support for option
- Option wrongly refers to Option ME2 - it should be Option ME1
- Seek clarification on whether the policy will immediately protect SNCIs when they are designated, which it is strongly recommended should be the case

2.83 East Dorset Environment Theme Action Group (ETAG)

- Strongly support the principle with an amendment to ensure that those sites identified by the panel since the adoption of the previous local plan are formally recognised, along with new sites as they are designated.
- Other Dorset local authorities do recognise sites in this respect.

2.84 General Comments

- Identification of SNCIs is an ongoing process, so Core Strategy needs to formally recognise those identified after its adoption
- Natural habitats and their protection are a key component of Green Infrastructure

2.85 Response: The option re-wording is noted, and consideration will be needed with how to deal with changes to SNCI designations during the plan period.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

2.86 In addition to the details below, please see the evidence and policy summarised for Preferred Option ME1.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.87 The document suggests the inclusion of criteria based policies for the protection of wildlife sites or landscapes, with distinctions made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites. Local sites should continue to be identified on a map, but as part of wider ecological networks that may include areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation.

'Options for Consideration' Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 3
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Strong Positive Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Positive Impact
5: Reduce the need to travel	Positive Impact
7: Improve health	Positive Impact
9: Social cohesion and access to services	Positive Impact

Table 2.7

'Options for Consideration' Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.88 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that it should help to mitigate potential effects of new development on the European sites. This option does not result in development in itself.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.89 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impact on good quality natural environment.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.90 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 3.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.91 Option ME 3 does not involve any infrastructure requirement.

Conclusions

2.92 The option scored positively in the SA and received good support. Emerging national policy continues to acknowledge sites locally designated for nature conservation, and an expanded Policy ME1 could look to confirm the Council's commitment for their protection. The issue to address of how to take full account of changes to the SNCI designations across Christchurch and East Dorset after the adoption of the Core Strategy and through the plan period is best dealt with either through the Site Specific DPD or through a regular review within the Annual Monitoring Reports.

Preferred Option ME 4

Protection for undesignated sites

Key undesignated sites of biodiversity or geological value which are shown to be under significant threat from pressures generated by new development, will be identified and designated locally in partnership with local biodiversity stakeholders. These sites may include priority habitats identified in the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy, green corridors and ancient woodlands that are not already designated. Once designated, options ME1 and ME3 will apply.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 4	8	6	0	14

Table 2.8

2.93 There was support for the preferred option from Natural England, RSPB, Environment Agency and the Amphibians and Reptiles Conservation Trust. However, of those who responded to this option, 43% objected.

2.94 Dorset Wildlife Trust

- Object to the option and consider wording ambiguous and confusing in what it seeks to protect.
- The option that appears to suggest the creation of another tier of wildlife protection, then referring back to options ME1 and ME3 makes it unclear how it would fit within the current SNCI system.
- With clarification of the dealing of new SNCI sites in option ME3 and the existing requirement in option ME1 of sites with no survey data requiring survey, protection and enhancement, then this option may not be necessary. Additionally, if Option ME1 specifically referred to ancient woodland, veteran trees and habitats and species of principal importance, with green corridors specifically referred to in the GI options, then ME4 would also not be required from a biodiversity point of view
- Consider designation of sites on an ad hoc basis as they become threatened from development be the last resort, and likely to lead to conflict - better to identify in advance so that developers have the foresight of the constraints around a particular site.

2.95 Response: Comments are noted and will need to consider the combination of this option with others in the formation of the draft policies as a way of removing ambiguity.

2.96 Woodland Trust

- Whilst being pleased that this option together with ME1 and ME3 look to protect ancient woodland and trees, they object to the option through its inference that protection is only an 'aim' and connected only to the development process. Want to see support in the suite of options to provide absolute protection for ancient woodland and for it to be backed up in a Trees and Woodland SPD.
- This approach would accord with Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 - a statutory duty for all public authorities to conserve biodiversity
- 86% of ancient woodland in the south west does not have full statutory protection such as SSSI designations
- East Dorset has an above average amount of ancient woodland in its district (4.76% against a national average of 2.4%) and therefore should do all it can to protect its resource.

2.97 Response: The importance of ancient woodland, particularly in East Dorset is fully acknowledged and will need to consider how it is referred to in the final draft policies.

2.98 East Dorset Environment Theme Action Group (ETAG)

- Support as Lawton report recommends affording greater protection to local wildlife sites
- Assume SANGs are one of the pressures generated by new development referred to in the option. Therefore they themselves could create additional pressures on some BAP habitats and species. It is recommended that this is specified to avoid room for doubt.

- Consider 2nd sentence to specific for document, and should be generalised to include sites that do not meet SNCI criteria and existing / potential linkages.
- Surveys on potential sites must be carried out at appropriate times of the year and take account of inappropriate land management practises yielding misleading results, particularly on grassland sites. Must also cover a 12 month period be take account what is apparent in all seasons
- Dorset Biodiversity Protocol could be used as an additional mechanism to protect undesignated sites

2.99 Response: It is expected that SANGs will need to respect any existing features with biodiversity importance, and these should be referred to in more detailed plans at more advanced stages.

2.100 Hurn Parish Council

- Object to the option as it should also refer to the protection of robust areas identified by local communities for recreational uses. They can themselves provide protection for fragile habitats from recreational pressures that are referred to in the option.

2.101 General Comments

- Object as designation that falls outside legislation is often inconsistent and can lead to protection through the back door.
- Acid and neutral grasslands on the urban fringe of south east Dorset have been overlooked in the Core Strategy. This is particularly the case in relation to the proposed new neighbourhoods, many of which are grasslands currently grazed by horses that masks their floristic composition. It is therefore difficult to make recognition of their value without the opportunity for a properly timed and prepared survey. It is suggested that the biodiversity interest of these sites must be assessed over a year and be accorded proper weight in the judgement of the options.
- Along with ancient woodland, developing secondary woodland is also valuable for biodiversity, carbon retention and landscape. Impacts currently recognised and experienced on heathlands are also relevant to other habitats, especially woodland.
- Natural habitats and their protection are a key component of Green Infrastructure

2.102 Response: Consideration will be needed for the specific issues / habitats raised and how either the Core Strategy or subsequent Development Plan Documents, etc. can take them in to account.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

Previous Local Plan Policies

2.103 The Christchurch Local Plan contains the saved policy ENV15 that looks to specifically protect green corridors for wildlife movement that have no formal designations. The corridors are identified on the proposals map.

2.104 The East Dorset Local Plan contains saved policy NCON5 that looks to protect natural features and habitats that are not formally designated, such as small woods, green lanes, hedges and ponds. The issues are similarly reflected in Policy LSCON2 which deals with developed in Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV).

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.105 The draft document makes reference to the general aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity and more specifically refers to the principle of refusing permission for development which would result in the loss irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland or individual veteran trees.

2.106 The NPPF also refers to a new Local Green Space designation, which whilst describing that areas should be in close proximity to centres of population and is special to that community for a number of reasons, it can be designated because of its wildlife richness.

'Options for Consideration' Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 4
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Strong Positive Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Positive Impact
5: Reduce the need to travel	Positive Impact
7: Improve health	Positive Impact
9: Social cohesion and access to services	Positive Impact

Table 2.9

'Options for Consideration' Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.107 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that it should help to mitigate potential effects of new development on the European sites. This option does not result in development in itself.

'Options for Consideration' Health Impact Assessment

2.108 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impact on good quality natural environment.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.109 The EqIA did not identify any impacts.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.110 This option does not have any infrastructure requirements.

Conclusions

2.111 Whilst local nature sites are continued to be viewed with importance in the Natural Environment White Paper and the draft National Planning Policy Framework, this preferred option requires clarification in the context of SNCIs and new designations and possibly merging with other options (including those concerned with Green Infrastructure) before taking forward as a draft policy.

2.112 A revised option ME1 would look to protect undesignated sites, primarily through looking to formalise the Dorset Biodiversity Protocol through this policy.

Preferred Option ME 5

Climate Change adaptation

Through options ME1 to ME4 the Core Strategy will promote improvements to the condition of sites of biodiversity importance through new development, thereby increasing their resilience to climate change. Reconnecting fragmented habitats and establishing wildlife corridors will be included as objectives within a strategy to develop a network of interconnected Green Infrastructure (See Preferred Option HE14). Design principles delivered through the Green Infrastructure strategy and options proposed through the Creating High Quality and Distinctive Environments Chapter will promote ‘permeability’ to allow wildlife to move through new developments and ‘green corridors’ (such as those currently identified in the Christchurch Local Plan). Management plans should be produced for sites which are likely to be significantly affected by climate change such as those within areas threatened by sea level rise or more frequent flooding.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 5	10	2	0	12

Table 2.10

2.113 There was general support received for this preferred option, including from Natural England, RSPB, Environment Agency, Dorset Wildlife Trust, the Amphibians and Reptiles Conservation Trust and the South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Steering Group.

2.114 Woodland Trust

- Support option as reconnection of fragmented habitats / creation of wildlife corridors is highly relevant to protecting and buffering ancient woodland.
- A creation of new habitats around existing valuable habitats together with a reduction in intensity of agricultural practice ensures species are better able to move around in to other natural habitats.
- This landscape approach can deliver both physical and ecological connectivity. Forest Research's BEETLE (Biological and Environmental Evaluation Tools for Landscape Ecology) model is a useful example of this approach.

2.115 Response: These are issues that are picked up through the actions of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and preferred Option ME6.

2.116 East Dorset Environment Theme Action Group (ETAG)

- Concern that climate change issues being considered are largely restricted to aspects covered by existing county policy documents.
- More information should be provided in the Core Strategy of the possible impacts of climate change, such as increase frequency of extreme weather events.
- Impact of transport should be considered in this section, including emissions, damage to roadside habitats, light pollution from street lights and headlights.
- Impact on soil and ecosystem services
- Combination of impacts of climate change means ecosystems need to be managed to maintain and increase their robustness, particularly important for river corridors which provide flood absorption
- Opportunities should be sought for where land management can help with holding water in soil, through appropriate planting, ditch realignment, etc.

2.117 Response: Several of the points are picked up through the Green Infrastructure Strategy. Preferred Option ME14 concerns flooding issues, and legislation now requires developments of a certain size to ensure there is no increase in run-off that includes the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

2.118 Hurn Parish Council

- Object to the option as it should acknowledge the importance of robust areas and ensure that their use by general public, their own biodiversity and contribution to climate change is not compromised by the policy wording
- Include reference to consultation with local communities and Parish Councils.
- Often areas cleared to reconnect habitats are large areas of woodland which are themselves assets in helping to address climate change.

2.119 Response: If robust areas or SANGs are defined on a map then this information can be used in conjunction with the desired outcomes envisaged for this policy.

2.120 General Comments

- Object to option as the Core Strategy should specifically include areas for both solar energy farms and deciduous forest to offset the effects of climate change. Proposed housing options WMC4 and WMC5 could instead be used to fulfil this need.

2.121 Response: Forest re-creation is a subject dealt with through Option ME6 and strategic nature areas, where a policy could provide a framework for various bodies to create new areas of priority habitat, which includes native woodland. Solar energy farms are already in principle permitted through existing planning legislation, although it is acknowledged that their development in Green Belt locations does needs some clarification through national legislation.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

2.122 In addition to the details below, please see the evidence and policy summarised for Preferred Option ME1.

Natural Environment White Paper. The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature, 2011. HM Government.

2.123 One of the key purposes of the white paper is to respond to the Lawton Report, which identified that due to the current fragmented nature of the natural environment, it is unable to effectively respond to new pressures such as climate change. The white paper promotes a more integrated approach to create a resilient ecological network across England, with Local Nature Partnerships and Nature Improvement Areas providing the framework to undertake this.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.124 A key objective highlights the aim to minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to impacts arising from climate change. Proactive strategies should be adopted to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

‘Options for Consideration’ Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 5
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Strong Positive Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Positive Impact
5: Reduce the need to travel	Positive Impact
7: Improve health	Positive Impact
9: Social cohesion and access to services	Positive Impact

Table 2.11

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.125 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that it should help to mitigate potential effects of new development on the European sites. This option does not result in development in itself.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.126 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impacts on good quality natural environment and adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.127 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 5.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.128 This option does not have any infrastructure requirements.

Conclusions

2.129 Many of the principles and issues this preferred option addresses are dealt with by options ME1 - ME4, and ME6 from this section as the impacts of and adaptation to climate change are their underlying themes. The preferred approach therefore is to integrate this option with the others, particularly those concerning landscape scale biodiversity and green infrastructure, whilst taking in to account the responses received. In addition to this, and as a general principle, all Core Strategy draft policies that propose changes in land use will need to take account of climate change and its effects.

Preferred Option ME 6

Landscape scale biodiversity

In order to further protect, manage and enhance Christchurch and East Dorset’s biodiversity and to create habitats more resilient to change, with particular reference to climate change, the Strategic Nature Areas set out on the South West Nature Map will be identified on the key diagram. They are shown as areas with potential for landscape-scale habitat enhancement and re-creation, and those referred to in preferred option ME2. Strategic Nature Areas are identified as the best areas to maintain and expand priority habitats.

Biodiversity improvement associated with new developments is one of the delivery mechanisms for the enhancement and re-creation of the Strategic Nature Areas. Conservation organisations, those involved with agriculture or forestry, as well as more general national funding sources are the others, which may lead to future partnership working to aid delivery. To ensure effective progress is being made, monitoring will need to be undertaken on a large scale by organisations such as local wildlife trusts or records centres, as those who have the best knowledge of the wider areas.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 6	9	2	0	11

Table 2.12

2.130 There was mainly support received for this preferred option, including from Natural England, RSPB, Environment Agency and the Amphibians and Reptiles Conservation Trust.

2.131 Woodland Trust

- Support option as the SNAs and South West Nature Map are particularly relevant to protecting ancient woodland and expanding native woodland. A landscape scale approach is also supported by published government advice on ancient and native woodland, 'Keepers of Time: A statement of policy on ancient and native woodland' (Defra, 2005).

2.132 Response: The Nature Map's relevance to ancient woodland protection is noted.

2.133 Dorset Wildlife Trust

- Policy wording should refer to ME1 rather than ME2
- If the Trust or the Dorset Environmental Records Centre are to monitor the biodiversity improvements associated with new development, appropriate funding would be required.

2.134 Response: Wording correction is noted. A draft policy incorporating this preferred option will need to take account the monitoring requirements, and whether it is able for it to fit within existing reporting structures.

2.135 East Dorset Environment Theme Action Group (ETAG)

- Support the option but note that the provisional mapping of some Strategic Nature Areas includes some boundary inaccuracies.

2.136 Response: The accuracy is noted and a suitable health warning and mapping scale would needed to be used with any depiction of the Strategic Nature Areas. Also, as recommended by DWT on preferred option ME1, the Dorset Nature Map would be better used.

2.137 Hurn Parish Council

- Object to the option as the Core Strategy does not include a copy of the South West Nature Map, cannot comment without knowing whether there is any effect on Hurn.
- As with the other options in this chapter, there is no reference to contact with community groups or Parish Councils who represent the people that may be affected by these proposals.

2.138 Response: The Strategic Nature Areas will need to be shown either separately on a map or as part of a key digram in the Pre Submission Core Strategy. Any work to progress habitat restoration and creation at this scale would need strong support from local communities, landowners, etc. for it to be a success.

2.139 Natural England One-to-one meeting, 13 December 2010

- It was their view that existing East Dorset Local Plan policies such as SL3 and NCON4 were good and there should be a continuation of positive policies seeking the re-creation priority habitats. In the context of heathland, it was noted however, the difficulties in obtaining land and that it takes many years to achieve suitable habitat.
- Natural England were of the opinion it is more important to identify areas for re-creation rather than setting a target for the number of hectares to be delivered - suggest the use of RSPB's recently produced heathland potential maps as a guide, as well as the emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy where it is site specific. Natural England do acknowledge that Local Authorities are focused on heathland mitigation, even though there is still a need for increases in other areas, such as woodland, areas that can flood, hay meadows and pockets of scrub to soften the landscape.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

2.140 In addition to the details below, please see the evidence and policy summarised for Preferred Option ME1.

Previous Local Plan Policies

2.141 The Christchurch Local Plan contains the following relevant saved policies:

- ENV15 - Where proposals that impact on identified green corridors within the Borough, its enhancement or expansion will be sought.

2.142 The East Dorset Local Plan contains the following relevant saved policies:

- NCON4 - Reflects heathland restoration targets in the structure plan through the use of conditions and agreements where opportunities arise, particularly on sites close to existing areas of heathland.
- SL3 - Conservation through management and restoration of heathland areas with owners and interested parties within the St Leonards and St Ives area.
- V16 - Conservation through management and restoration of heathland areas with owners and interested parties within the Verwood and Three Legged Cross area.
- V17 - Grazing land adjoining Dewlands Common, Verwood to be used to re-create heathland.

Natural Environment White Paper. The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature, 2011. HM Government.

2.143 As part of the White Paper's promotion of a more integrated approach to create a resilient ecological network across England, Local Nature Partnerships and Nature Improvement Areas providing the framework to undertake this. In the context of Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole, a Local Nature Partnership is currently being worked up with initial funding in place from Defra. Funding is also being sought for Nature Improvement Areas, though the area being proposed, 'Wild Purbeck' currently only takes in a small south western tip of East Dorset.

South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy

2.144 The Strategy identifies themes that include habitat creation and restoration, greening the urban environment, as well as identifying those zones on a map. Of the four restoration zones the strategy identifies for expansion and restoration based on the South West Nature Map, three have direct relevance for Christchurch and East Dorset:

- Woodland - north east of Wimborne and west of Holt Heath
- Lowland heath - centred on existing designated heathland sites and forestry blocks north of Bournemouth Airport
- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh - River Allen as far south as Wimborne Minster and River Avon including Christchurch Harbour

‘Options for Consideration’ Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 6
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Strong Positive Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Positive Impact
5: Reduce the need to travel	Positive Impact
7: Improve health	Positive Impact
9: Social cohesion and access to services	Positive Impact

Table 2.13

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.145 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that it should help to mitigate potential effects of new development on the European sites. This option does not result in development in itself.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.146 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impact on good quality natural environment.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.147 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 6.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.148 This option does not have any infrastructure requirements.

Conclusions

2.149 It is confirmed through both responses to the Core Strategy Options consultation and new evidence and policy that a wider, landscape scale approach is to be taken towards biodiversity improvements. The approach, backed by policies in the Core Strategy can provide the framework for coordinating activities that can secure the retention and enhancement of features.

2.150 In terms of the wording of the policy, the wrong option referred to is noted and will be updated if the option is taken forward. Any mapping used to show the areas for potential future improvement must be displayed in such a way as not to be too prescriptive to allow improvements to biodiversity to happen outside the areas also.

Climate Change and Sustainable Development

2.151 **Issue: How should our sustainable construction and energy efficiency policies apply to new development?**

Preferred Option ME 7

Sustainable development standards for new homes and extension or refurbishment of existing homes.

Other than water efficiency, the Core Strategy will not require new housing to meet higher standards of the Code for Sustainable Homes beyond the programme required nationally (as set out in the national policy statement 'Building a Greener Future'). Developments will, however, be required to incorporate carbon reduction, water and energy efficiency measures and to demonstrate they have explored a range of sustainable and low carbon options. The Councils will encourage and favourably consider innovatively designed schemes which achieve high levels of carbon reduction, where they meet with other planning requirements. This approach will also apply to development involving the extension or refurbishment of existing homes (where planning permission is required). Decisions regarding the most appropriate range and type of measures to be considered for each development should be informed by the Code for Sustainable Homes design categories, but are most likely to include:

- Water and energy efficiency.
- Orientation and solar gain (natural lighting and heating).
- Use of renewable and low impact materials.
- Minimising waste, pollution and water run-off.

The Core Strategy will adopt targets 2a and 2b of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy (2009) relating to existing homes:

"to achieve an average SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) rating of 65-70 in the housing stock by 2016" and, "to ensure that there will be no dwelling with a SAP rating of less than 35 by 2016".

New residential developments (i.e. additional and replacement dwellings) throughout existing settlements and new neighbourhoods will be encouraged to incorporate water efficiency meeting level 3 of the 'water' component of the 'Code for Sustainable Homes' (unless, having regard to the type of development involved, its design and location, this is not feasible or viable).

Ground water sources will be afforded protection through a criteria-based policy for new development which refers to the Environment Agency's Ground Water Source Protection Zones which, if appropriate, will be shown on the Core Strategy proposals map. The criteria will assess:

- The type of development and its likely impact on ground water in terms of contaminants from construction and from use.
- The need for development affecting a Ground Water Source Protection Zones.
- Proximity to a Ground Water Source Protection Zone.
- The sensitivity of underground aquifers.

Developments involving the conversion or alteration of historic buildings will be expected to demonstrate that they have explored a range of sustainable and low carbon options for construction and energy use and incorporated them into the design where practically possible, provided that this does not harm the character of the building or increase the risk of long-term deterioration to fabric or fittings.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 7	6	2	0	8

Table 2.14

2.152 Jackson Planning Ltd (Meyrick Estate)

- Objection – Respondent comments on all of the Preferred Options ME7 – ME13 stating that the standards proposed are out of line with those of the National Government which are expressed in the Climate Change Act 2008, EU Directive 209/28EC, the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan and UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009, and that as such they are not practical in terms of their application and assessment. These comments are repeated in respect of each of the Options ME7 - ME9 all of which deal with sustainable development standards. As the comments are so similar in content, it is intended that the response that follows should cover the Objection as it occurs at the discussion of each individual Option.

2.153 Response: Consideration of The Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and of the intentions of Central Government in general has clarified the approach to standards with regard to Renewable Energy Strategy and the reduction of emissions which lie within the Core Strategy. National standards are referred to in the Draft NPPF at paragraph 150 and it is made clear in the following wording - local planning authorities should.... "When setting any local requirement for a building's sustainability, do so in a way consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy and adopt nationally described standards". As such the wording of ME7 will be required to be reworded to reflect this advice, and the Councils will not set standards above the National Programme for Implementation. Other texts of pre submission options will be altered as necessary. Alterations will include reference to changing/evolution of standards to reflect increasing controls likely to be set during the plan period.

2.154 Environment Agency

- Support – Recommend that the 4th bullet point of the Preferred Option ME7 text read as follows -Minimising waste, pollution and water run off, incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems where possible.

2.155 Response: This revised wording is accepted as a reasonable and useful addition to the text.

2.156 Environment Agency

- Support - wish to see the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) in the body of the Option.

2.157 Response: accept the need to include SUDS in the text of the Option ME7 .

- Support –Recommend alterations to the penultimate paragraph of the Preferred Option. Text to run “Groundwater sources will be afforded protection through a criteria-based policy for new development which refers to the Environment Agency’s, *Groundwater Protection: Policy and Practice (GP3)*’ document. Groundwater Source Protection Zones will be shown on the Core Strategy proposals map if appropriate. The criteria will assess:
 - The type of development and its likely impact on groundwater in terms of contaminants from construction and from use
 - The need for development affecting Groundwater Source Protection Zones.
 - Proximity to a Groundwater Source Protection Zones.
 - Proximity and impact on licensed and unlicensed water supplied
 - The sensitivity of underground aquifers

2.158 Response: This revised wording is accepted as a reasonable and useful addition to the text. This will be included in a separate Policy reflecting its importance as a stand-alone topic.

- Support - reference to groundwater issues and indicate that Groundwater Source Protection Zones could be included on the Core Strategy proposals map, but also explain that this may not be possible because of regular reviews of these Zone boundaries.

2.159 Response: it is considered impractical to very regularly update the Core Strategy proposals map. Such documents have as one of their reasons for existing, the provision of certainty to developers residents and the general public. Reference can be made to Zone Maps for separate investigation.

2.160 Appropriateness of Standards

- Various individuals and organisations all expressed varying degrees of support or concern with regard to the use and application of standards and their appropriateness ie. requirements above those within the Code for Sustainable Homes, and not reflecting the Climate Change Act 2008, EU Directive 2009/28EC, the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan and UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009.

2.161 Response: As noted above clear guidance has been given by the Central Government Department and this will be followed and assimilated into the pre-submission policy relating to standards for sustainable construction and the reduction of emissions. The Core Strategy will not set standards above the national programme for implementing the Code for Sustainable Homes.

2.162 The targets set in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy (2009) and contained in Option ME7 are regarded as a local policy statement as they deal with an approach to be taken within a limited spatial area. As such their inclusion as a part of the Option runs contrary to the advice within the Draft National Planning Policy Framework which stresses the use of national standards. As such the reference to the targets of the

Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy should be deleted from the text. These local standards will be superseded through the implementation of the national programme and as such are likely to be out of date within the near future. As such it is not appropriate to include them in any future Policy.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.163 Paragraph 150 of the Draft National Planning Policy Framework sets the context for Local Planning Authorities in the reduction of greenhouse gasses and zero carbon building policy. In this respect ME7 needs to be altered to specifically state that national standards will be followed in respect of the reduction of greenhouse gases and zero carbon building policy. In this respect Preferred Option ME7 is generally in line with the Draft NPPF as it recognises the primacy of national standards; however reference to the Dorset Standards is unnecessary.

'Options for Consideration' Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 7
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Strong Positive Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Strong Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Strong Positive Impact
4: Climate change	Strong Positive Impact
10: Protect historic buildings and archaeological sites	Positive Impact
11: Maintain local distinctiveness	Strong Positive Impact
12: Sustainable economic growth	Positive Impact

Table 2.15

2.164 Option ME7 contains a clear promotion of sustainability and this is reflected in the Strong Positive assessment that it receives. Option ME7 ensures that the area's specific water resource implications are addressed via a higher standard for water efficiency. It promotes sustainable construction methods and energy efficiency standards to meet local targets by 2016.

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.165 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that it should help to mitigate potential effects of new development on the European sites. This option does not result in development in itself.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.166 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies positive impacts for housing and on adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.167 This Option would improve the fuel efficiency of new dwellings and those which are extended or refurbished. There would be benefits to particular groups on the grounds of age, disability and on areas of deprivation, who may suffer from fuel poverty.

Conclusions

2.168 Preferred Option ME7 deals with a range of interrelated measures for the reduction of greenhouse gasses and zero carbon building policy and sets them out in the context of new, extended or refurbished homes. The SA, HRA, HIA, and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impact. A majority of respondents supported the Preferred Option. The Draft NPPF however has stated that in the future, national standards should be followed, which is not the approach which ME7 takes - as it ties house development to targets 2a and 2b of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy (2009). Further it is the Government's intention that standards relating to energy efficiency of buildings will be progressively raised meaning that these standards may become less relevant in coming years. The future text should therefore delete mention to standards other than national standards applicable at that time.

2.169 It is considered that the reference and bullet points relating to the Code for Sustainable Homes design categories should be retained as these indicate the general thrust of that document and will remain relevant for many years. The text relating to Groundwater Source Protection Zones is also considered relevant and will be retained. As a topic this has very limited connections with Sustainable Development Standards and it is therefore considered that this element of the Option should be moved to another more relevant Option within this chapter, potentially ME1 or a new standalone draft policy. In addition the Policy text will incorporate minor changes suggested (see above) by the Environment Agency in respect of SUDs as these are an important element in future development.

Preferred Option ME 8

Sustainable development standards for non-residential developments

Non-residential development throughout existing settlements and the new neighbourhoods will be required to incorporate carbon reduction, water and energy efficiency measures and to demonstrate they have explored a range of sustainable and low carbon options. It is not appropriate to make reference to any particular assessment standard or method until the emerging national policy for non-domestic buildings is adopted.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 8	5	1	0	6

Table 2.16

2.170 Jackson Planning Ltd (Meyrick Estate)

- Objection – Respondent comments on all of the Preferred Options ME7 – ME13 in a similar manner see ME7 above

2.171 Response: As per ME7 above.

2.172 Broadway Malyan

- Support - While giving general support it is felt that it would be potentially harmful to the viability of future non residential projects to impose standards without having regard to national policy.

2.173 Response: The response to Jackson Planning (set out above in respect of ME7) sets out the Councils' newly considered view, based on the Draft NPPF, that national standards should be applied in respect of the promotion of renewable energy and sustainable building.

2.174 Environment Agency

2.175 Support - Policy should refer to BREEAM standards or equivalent or emerging future standards for construction.

2.176 Response: As stated previously it is intended to promote and use nationally recognised standards in relation to development however it is unlikely that these will be available before 2019. BREEAM is a nationally recognised and Government supported assessment tool but is not legislation; there is no national assessment tool for commercial building. The Councils' will therefore continue to use those recognised standards most appropriate to achieving sustainable building and maximising renewable and low carbon energy use.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.177 Paragraph 150 of the Draft NPPF sets the context for standards for sustainable building and low carbon utilisation for Local Planning Authorities. In this case Preferred Option ME8 does not prescribe any local standard but allows for the development and future use of national standards this is consistent with the current Central Government approach to non residential sustainable building standards.

'Options for Consideration' Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 8
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Positive Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Uncertain Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Uncertain Impact
4: Climate change	Positive Impact
11: Maintain local distinctiveness	Strong Positive Impact
12: Sustainable economic growth	Negative Impact

Table 2.17

2.178 In conclusion, Option ME8 is sustainable. There are uncertain outcomes in relation to objectives concerning sustainable use of resources or the minimisation of pollution as it is not known if it will require extra resources or actually work towards minimising pollution. The Option has a negative effect on economic growth as it is likely to raise development costs.

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.179 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that it should help to mitigate potential effects of new development on the European sites. This option does not result in development in itself.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.180 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impact on adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.181 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 8.

Conclusions

2.182 Option ME8 was generally supported by the majority of respondents. However it is considered that ME8 is not necessary as it does not introduce or adopt standards which differ from the national programme. The SA, HRA, HIA, and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impact except that the application of higher development standards may increase development costs. National Standards for sustainable development in relation to commercial buildings are hoped to be in place by 2019 but at present there are no national standards. The Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has stated that in the future national standards should be followed. This Preferred Option recognises that national standards are emerging and that it is not appropriate to make reference to particular assessment or standards until national policy is adopted. A timetable showing milestones across the first three carbon budget periods (2008 - 2022) can be found in Annex 1 (page105) of the Communities and Local Government Carbon Reduction Delivery Plan (March 2010) The Councils' will therefore continue to use those recognised standards or assessments most appropriate to achieving sustainable building and maximising renewable and low carbon energy use. As such the Option is appropriate.

2.183 Options ME7, 8, and 9 all deal with the same subject matter. As such it may be appropriate to delete this Option ME8 in favour of ME7, as this can be done without the loss of any detail.

Alternative Preferred Option ME 9

No local policies for sustainable construction, water or energy efficiency.

For housing, elements of the Code for Sustainable Homes would become mandatory in line with the national programme set out in Building a Greener Future but there would be no additional local policy requirements to incorporate carbon reduction, water or energy efficiency measures. Commercial development and historic buildings would be unaffected by local policies.

Core Strategy Alternative Preferred Option ME 9 Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Alternative Preferred Option ME 9	1	2	0	3

Table 2.18

2.184 Jackson Planning Ltd (Meyrick Estate)

- Objection

2.185 See ME7 discussion above.

2.186 Need to include commercial development

- Commercial development must be included in any Option text so that it follows green principles and the development process can be policed.

2.187 **Response:** It is intended that all new commercial development will be subject to the relevant national requirements and standards. However it is not considered necessary that this Option be set out as a separate Core Strategy Policy because future emerging policy will be available to directly refer to.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.188 Option ME7 recognises the primacy of national standards and requirements and as such is in accordance with the Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

'Options for Consideration' Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Alternative Preferred Option ME 9
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Positive Impact

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Alternative Preferred Option ME 9
2: Sustainable use of resources	No Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Positive Impact
4: Climate change	Positive Impact
11: Maintain local distinctiveness	Positive Impact

Table 2.19

2.189 Overall this Option received positive response and no negative assessment.

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.190 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that it should help to mitigate potential effects of new development on the European sites. This option does not result in development in itself.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.191 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts on health objectives.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.192 Doing nothing would have a negative impact on the fuel poverty of particular groups on the grounds of age, disability and on areas of deprivation.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.193 Option ME 9 does not involve any infrastructure requirement.

Conclusions

2.194 Option ME9 is not supported by the consultation as strongly as the other two Preferred Options ME7 and ME8, which cover similar but slightly differing approach to standards for sustainable construction. The SA, HRA, HIA and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impacts for Option ME9. Overall Option ME9 is the most restrictively worded option and would not allow for application of local standards. The “no local standards” is the approach advocated by Central Government in the Draft NPPF and is accepted by the Councils’. As such the approach of ME9 is considered an appropriate approach to the setting of sustainable development standards.

2.195 However the Option is covered by the wording within the first half of ME7 and as such it will not be required to adopt Option ME9 into the Core Strategy. It is considered consistent with the Draft NPPF to adopt an approach of taking forward the national programme for sustainable construction with local detail in an amended ME7. It is considered that there is added value in requiring developers to explore a range of sustainable low carbon options and in specifying elements of the code to be fulfilled. Options ME7, 8, and 9 all deal with the same subject matter, as such it is appropriate to delete Option ME9 without losing the detail and direction contained therein.

2.196 Issue: How should our renewable, decentralised and low carbon energy policies apply to new development?

Preferred Option ME 10

Renewable energy standards for residential and non-residential developments

At least 10% of the total energy used in new development of more than 10 dwellings (or 0.5ha) or 1,000m² of non-residential floorspace (or if the site is 1ha or larger) will come from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources (unless, having regard to the type of development involved and its location and design, this is not feasible or viable).

The Councils will investigate options for district heating and/or power facilities. Developments may be required to connect to such a facility where appropriate, feasible and viable.

Core Strategy Preferred Option ME 10 Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 10	4	1	0	5

Table 2.20

2.197 Jackson Planning Ltd (Meyrick Estate)

- Objection – Respondent comments on all of the Preferred Options ME10 – ME13 stating that the standards proposed are out of line with those of the National Government which are expressed in the Climate Change Act 2008, EU Directive 2009/28/EC, the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan and UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009, and that as such they are not practical in terms of their application and assessment. These comments are repeated in respect of each of the Preferred Options noted above. As the comments are so similar in content, it is intended that the response that follows should cover the Objection as it occurs at the discussion of each individual Preferred Option.

2.198 Response: The Draft NPPF states that the planning system should aim to give support to the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure and supply and to have a positive strategy to maximise renewable and low energy development. As such Options ME10 - ME13 all seek to ensure that new development reflects this requirement and that it will be configured in a way which reflects Central Government's standards now and in the future while being practical in terms of application and assessment.

2.199 While there are a number of documents at present which refer to national standards, the recent Energy Act 2011, which received Royal Assent on 18th October 2011 provides for some of the key elements of the Government's new programme and also its first Annual Energy Statement. It is a first step in a legislative programme, and further legislation will be brought forward in the near future. The Act provides for a step change in the provision of energy efficiency measures to homes and businesses, and makes improvements to our framework to enable and secure low-carbon energy supplies and fair competition in the energy markets. The Councils' shall use the Act to ensure that their efforts are clearly in line with Central Government intentions.

2.200 General Comments

- Can the Councils stipulate conditions about energy efficiency?

2.201 Response: The Draft NPPF does not state that national standards should always be used in supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy. There is certainly scope to develop local standards for renewables. Councils' should design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development as well as supporting the move to a low carbon economy. This should be supported by the planning system and one of the normal mechanisms that could be used in this respect would be to use reasonable conditions.

- The sustainable energy requirement of 10% stated within the Preferred Option ME10 text is too low.

2.202 Response: The requirement of 10% is derived from the Dorset Energy Efficiency Strategy (2009) which in turn was derived from research and findings within the Regional Spatial Strategy (2005/6). It is the intention of the Councils to ensure that the development seeks to achieve the most updated requirement where possible and consistent with Central Government standards and policy. There is now an aspirational target to raise the figure to 15% identified in the Dorset Renewable Energy Strategy (2011), and it may be reasonable and appropriate to adopt this, subject to feasibility and viability - (see below).

- Concern regarding the type of Combined Heat and Power District Heating (CHP), which could be built due to the toxic fumes that could be emitted from it.

2.203 Response: The existing and emerging national policies states that local policies should avoid prescription on technologies. Option ME10 mentions investigation of a CHP in the most general terms and without any site specific information. Any more specific and detailed decisions regarding the most appropriate types and locations of renewable energy will be taken at a later date and fully considered at that time. A discussion of these factors is not appropriate at this part of the Core Strategy preparation.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure

2.204 The investigation of options to investigate district heating and/or power facilities as well as the use of 10% total energy from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources accords with the intention of the National Policy Statement to encourage renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure. The Preferred Option is therefore in accordance with the National Policy Statement.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.205 Preferred Option ME10 encourages the Councils' to identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and also normally require potential heat customers and suppliers to connect to renewable local supplies where this is feasible and viable. All of these concepts are included in the Draft NPPF. There is no guidance in the Draft NPPF which would reject the use of local targets in respect of Renewable Energy generation as long as these are feasible and viable. Preferred Option ME10 is therefore in accordance with the Draft NPPF.

Dorset Renewable Energy Strategy (2011) Consultation Draft

2.206 The Dorset Renewable Energy Strategy 2011 has set an aspirational target (see below) for the generation of renewable Power. This target was introduced in the Consultation document for the revised Strategy and is not yet agreed; however it is expected to be agreed in the near future.

2.207 Proposed aspirational target

2.208 This update (to the original Strategy) proposes to adopt an aspirational target to generate more than 15% of all energy demand in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole from renewable energy resources by 2020. Progress will be monitored each year to determine performance against this target. It is acknowledged by the Local Planning Authorities that the target of 15% will be difficult to achieve; however it is considered that it is potentially achievable.

2.209 The Dorset Renewable Energy Strategy (2011) Consultation Draft has the following aims

- maximise the potential for local economic benefit and facilitate renewable energy development that is appropriate to Dorset’s environment and communities
- encourage a high degree of community involvement, understanding and benefit from using energy more efficiently and developing Dorset’s renewable energy resources
- enable Dorset to play its part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in line with local, regional, national and international targets

2.210 Option ME10 accords with these as it promotes energy from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources as well as options for district heating and/or power facilities.

2.211 The nature of developments and the conditions and constraints on them are all extremely variable. Many sites require costly groundworks or infrastructure in order to be brought forward. A fixed quota of renewable energy provision may mean extra costs sufficient to make a development project lose viability or become infeasible. While it is necessary to ensure that developments contribute to renewable energy provision wherever possible, such provision should not create conditions where new development which may provide other benefits, i.e. affordable housing, cannot take place. A local target for renewable energy provision for new development is considered a reasonable aim and will benefit new developments in the future. The Councils' will adopt the 15% target from the Dorset Strategy, subject to feasibility and viability; however such assessment has not yet been undertaken.

‘Options for Consideration’ Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 10
2: Sustainable use of resources	Strong Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Strong Positive Impact
4: Climate change	Strong Positive Impact
8: Provide suitable and affordable housing	Uncertain Impact
11: Maintain local distinctiveness	Positive Impact
12: Sustainable economic growth	Negative Impact

Table 2.21

2.212 Option ME 10, scored very positively under the environmental objectives but negatively under the affordability/economic growth objectives due to the potential effect on development costs. Clear environmental benefits result from Option ME10.

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.213 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that the effects of any new development of decentralised heating/power facilities would need to be considered once any proposals come forward. This option does not result in development in itself and therefore has no impact.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.214 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies positive impacts for housing, the built environment and on adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.215 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 10.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.216 Option ME 10 does not involve any infrastructure requirement.

Conclusions

2.217 Option ME 10 is supported by the consultation, evidence base and consistent with national policy. The SA only identifies one negative impact but is overall positive. The HRA, HIA and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impacts. National policy both current and emerging makes clear that local authorities should adopt policies which promote renewable, low carbon and decentralised energy.

2.218 The aspirational figure for renewable energy generation as proposed by the Dorset Renewable Energy Strategy 2011 is 15% rather than the 10% stated in Preferred Option ME10. The Strategy is expected to guide renewable energy generation in the whole of Dorset until 2020. The overall intention of Option ME10 is appropriate, and it is considered that Para 152 of the Draft NPPF allows Local Authorities to set levels of renewable energy generation where these are feasible and viable. In this case the figure of 15% is likely to be a standard adopted throughout Dorset, and so will be a consistent local approach. As such it is considered that Option ME10 should be retained in an altered manner to reflect the new 15% figure, subject to the feasibility and viability of the figure.

2.219 It is appropriate to merge this Option with Option ME11 as both options deal with the promotion of renewable, decentralised, and low carbon energy in development. In conjunction with efforts to minimise power use and power loss within new development a further set of actions aimed at creating a more sustainable and less high carbon use style of living involves the use of renewable energy or low carbon energy rather than more conventional power sources. Renewable and low carbon energy delivery is supported by central government, while local authorities have a role to play in encouraging the use of renewable or low carbon energy at the local level. Combined with sustainable development, renewable and low carbon energy use can make a strong contribution to reducing the local carbon footprint. Policies to reinforce the use of renewable and low carbon energy are therefore necessary within the Core Strategy.

Preferred Option ME 11

Renewable energy standards for residential and non-residential development within larger developments and within the new neighbourhoods

Larger developments within existing settlements (10 dwellings or 0.5ha residential land area, or 1,000m² of non-residential floorspace or 1ha or larger) and all development within the new neighbourhoods will be expected to achieve above the minimum 10% target for energy from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources. This option can only be adopted, however, if the findings of the ongoing master planning of the new neighbourhoods and viability work demonstrate that clear opportunities exist to provide a higher proportion of energy from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources, and are shown to be feasible and viable. No specific target can yet be proposed, because evidence is not yet available to inform what higher target would be most appropriate within the bounds of development viability and geographic constraints in order to satisfy paragraph 33 of the Supplement to PPS1. The Councils must await completion of the master planning assessment to allow an informed decision on a viable renewable energy option to be taken following Preferred Options consultation.

To prevent a piecemeal approach, the preferred option would consider each urban extension as one ‘larger development’ and would, therefore, require that ALL schemes within the extensions meet the higher target (unless, having regard to the type of development involved and its location and design, this is not feasible or viable). It is anticipated that this would require district-wide energy generation such as a combined heat and power plant. To meet the higher targets, energy provision could either be provided on-site or through commuted sums to the Council which would then finance a large off-site facility. To maximise this potential, the Councils will investigate opportunities to connect such a scheme to existing development adjacent to the new neighbourhoods.

If the evidence base does not justify a higher target, non-residential development within larger developments and within the new neighbourhoods will be required to meet the 10% target.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 11	4	2	0	6

Table 2.22

2.220 Jackson Planning Ltd (Meyrick Estate)

- Objection – Respondent comments on all of the Preferred Options ME10 – ME13 stating that the standards proposed are out of line with those of the National Government which are expressed in the Climate Change Act 2008, EU Directive 2009/28/EC, the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan and UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009, and that as such they are not practical in terms of their application and assessment. These comments are repeated in respect of each of the Preferred Options noted above. As the comments are so similar in content, it is intended that the response that follows should cover the Objection as it occurs at the discussion of each individual Preferred Option.

2.221 Response: The Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the planning system should aim to give support to the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure and supply and to have a positive strategy to maximise renewable and low energy development. As such Options ME10 - ME13 all seek to ensure that new development reflects this requirement and that the requirement will be configured in a way which reflects central government standards now and in the future while being practical in terms of application and assessment. This is reinforced by paragraph 152 of the Draft NPPF which clearly expects policies at the local level to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy.

2.222 While there are a number of documents at present which refer to national standards the recent Energy Act 2011 which received Royal Assent on 18th October 2011 provides for some of the key elements of the Government's new programme and also its first Annual Energy Statement. It is a first step in a legislative programme, and further legislation will be brought forward in the near future. The Act provides for a step change in the provision of energy efficiency measures to homes and businesses, and makes improvements to our framework to enable and secure low-carbon energy supplies and fair competition in the energy markets. The Councils' shall use the Act to ensure that their efforts are clearly in line with central government intentions.

- Objection - Notwithstanding the above objection ME11 in particular is out of step with the time table for zero carbon by 2016.

2.223 Response: The Preferred Option refers not just to new development or new neighbourhoods but also to residential areas in the locality of new development (ie existing settlement areas) where the introduction of renewable energy from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources would be of benefit to existing residences which will not be able to achieve zero carbon standards. Reference is made to the Response in ME10.

2.224 General Comments

- Are local micro-generation plants being considered?

2.225 Response: There are no specific proposals presently under consideration. Should such plants be proposed they will need to be assessed as to their appropriateness to their site and to their local impact.

- There is no evidence to support this Preferred Option.

2.226 Response: The Councils have undertaken major planning work for the Christchurch Urban Extension and new neighbourhoods in East Dorset. Master planning work and viability assessments have informed policy and strategy approach to the Christchurch Urban Extension and East Dorset's New Neighbourhoods. The policy approach to renewable energy provision will be set out within these site specific chapters of the Core Strategy. Due to differences in site circumstances, viability and feasibility it is now not considered appropriate to have a generic policy relating to all of the sites.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure

2.227 The investigation of options to investigate district heating and/or power facilities as well as the use of 10% total energy from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources accords with the intention of the National Policy Statement to encourage renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure. The Preferred Option is therefore in accordance with the National Policy Statement.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.228 Preferred Option ME11 encourages Local Planning Authorities to identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. All of these concepts are included in the para 152 of the Draft NPPF. In this paragraph there is clear support for local authorities to create and support a positive local strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources. Local solutions are encouraged as a part of the contribution and as such setting local targets is an accepted factor in achieving positive results. The Preferred Option ME11 is therefore in accordance with the Draft NPPF.

'Options for Consideration' Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 11
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Strong Positive Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Strong Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Strong Positive Impact
4: Climate change	Positive Impact
8: Provide suitable and affordable housing	Uncertain Impact
11: Maintain local distinctiveness	Positive Impact

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 11
12: Sustainable economic growth	Negative Impact

Table 2.23

2.229 Option ME11 is a feasible option. Strong environmental benefits result from Option ME11, however extra costs would be imposed on economic growth as a result of meeting sustainable targets.

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.230 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that the effects of any new development of decentralised heating/power facilities would need to be considered once any proposals come forward. This option does not result in development in itself, therefore it has no direct impacts.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.231 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies positive impacts for housing, the built environment and on adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.232 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 11.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.233 Option ME 11 does not involve any infrastructure requirement.

Conclusions

2.234 Option ME 11 is supported by the consultation and consistent with national policy. The HRA, HIA and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impacts. Evidence indicates high development costs on site and off site relating to the urban extension in Christchurch may affect feasibility and viability. In turn higher construction costs inherent in providing decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy would exacerbate this situation. As such implementing a policy requiring a fixed amount of renewable energy could threaten the whole concept of development both on the urban extension and other large sites, while an adaptable requirement and a robust assessment of what could be provided in terms of renewable energy could still achieve positive results within the capability of the site to provide.

2.235 In respect of the New Neighbourhoods within EDDC area, each of these will have particular development opportunities and constraints within which renewable or low carbon energy generation can occur and have their own site specific chapters. The policy approach to renewable energy provision will be set out within these site specific chapters of the Core Strategy. Therefore Option ME11 while being appropriate would need alteration to allow for its flexible application to the Urban Extension and New Neighbourhoods, subject to the feasibility and viability aspects of each of these sites.

2.236 Option ME11 deals with larger developments. These larger sites will be considered separately, each with their own individual assessment and policy/policies in order to best address their particular site requirements, opportunities and constraints. Their target for energy from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources is one of the elements which a site specific policy will address. This means that Option ME11 can now be omitted as its subject matter is best dealt with in the individual site policies.

2.237 With the omission of ME11, ME10 will be taken forward to set out renewable energy policy within development alongside the site specific chapters for the Christchurch Urban Extension and the East Dorset New Neighbourhoods which will contain site specific renewable energy policies.

Preferred Option ME 12

Financial contribution for small or exempt developments (carbon offset fund)

Where developments cannot feasibly or viably provide the required proportion of their total energy requirements from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy sources as part of the development, the Core Strategy will require a financial contribution towards off-site carbon reduction measures. These measures, such as district-wide heating facilities or domestic micro-generation, improvements to the energy efficiency of existing buildings, or even planting and habitat creation, will mitigate the carbon released from the new development. This approach would operate along the lines of a ‘carbon offset fund’ which has been successfully implemented by councils elsewhere. Contributions would be pooled and used to fund an area-wide decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy source elsewhere in the district (or other carbon saving measure) thereby offsetting the carbon emissions from the contributing developments.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 12	5	1	0	6

Table 2.24

2.238 Jackson Planning Ltd (Meyrick Estate)

- Objection – Respondent comments on all of the Preferred Options ME10 – ME13 stating that the standards proposed are out of line with those of the National Government which are expressed in the Climate Change Act 2008, EU Directive 2009/28/EC, the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan and UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009, and that as such they are not practical in terms of their application and assessment. These comments are repeated in respect of each of the Preferred Options noted above. As the comments are so similar in content, it is intended that the response that follows should cover the Objection as it occurs at the discussion of each individual Preferred Option.

2.239 Response: The Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the planning system should aim to give support to the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure and supply and to have a positive strategy to maximise renewable and low energy development. As such Options ME10 - ME13 all seek to ensure that new development reflects this requirement and that it will be configured in a way which reflects central government's standards' now and in the future while being practical in terms of application and assessment.

2.240 Dorset County Council, SE Dorset Infrastructure Steering Group

- Support: Green infrastructure schemes can have a part to play in carbon offsetting measures and this should be considered when Community Infrastructure Levy mechanisms are put into place.

2.241 Response: The preparation of the Core Strategy Infrastructure Development Plan will explore the need to identify any specific renewable schemes which could be funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

2.242 Issues raised in the Consultation

- The proposed contributions should be "ring fenced"

2.243 Response: This will be dealt with through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - an explanation

2.244 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will become the main mechanism in the future by the Councils' to gather and distribute funds for necessary development schemes. It is a tariff based system which can potentially be applied to all new development. Beyond April 2014 it will not be possible to pool contributions through the use of Section 106 agreements as it was in the past and so this mechanism will become less used. In addition Section 106 monies will be required to be used only in relation to the sites from which they are derived. The CIL is regarded as a more flexible arrangement to assist necessary projects and developments by the Councils. The CIL will also be able to fund strategic projects.

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure

2.245 The introduction of particular funding arrangements to assist in the provision of district wide heating facilities and domestic micro-generation accords with the intention of the National Policy Statement to encourage renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure. The Preferred Option is therefore in accordance with the National Policy Statement.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.246 Preferred Option ME12 accords with the general intention of the Draft NPPF to support cuts in greenhouse gas emissions and also to support the delivery of renewable and low-carbon energy. Preferred Option ME12 is therefore in accordance with the Draft NPPF.

‘Options for Consideration’ Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 12
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Strong Positive Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Strong Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Strong Positive Impact
4: Climate change	Strong Positive Impact
8: Provide suitable and affordable housing	Positive Impact
11: Maintain local distinctiveness	No Impact
12: Sustainable economic growth	Positive Impact

Table 2.25

2.247 Option 12 scores positively under the environmental objectives and the affordability and viability objectives. While some development costs might rise as a result of the Option it is considered that increased economic opportunities would arise locally and that this would in turn encourage increased employment and general economic growth.

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.248 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that this option does not result in development in itself. Instead it refers to the funding mechanism for decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy sources. Any renewable energy should be subject to HRA at the planning application stage.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.249 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies positive impacts for housing, the built environment and on adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.250 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 12.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.251 Option ME 12 does not involve any infrastructure requirement.

Conclusions

2.252 Option ME 12 is supported by the consultation, evidence base and at present is consistent with national policy, but not beyond April 2014 when the Community Infrastructure Levy will be the general collection mechanism. The SA does not identify any negative impact and is overall positive. The HRA, HIA and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impacts. In conclusion, this option as set out is not considered an appropriate approach to address financial contributions for small or exempt developments as it will not be possible to pool contributions through Section 106 or to support strategic schemes by this method after April 2014. In the future, infrastructure measures will be delivered through the Core Strategy and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). All development will be required to contribute and the type of projects described in ME12 will fall within the CIL remit. As such Option ME12 should be omitted from any further part of the process of preparing future Policy.

Preferred Option ME 13

Energy-generating technologies

Future policies will not prescribe which type of renewable technology to incorporate into developments. The suitability of the chosen technologies should be judged on a site-specific basis and developers will be expected to assess a range of suitable options including district-wide and/or micro-generation. Where specific opportunities exist, such as at new neighbourhoods, the development of Combined Heat and Power networks (or

other district-wide/community heating and power) will be favoured. As part of the urban extension master planning, the Councils will carry out a feasibility assessment to identify which technologies and locations are most appropriate and how they may be financed through new development and other funding sources. As new neighbourhoods provide the best opportunity to deliver carbon-reducing measures which would not be feasible elsewhere in the urban areas due to the small-scale of individual developments, they will be the focus of feasibility studies and possible developer contributions policies.

Core Strategy Preferred Option ME 13 Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 13	3	3	0	6

Table 2.26

2.253 Jackson Planning Ltd (Meyrick Estate)

- Objection – Respondent comments on all of the Preferred Options ME10 – ME13 stating that the standards proposed are out of line with those of the National Government which are expressed in the Climate Change Act 2008, EU Directive 209/28EC, the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan and UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009, and that as such they are not practical in terms of their application and assessment. These comments are repeated in respect of each of the Preferred Options noted above. As the comments are so similar in content, it is intended that the response that follows should cover the Objection as it occurs at the discussion of each individual Preferred Option.

2.254 Response: The Draft NPPF states that the planning system should aim to give support to the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure and supply and to have a positive strategy to maximise renewable and low energy development. As such Options ME10 - ME13 all seek to ensure that new development reflects this requirement and that it will be configured in a way which reflects central governments standards now and in the future while being practical in terms of application and assessment.

2.255 Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

- The Society is concerned about possible inappropriate location of renewable energy technology close to sensitive sites and therefore recommend that environmental considerations should be incorporated at an early stage.

2.256 Response: The Councils' will carry out separate feasibility assessments in respect of the urban extension master plan and in other locations where large developments are proposed in order to ensure that optimum solutions for renewable energy are employed. These assessments will be of necessity in the pre-development stages of any scheme. Although the discussion relating to this option is more related to financial viability and technology appropriateness, it would also be necessary for any development to include a near simultaneous separate assessment in relation to impact on the local natural environment. This would be able to identify potentially adverse effects on flora and fauna at an early stage.

2.257 Alliance Planning

- The policy does not go far enough to tackle the effects of climate change

2.258 Response: The existing and emerging national policies stipulates that local policies should avoid any prescription on technologies, this option is in line with that advice. Furthermore Councils' cannot adopt over ambitious policies for renewable energy that could render sustainable development unviable and planning must support sustainable economic growth.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure

2.259 The selection of appropriate technologies and options such as district wide and/or micro generation as well as combined heat and power networks to suit the requirements of specific sites such as the urban extension or of other larger developments accords with the intention of the National Policy Statement to encourage renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure. The Preferred Option is therefore in accordance with the National Policy Statement.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.260 The selection of appropriate technologies and options such as district wide and/or micro generation as well as combined heat and power networks to suit the requirements of specific sites such as the new neighbourhoods or of other larger developments accords with the intention of the National Policy Statement - to encourage renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure. The Draft NPPF also states that the planning system should "identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers". The preferred option does this while urging developers to assess a range of suitable options from available technology in order to increase the use of renewable and low carbon energy options. The Preferred Option is therefore in accordance with the Draft NPPF.

Dorset Biodiversity Strategy Mid Term Review Summary (2010)

2.261 The Strategy seeks to expand the use of locally generated wood fuel. This is the type of renewable energy that is encouraged by Preferred Option 13. Developers will be expected to consider such locally supplied renewable power sources when considering how to achieve feasible energy provision in new development. The Preferred Option is therefore in accordance with the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy Mid Term Review Summary (2010).

‘Options for Consideration’ Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 13
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	No Impact
2: Sustainable use of resources	Positive Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Uncertain Impact
4: Climate change	Positive Impact
11: Maintain local distinctiveness	Uncertain Impact

Table 2.27

2.262 Option ME13 has very few impacts. There is some uncertainty however as to whether there may be impacts with regard to pollution and local distinctiveness.

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.263 The HRA assessment for this option identifies uncertain impacts on European habitats but possible impacts could include:

- Physical disturbance / damage
- Non-physical disturbance such as noise and light pollution
- Air pollution
- Interruption to hydrological regimes (e.g. From water abstraction or water pollution)

2.264 Uncertain at this stage as dependent upon exact location but most likely to have an impact on the following habitats:

- Dorset Heathlands SPA / Ramsar.
- Dorset Heaths SAC due to their proximity to the proposed urban extension location.

2.265 The HRA assessment concludes that the impact on European habitats is uncertain for Option ME 13. Development of energy-generating technologies may have adverse effects on any nearby European sites both during the construction phase and operation. This is uncertain due to a lack of information at this stage about the planned location, type and scale of any new facilities.

2.266 The Core Strategy sets out a range of policies which seek to provide effective mitigation for the potential impacts identified above. Good practise construction techniques including noise suppression measures, hours of operation, measures to prevent water pollution (proposed Core Strategy Spatial Vision seeks to encourage 'high standards of building design and construction'). Proposed Core Strategy policies which seek to restrict emissions from transport and energy generation, and minimise water usage within new developments include Objectives 3 and 6, Policies KS 19, KS 20 and ME 7.

'Options for Consideration' Health Impact Assessment

2.267 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies positive impacts for housing and on adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

'Options for Consideration' Equalities Impact Assessment

2.268 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 13.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.269 Option ME 13 does not involve any infrastructure requirements.

Conclusions

2.270 Option ME 13 is neither opposed nor supported by the consultation. It is consistent with the evidence base and national policy. The SA identifies an overall positive impact. The HRA, HIA and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impacts. The Option is considered to be overly detailed and prescriptive which may not be appropriate in the medium or long term. The text should therefore be reduced.

2.271 It may be appropriate to merge the Option ME13 with other Options ME10,11,12 as all of these relate to similar topics. The Option text includes a short discussion of some renewable technologies. The Policy approach to new neighbourhoods, relating to renewable and low carbon energy in those locations will be set out in site specific chapters, therefore the function of the Option is as a short generalist introduction of the need to incorporate renewable technology into new development. As so little of the Option text is therefore required this small amount should be incorporated into a single Option text based on ME 10 + ME13, (ME11 and 12 have already been suggested for deletion).

Flooding Risk, Mitigation and Management

2.272 Issue: How should our policies direct development away from flood risk areas while also making best use of limited development land?

2.273 Areas within Christchurch and East Dorset are at risk from river and sea flooding. As a consequence new development should be directed away from areas of highest risk, in addition land needs to be retained for works to protect vulnerable areas, and assessment made of how to ensure safe development without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

2.274 Options have been drawn up which address these issues (Preferred Options ME 14, 15, 16, 17). These Options were drawn up within the assumption that Planning Policy Statement 25 (2010) Development and Flood Risk would continue to form the main source of guidance for Local Planning Authorities. In July 2011 however the Draft National Planning Policy Framework was published for consultation. While this latter document is still in its consultation period it is clearly the intention of the Government to adapt and use the Draft NPPF to guide development and planning policy in the future.

2.275 In approach the two documents are very different, the Draft NPPF is brief and more general, whereas PPS 25 provided a detailed set of statements and advice on techniques and procedures to be used, however the same principles remain in both documents.

2.276 The Draft NPPF clearly states that Local Plans must develop policies to manage flood risk. The Local Planning Authority must also in the likely absence of PPS25, provide an explanation of the rationale to be applied by it in reaching considered decisions with regard to flooding related matters.

2.277 As a consequence of the change in approach between Central Government advice past and present, it is now necessary to amend the Options concerning flooding in order to provide a clear frame of information and policy to explain the rationale behind the Local Planning Authority's approach and aid the understanding of flooding issues by developers and plan users.

2.278 The following table sets out the general content of the Draft NPPF and PPS25 in respect of flooding. Where the Draft NPPF lacks the depth of detail this is set out in the third column and will be provided by the Local Planning Authority in a Supplementary Planning Document separate to the Options or in the Options themselves.

PPS25 content	Draft NPPF content	Extra policies/information needed
LPA to Prepare Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and set out principles of the assessment of flood risk	LPA to Prepare Strategic Flood Risk Assessments	Requirement to set out principles of the assessment of flood risk in some detail as these do not occur in the draft NPPF.
Use SFRA to direct development to low/no risk areas	Use SFRA to direct development to low/no risk areas	Policy to state that SFRA will be used to determine the suitability of development
LPA to apply Sequential test to development	LPA to apply Sequential test to development	Refer to NPPF and to PPS 25 as well as SFRA and FRA as appropriate
LPA to apply Exceptional test to development	LPA to apply Exceptional test to development	Refer to NPPF and to PPS 25 as well as SFRA and FRA as appropriate

PPS25 content	Draft NPPF content	Extra policies/information needed
Create policies for the appraising of flood risk	LPA should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change	LA should create policies which show how it will deal with development in relation to flood risk assessment
LPA should frame policies for development which avoid flood risk to people and property where possible	Must create safe development without increasing flood risk	LPA to create its own policies to ensure avoidance of flood risk
LPA to manage any residual risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change	Planning system to minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to impacts arising from climate change	LPA to create policies or advice relating to residual risk
LPA should only be permitting development in areas of flood risk when there are no reasonably available sites in areas of lower flood risk and benefits of the development outweigh the risks from flooding	Footnote 10 such development must show wider sustainability benefits to outweigh risk. Apply the Exception Test	LPA to create guidance to clarify the process and procedures involved and any special local circumstances relevant to their decision.
LPA has duty re safeguarding land from development that is required for current and future flood management eg conveyance and storage of flood water, and flood defences.	Local Plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development by safe-guarding land from development that is required for current and future flood management. Planning should avoid inappropriate development in vulnerable areas (in relation to coastal change)	LPA to set out safeguarding policies reflecting future and current land required to fulfil local flood management. LPA to provide advice on the types of management, techniques involved, techniques preferred, and to explain the benefits of such management

PPS25 content	Draft NPPF content	Extra policies/information needed
<p>LPA should be reducing flood risk to and from new development through location, layout and design, incorporating sustainable drainage systems (SUDS);</p>	<p>After applying a sequential approach the most vulnerable development should be located in areas of lowest flood risk, development is to be appropriately flood resilient and resistant, include safe access and escape routes, priority should be given to use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS)</p>	<p>LPA will need to set out in detail how it will assess development vulnerability, flood risk, flood resilience, site design and layout, and the techniques such as SUDS which may be profitably used.</p>
<p>LPAs should use opportunities offered by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding eg surface water management plans; making the most of the benefits of green infrastructure for flood storage, conveyance and SUDS; re-creating functional floodplain; and setting back defences.</p>	<p>Care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaption measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure.</p> <p>When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere...</p>	<p>LPA will need to explain how it intends to manage risks and to ensure that consideration is taken of a range of techniques to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding.</p> <p>LA will need to explain techniques and encourage their most appropriate use in varying circumstances.</p>
<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>LPA should be working effectively with the Environment Agency, other operating authorities and other stakeholders to ensure that best use is made of their expertise and information</p> <p>so that plans are effective and decisions on planning applications can be delivered. expeditiously; and ensuring spatial planning supports flood risk management policies and plans, River Basin Management Plans and emergency planning.</p>	<p>No advice</p>	<p>The LPA, to ensure a proactive flood management system has to be able to co-ordinate all aspects of development to ensure smooth delivery. This involves effective and appropriate policies and also facilitating co-operation between involved parties and specialist organisations. This is not requiring policy but would be part of an overarching set of documentation relating to flood risk, mitigation and management. The LPA has already agreed to provide a Supplementary Planning Document in relation to flooding and this would be a suitable vehicle to carry information of this kind</p>

Table 2.28

2.279 The assessment of the Options ME14 - ME16 has concluded that only 2 policies need be taken forward, one a reworded ME14 and the second a combined ME15 and ME16.

2.280 The Local Planning Authorities have agreed with the comments of the Environment Agency to produce a Supplementary Planning Document in respect of Flooding - see below (Option ME14). As there is sufficient detail in the NPPF for strategic planning and development management then there is little extra detail that needs to be added into the two new Options as set out above. If these two new Options are supported by the proposed Supplementary Planning Document with technical detail, an explanation of necessary assessment techniques, and also clear standards within it then a comprehensive approach to flood risk and flood defence has been established.

Supplementary Planning Document.

2.281 This document will support the Options dealing with flood matters and also give a clearer understanding of some of the matters regarding floods and stated in the Draft NPPF.

2.282 Content of the SPD would need to be referenced to the paragraph of the Draft NPPF to which it related in order to allow its most effective use.

Information/Policy need identified	Reference in NPPF (para)	Type of Information to be Provided by SPD
Principles of assessment of flood risk	LPA must be supported by SFRA para 155	Forms of flooding, categorisation used in assessment ie Low Probability etc. Flood risk vulnerability classification
Role of SFRA	Yes mentioned in para156 and footnote	Principles, minimum requirements, who prepares SFRA what information can be found in SFRA. Flood Zones maps
Role of FRA	Yes 157, 158	When used/required, who prepares, relationship to SFRA
Explain Sequential test	Mentioned in 156 and footnote but not explained	When used/required, principles of the sequential approach and test, who prepares, relationship to flood zones.

Information/Policy need identified	Reference in NPPF (para)	Type of Information to be Provided by SPD
Explain Exception test	Para 156 Detailed footnote but needs more explanation	When used/required, principles of the sequential approach and test, who prepares, relationship to flood zones. Compliance
Minor development and Change of use	Mentioned in 158 but needs more explanation	Circumstances where these sites need assessment, FRA still applies, other advice to prospective developers.
Explain how LPA deals with development in relation to flood risk	Brief directive to LPA re type of approach, needs more explanation	Principles applied, relevant Local Development Documents, other relevant documents,
How to ensure avoidance of flood risk	Mentioned in para 156, needs more detail	Explain what constitutes flood risk, List relevant LPA policies, documents and advice, advise of potential contributions, provision of scheme details in initial discussions.
Advice re residual risk	Mentioned in 157 but needs clear explanation	Define residual risk, give examples, cite good practice
Guidance re procedures, process, and potential local circumstances in decision making	No	Explain approach, with Draft NPPF, followed by Core Strategy and SFRA, site assessment for risk. Arrangements for mitigation works and tariffs appropriate to such works. Potential for site specific planning obligations for flood risk management. consultation,
Safeguarding policies reflecting future and current land required to fulfil local flood management	Mentions safeguarding land -156	State where information/policies can be found showing safeguarded land or land at risk/unsuitable. Detail any ongoing research. Locationally specific development guidance/policies and non development zones Guidance/policies for defended and undefended areas Developable zones where mitigation may be appropriate

Information/Policy need identified	Reference in NPPF (para)	Type of Information to be Provided by SPD
Advice re types of management, techniques involved and preferred and benefits of such management	Mentions priority of SUDS 157	SUDS, EDDC SPD on Flood Risk Christchurch to produce own, DCC as SAB, appropriate locations and types Other flood mitigation ie storage areas, new technologies, substitution of uses (from vulnerable to less vulnerable)
How LA will assess vulnerability, flood risk flood resilience, site design/layout		Sequential testing using SFRA Use SFRA to inform FRA Site specific risk, location of uses within the site, access points, levels, safe design
Organisations involved	No	List organisations, their role/responsibilities, and at what point in the process they are involved.
Co-operation between organisations	No	Set out what is expected/required from all parties.
Status of SPD	No	Why SPD produced, how to use it and what it links with. Its role in decision making.

Table 2.29

2.283 The SPD will set out how the Councils' will assess flood risk and ensure that development is appropriate in terms of construction and location and that it will, where possible, reduce flood risk. It is anticipated that it will guide developers to achieve standards required by the Councils' or the Environment Agency at the earliest stages of the development process rather than viewing flood risk as a separate "add on" to be dealt with later in the construction process. The advantages to the developer is a greater understanding of flood risk, an appreciation of the way that the Councils' will deal with applications in areas of flood risk and the additional construction costs that are likely to be involved in any scheme where flood risk is possible. It is not intended that the SPD will have the status of a Policy, rather it is designed as guidance to be used with LPA Policies and the stipulations of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Preferred Option ME 14

Development within areas at risk of flooding

PPS25 is considered adequate, when adapted and clarified by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessments to suit local circumstances, to inform decisions regarding the suitability of all forms of development within flood zones and no local policy is therefore required. Only where applications or proposed sites for allocation satisfy the requirements of PPS25 will development be permitted. Providing safe unaided egress from the development to ground beyond the flood risk area shall be a requirement of all development which intensifies use. The Core Strategy will define the extent of each flood zone and the Councils will provide whatever additional information is available through the Strategic Flood Risk Assessments to inform applications. In their determination of planning applications, the Councils will make reference to all available information on flood risk from all sources of flooding at the time of application and will consult with the Environment Agency.

This option will not form a stand-alone policy.

Christchurch Council will prepare a Supplementary Planning Document on the topic of flood risk to provide guidance for developers on how to deliver Core Strategy policies, interpret and use the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment flood maps to determine the site level degree of risk, and provide advice on how to apply the Sequential and Exception tests locally.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 14	3	0	0	3

Table 2.30

2.284 Options for Consideration Consultation (Water Supply/Flood Risk) Meeting 29th Nov 2010.

2.285 Attended by Environment Agency, Jackson Planning (Meyrick Estate), Wessex Water, CBC, EDDC.

- The timing of a Supplementary Planning Document will be crucial especially if it lags too far behind the production of the Core Strategy
- Response - the Councils' are aware of the need for the early production of the Supplementary Planning Document and ensure this is prepared alongside the Core Strategy.
- There is a need for much more information on flood defences, their need and their costs. The Infrastructure Development Plan will need to cost possible flood defence improvements and their viability.

- Response: Major flood defence schemes have been identified while a fuller range of schemes has yet to be finalised. Once this has been completed the whole will be able to be costed. This will be done as soon as possible.
- The Environment Agency support a developer contributions policy that operates on a borough wide basis so that it would not only be development within flood risk areas contributing towards the cost of defences.

2.286 Response: This approach is welcomed and has been successfully used in other areas.

2.287 Environment Agency

- Reference to a Supplementary Planning Document on flood risk is welcomed; would like to see it produced as soon as possible

2.288 Response: Local Plans should now address specific requirements of their own local area. To this effect the Councils' will prepare as soon as possible a Supplementary Planning Document which will contain development advice and up to date information on the topic of flood risk, how to interpret and deliver Core Strategy policies, the interpretation and use of Strategic Flood Risk Assessment flood maps and how to apply the Sequential and Exception Tests locally. In addition details of any specialised local requirements will be set out.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.289 The text is broadly in line with the Draft NPPF in seeking to minimise vulnerability to climate change and manage the risk of flooding as well as to ensure safe unaided egress from vulnerable areas to locations outside of the flood risk area. It is also relevant to the natural environment, its objectives include mitigating the effects of climate change, flooding and coastal change. However it is couched within references to and the approach of PPS 25 and as such needs revision to reflect paragraphs 154 to 157 of the Draft NPPF.

'Options for Consideration' Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 14
2: Sustainable use of resources	Uncertain Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Positive Impact
6: Safe and secure environment	Strong Positive Impact
8: Provide suitable and affordable housing	Uncertain Impact

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

Preferred Option ME 14

12: Sustainable economic growth

Negative Impact

Table 2.31

2.290 The option scores positively under the environmental objectives but uncertainly under the cost and affordability objectives due to the additional cost to development of requiring flood mitigation measures and contributions towards defence improvements, this cost in turn produces a negative effect in relation to economic growth. Cost and viability impacts will be holistically assessed once all infrastructure requirements are known.

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.291 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that this option does not result in development in itself.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.292 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impact on adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.293 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 14.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.294 Option ME 14 does not involve any infrastructure requirements.

Conclusions

2.295 Option ME 14 is supported by the consultation, evidence base and is consistent with emerging national policy but needs its text to refer to the Draft NPPF. The SA identifies one negative impact but is overall positive. The HRA, HIA and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impacts. Although the Draft NPPF is only at a consultative stage it is reasonable to assume that the overall approach that it takes will be retained and that it will in the relatively near future form national policy in respect of planning and flooding. The Draft NPPF states that the LPA shall produce proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change and policies to manage flood risk. Option ME14 states that no local policy is required, it is now clear that the Draft NPPF when adapted and clarified by the Christchurch and East Dorset Strategic Flood Risk Assessments will be able to inform decisions regarding the suitability of all sorts of development in flood zones. In addition the Supplementary Planning Document will be available for reference to detailed standards.

2.296 The assumption is that Planning Policy Statements, including PPS 25 and its associated guidance documents will not exist in the future. In this case detailed advice with regards to planning and flooding will need to be produced by the Councils'. Option ME14 already includes a reference to Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) but not to Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), also there is reference to the Sequential and Exception tests as local assessments. Flood Resilience and Flood Resistance are not mentioned in ME14 but are noted in the Draft NPPF, while ME14 and the Draft NPPF both make reference to provision of safe unaided egress. Defining the extent of each flood zone will be necessary and this can best be done within the new SPD. The Option does not discuss suitable adaptation measures or the need to use opportunities offered by new development to reduce flood risk elsewhere, and for local authorities to ensure that new development does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

2.297 It is therefore clear that ME14 should be re-written to reflect the issues raised within the Draft NPPF and to give a local context.

2.298 Option ME14 introduces the Councils' preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document on the topic of flood risk in order to provide technical guidance for developers. The Option ME14 should retain this element and expand on it in order to explain the way that it will be used, and also the main information sections that will be included in it. Overall ME14 is an appropriate approach to development within areas at risk of flooding once it has been subject to some rewriting to take account of the Draft NPPF's approach.

2.299 Options ME14, 15, 16, and 17 deal with aspects of a similar subject - flooding - as such it may be useful to combine the texts of all four into a single text. This possibility will be discussed further after each has been assessed separately.

Preferred Option ME 15

Flood mitigation measures

Local policy will support the Planning Policy Statement 25 requirement that all developments (in all flood zones and including new neighbourhoods) will be required to demonstrate that flood risk does not increase as a result, and that options have been sought to reduce flood risk overall. Post-development surface water run-off must not exceed pre-development levels and options should have been sought to reduce levels of run off overall. The primary means of satisfying this policy will be through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems and a range of flood resistance and resilience measures. Space for such measures should be set aside within larger developments.

All developments (including redevelopments and extensions which require planning permission) within areas at risk of flooding will be required to incorporate appropriate flood resistance and resilience measures as a means of 'future proofing' against the effects of climate change. Historic buildings and sites may be exempt from this option where measures would harm their character or increase the risk of long-term deterioration to fabric or fittings.

Details of the most appropriate types and layouts for Sustainable Drainage Systems and the most appropriate resistance and resilience measures will be provided by the forthcoming Flood and Water Management Bill, the existing East Dorset Supplementary Planning Document on Sustainable Drainage Systems, the proposed Christchurch Supplementary Planning Document on Flood Risk and other local evidence (including the Strategic Flood Risk Assessments) available at the time of application.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 15	4	2	0	6

Table 2.32

2.300 Environment Agency

- Suggest that reference to Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs) in the Option text be removed and set out in a separate stand alone Option as SUDS are not specific to flood risk. This new Option could also include the SUDS reference in ME7

2.301 Response: It is not considered that a completely separate Option relating solely to SUDS is appropriate as a stand-alone text. SUDS should have an adequate mention and it is considered that Option ME15 is the most appropriate location for text relating to them.

2.302 Environment Agency

- The Agency asked for more information about the difference between flood resistance and flood resilience, and for this to be set out in the Option.

2.303 Response: These terms “resistance” and “resilience” will be set out and discussed in the Supplementary Planning Document. If necessary an appendix at the end of the Submission Options can be used to briefly explain these terms

2.304 General Comment

- Support for the Preferred Option, with limited objections, either requiring more detail in the text, or discussing whether a policy with regard to flood mitigation is necessary, given existing legislation.

2.305 Response: The Preferred Option has within it sufficient detail and other documents exist to provide additional information, these documents are mentioned in the text of the Option.

2.306 Environment Agency

- Suggest extra text within the Preferred Option text 'setting finished floor levels above future predicted flood levels'.

2.307 Response: This level of detail is not appropriate at this part of the Option process. It will be considered as a part of the proposed Supplementary Planning Document on Flood Risk.

2.308 Dorset County Council Green Infrastructure Steering Group

- Supported, reference to sustainable urban drainage welcomed, suggestion to include "flood measures should have regard to opportunities for improving/using green infrastructure (for example habitats or harbourside parks) where they can serve a dual purpose of delivering flood management and improve open space"

2.309 Response: This is a point that can be incorporated in the Supplementary Planning Document on Flood Risk.

2.310 The Woodland Trust

- Would like to see the role of woodland and water included in this option, furthermore a recognition that natural processes in particular trees and woodland can play a key role in flood management
- Wishes to see acknowledged the full value of trees in urban areas in the development by LA's of flood risk assessments
- Wishes a reference to the importance of trees and woodlands in SUDS

2.311 Response: The Councils' will prepare a Supplementary Planning Document on the topic of flood risk to provide guidance for developers on how to deliver Core Strategy policies, interpret and use the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment flood maps to determine the site level degree of risk, and provide advice on how to apply the Sequential and Exception tests locally. It is considered that the above noted comments are best addressed within that Supplementary Planning Document.

2.312 General Comments

- Objection because it is considered that this policy does not add to the PPS 25 requirements therefore it should be removed

2.313 Response: The Draft NPPF is now the relevant document to refer to regarding flood mitigation and this states (Para 155) that Local Plans must “develop policies to manage flood risk”.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.314 The Draft NPPF sets out Government policy on development and flood risk. Its aims are to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process, to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas of highest risk. Where new development is, exceptionally, necessary in such areas, policy aims to make it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere and, where possible, reducing flood risk overall. Local authorities will need to ensure that development plans are adapted to climate change, including taking account of future flood risk. As with current Central Government policy, there is continued emphasis on local authorities ensuring that new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to impacts arising from climate change, and also that local plans must be supported by strategic flood risk assessment.

2.315 The Option is relevant to the natural environment, its objectives include climate change, flooding and coastal change. As with current Central Government policy, there is continued emphasis on new development being planned to avoid increased vulnerability to impacts arising from climate change and local plans being supported by strategic flood risk assessment. Overall, the Option is generally in line with Central Government views, except that it uses as its legal background PPS25. As such the option needs alteration to reflect the newly emerging policy wording and approach and as such it does accord with the Draft NPPF.

‘Options for Consideration’ Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 15
3: Minimise pollution	Positive Impact
6: Safe and secure environment	Strong Positive Impact
8: Provide suitable and affordable housing	Uncertain Impact
10: Protect historic buildings and archaeological sites	Positive Impact
11: Maintain local distinctiveness	Strong Positive Impact

Table 2.33

2.316 This option reinforces the national policy position set by the Draft NPPF. The option scores positively under the environmental objectives but partly negatively or uncertainly under the cost and affordability objectives due to the additional cost to development of requiring flood mitigation measures and contributions towards defence improvements. Cost and viability impacts will be holistically assessed once all infrastructure requirements are known. A negative effect was noted in relation to economic growth.

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.317 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that it should help to mitigate potential effects of new development on the European sites. This option does not result in development in itself.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.318 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impact on adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.319 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 15.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.320 Option ME 15 does not involve any infrastructure requirements. Note: Whilst Option ME15 does not include any infrastructure requirements, it refers to documents that will influence the increasing use of Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SUDS). Such schemes are likely to involve increasing use of permeable surfaces within developments, holding areas for floodwater and run-off and a range of techniques to slow run-off. In addition the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 removes the automatic right to connect to sewers in order to encourage the uptake of sustainable drainage systems, and also makes it much easier for unitary and county councils to adopt SUDS for new developments and redevelopments.

Conclusions

2.321 Option ME 15 is supported by the consultation, however the evidence base as stated, needs updating referring to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 rather than the "forthcoming Flood and Water Management Bill". The Option is however, in general, consistent with national policy. The SA identifies an overall positive impact. The HRA, HIA and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impacts. ME15 was drawn up in relation to PPS25. It is considered that it is broadly in line with the Draft NPPF, however in the future the issues within Option ME15 will have to be supported and co-ordinated by Local Planning Authority policies in order to achieve a detailed response to developers. The introduction to Option ME14 set out how the Councils' will respond to the potential introduction of the Draft NPPF as a primary guide in respect of flooding matters. In conclusion, this option as set out, is considered an appropriate approach to flood mitigation measures. It is however considered appropriate to include the factors dealt with in ME15 into ME16.

Flood Management Strategy and Delivery Plan

2.322 For developments within a flood risk area which pass the Sequential Test as set out in the Draft NPPF, but where risk can not be adequately mitigated on site, a flood management strategy and delivery plan will be required prior to the grant of consent. The strategy will identify the measures required to reduce flood risk and surface water run-off at the site for the duration of its design life, making it safe (including unaided access/egress during times of flood) and ensuring that flood risk does not increase elsewhere as a result. The delivery plan will identify the level and source of funding required for such measures and set out a realistic and achievable timetable for implementation. For very large schemes, area-wide flood attenuation measures may be required.

2.323 Flood defences will be identified on the Councils' schedules of essential infrastructure and development will be charged under a tariff-based developer contributions scheme. Where development is of a sufficient scale to fund flood alleviation works to make that development safe throughout its design life, works in kind will be considered where appropriate.

2.324 This Option would be based in the future in part on a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) policy. The tariff would be collected from all development. Where more major schemes take place they may be able to provide the necessary flood defences to safeguard their own area.. From April 2014 it will no longer be possible to pool Section 106 contributions for more than 5 dwellings and the monies will have to be used in a site specific manner. Therefore the CIL approach is the more favoured and flexible approach.

Preferred Option ME 16

Flood management strategies and funding flood defence improvements

For developments within a flood risk area which pass the PPS25 Sequential Test, but where risk can not be adequately mitigated on site, a flood management strategy and delivery plan will be required prior to the grant of consent. The strategy will identify the measures required to reduce flood risk and surface water run-off at the site for the duration of its design life, making it safe (including unaided access/egress during times of flood) and ensuring that flood risk does not increase elsewhere as a result. The delivery plan will identify the level and source of funding required for such measures and set out a realistic and achievable timetable for implementation. For very large schemes, area-wide flood attenuation measures may be required.

Flood defences will be identified on the Councils' schedules of essential infrastructure and development will be charged under a tariff-based developer contributions scheme. Where development is of a sufficient scale to fund flood alleviation works to make that development safe throughout its design life, works in kind will be considered where appropriate.

Alternative Preferred Option ME 17

Flood management strategies and funding flood defence improvements

If future government guidance does not support a tariff based approach section 106 planning obligations conforming to Circular 05/05 will be used instead. Due to the limitations imposed by Circular 05/05, developer contributions towards improvements to strategic flood defence infrastructure such as major river and coastal defences would not be required on an area-wide basis. Throughout the Core Strategy period and beyond, there will be insufficient quantity of development within flood zones to make a worthwhile contribution towards expensive strategic flood defences which could protect large areas in the long term. However, where development is of a sufficient scale to fund improvements to major defences to make that development safe throughout its design life, financial contributions or works in kind would be considered where appropriate.

2.325 It is now clear that the Government will support a tariff based approach (CIL) and that Section 106 Agreements although still being valid as a means of collecting contributions will be regarded as a very limited vehicle for collecting developer contributions in the future, and so will be a much less used technique. As such this Option ME17 is no longer required, Option ME16 will therefore be taken forward alongside a much scaled back Section 106 usage.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 16	3	0	0	3
Alternative Preferred Option ME 17	1	1	0	2

Table 2.34

2.326 Focus groups and one-2-one meetings - Water Supply/Flood Risk 29th Nov 2010.

- Government advice is that the taxpayer will not be expected to pay for flood defences and it will be down to developers to pay for the requirements of their schemes.

2.327 Response: This arrangement is the Councils' preferred approach.

Option ME16

2.328 Environment Agency

- Recommend amendment to 2nd paragraph to read "Where there is no net increase in dwellings or commercial units created, historic buildings and sites may be exempt from this option where measures would harm their character or increase the risk of long-term deterioration to the fabric or fittings"

2.329 Response: It is considered that the addition of this extra text to Option ME16 is appropriate as it acknowledges an important development sector and its particular needs.

2.330 General Comments

- Option welcomed provided that measures to reduce flooding and rain water run-off are sufficient for the duration of the development

2.331 Response: It is considered good practise to ensure that sufficient measures to reduce flooding are in place for the duration of the development.

2.332 General Comments

- Welcomed provided that measures to reduce flooding and rain water run off are sufficient for the duration of the development

2.333 Response. The Councils' will take measures to ensure that run-off is adequate in all cases for the duration of the development, however changing unforeseen climatic circumstances cannot always be incorporated into design.

Option ME17

2.334 General Comments

2.335 Suggestion to amend option to include where 5 or 15 year supply of land for housing cannot be delivered, development in flood risk areas should be allowed, provided it does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

2.336 Response: This is an issue that depends on future housing land supply research and individual site investigation and is as such not appropriate in the selection of Options.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.337 It is considered that Option ME16 is broadly in line with the Draft NPPF, however Option ME17 being based on the use of Section 106 Agreements describes a process which will still be valid but it will be little used as it is a far less appropriate and adaptable technique than the tariff based CIL. The Draft NPPF has as a part of its objectives that local planning authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change and also use opportunities offered by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding. Although these do not mention the funding of flood defence improvements, it is clear that schemes of flood defence or to reduce flood risk can be the beneficiaries of development tariffs and that in being proactive the local planning authority can manage and direct this funding such as is proposed in both ME16 and ME17.

2.338 As with the other Options in relation to flooding the basis for the Option is PPS25. Therefore the Option text of ME16 and ME17 is not in accordance with the Draft NPPF and will have to be altered to reflect the newly emerging national policy approach.

‘Options for Consideration’ Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 16	Alternative Preferred Option ME 17
1: Protect and enhance habitats and species	Uncertain	Uncertain Impact
3: Minimise pollution	Positive	Positive Impact
6: Safe and secure environment	Strong Positive	Positive Impact
8: Provide suitable and affordable housing	Uncertain	Uncertain Impact
11: Maintain local distinctiveness	Strong Positive	Positive Impact
12: Sustainable economic growth	Strong Positive	Strong negative Impact

Table 2.35

2.339 Both options reinforce the ethos of the Draft NPPF position. Both options score very positively under the environmental objectives but ME17 scores negatively or uncertainly under the cost and affordability objectives and in respect of sustainable economic growth due to the additional cost to development of requiring flood mitigation measures and contributions towards defence improvements. Cost and viability impacts will be holistically assessed once all infrastructure requirements are known. The assessment indicates that both options would be acceptable, but that it is preferable to adopt Option ME16 over Option ME17.

2.340 'Options for Consideration' Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.341 The HRA assessment for these options identifies uncertain impacts on European habitats but possible impacts could include:

- Physical disturbance / damage
- Non-physical disturbance such as noise and light pollution
- Air pollution
- Interruption to hydrological regimes (e.g. Changes in water flows)

2.342 Uncertain at this stage as dependent upon exact location but most likely to have an impact on the following habitats:

- Dorset Heathlands SPA / Ramsar.
- Dorset Heaths SAC and;
- Avon Valley SPA / Ramsar.

2.343 The HRA assessment concludes that the impact on European habitats is uncertain for Options ME 16 and ME 17. Development of flood defence improvements may have adverse effects on any nearby European sites both during the construction and operation phase. This is uncertain due to a lack of information at this stage about the planned location, type and scale of any new defence system.

2.344 The Core Strategy set out a range of policies which seek to provide effective mitigation for the potential impacts identified above. Good practise construction techniques including noise suppression measures, hours of operation, measures to prevent water pollution (proposed Core Strategy Spatial Vision seeks to encourage 'high standards of building design and construction'). Proposed Core Strategy policies which seek to restrict emissions from transport include Objective 6 and Policies KS 19 and KS 20.

'Options for Consideration' Health Impact Assessment

2.345 The HIA assessment for these options does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impact on adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

'Options for Consideration' Equalities Impact Assessment

2.346 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Options ME 16 and ME 17.

Conclusions

2.347 Preferred Options ME16 and ME17 deal with very similar topics but present different scenarios based on differing approaches to collecting and distributing funding and more specifically how the levels and sources/collecting of funding will take place.

2.348 It is now clear that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) based on a tariff based approach will be supported by the Government. The Councils will therefore set out through a delivery plan a level and source of funding and how the funds will be spent. The monies collected through the CIL will be apportioned to flood defence works as necessary.

2.349 Option ME 16 is supported and Alternative Preferred Option ME 17 is neither opposed nor supported by the consultation. Option ME16 is clearly supported by the evidence base and is consistent with national policy, however ME17 is concerned with a non tariff based situation which will not now occur and while it is fair to accept that Section 106 agreements will still be in use their influence will be very limited. As such ME17 does not reflect the future and the predominantly tariff based approach envisaged by Government and can be considered as not being consistent with Government policy. The SA identifies an overall positive impact for Option ME 16 and for Alternative Preferred Option ME 17 it identifies one negative impact but overall positive impact. The HRA, HIA and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impacts. In conclusion option ME 16 as set out is considered an appropriate approach to deliver a flood management strategy and funding for flood defence improvements.

2.350 Option ME16 described a process which links easily with the operation of the CIL as a tariff based approach. This approach is that favoured by the government. The Section 106 process will be more limited in its ability to fund major schemes in the near future (from 2014). Therefore in terms of future ease of working and of having certainty of the process involved with a management strategy and delivery plan, with a level and source of funding and an achievable timetable, Option ME16 is clearly the preferable Option rather than ME17.

2.351 As discussed above in ME15 it is considered appropriate to combine ME15 with ME16.

2.352 Issue: How should we consider development in areas of risk from coastal erosion?

Preferred Option ME 18

Development within areas at risk of coastal erosion

The supplement to Planning Policy Statement 25 'Development and Coastal Change' identifies that, where the policy approach of the shoreline management plan is to hold the line for the whole period covered by the Plan (100 years), it will not be necessary to identify a Coastal Change Management Area and associated development management policies. Coastal Change Management Areas are defined as areas likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast. The overall approach of maintaining defences as identified in the draft Shoreline Management Plan 2 does not require the identification of Coastal Change Management Areas in Christchurch.

The Christchurch Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 identifies areas of the Borough affected by increased flood risk from tidal and fluvial flooding to 2126 taking into account the effects of climate change. PPS25 informed by the Christchurch Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will inform decisions about the suitability of development in areas affected by increased flood risk.

Consultation Response

Option	Support	Object	No Opinion	Total
Preferred Option ME 18	1	1	0	2

Table 2.36

2.353 Coastal Defence Strategy

- This strategy will be prepared with Christchurch and New Forest Councils' in conjunction with the Environment Agency. This will inform the Christchurch Flood Management Strategy in terms of identifying flood defence options and costing infrastructure. The strategy is due to be in place in 2012 and will inform the next stage of the Core Strategy and production of the SPD.

2.354 Viability

- Viability issues will be very significant in implementing the flood management strategy in terms of the tariffs that could be applied to new development. The Coalition Government is advising that floodrisk infrastructure requirements for new development will not be funded by the government and the emphasis will be on developer contributions. This will have a significant impact on infrastructure improvements which can be put in place in view of viability.

2.355 Environment Agency

- Objection - It might be prudent to limit development along potentially vulnerable sections of coast with consideration of only allowing time limited planning permissions or other temporary development.

2.356 Response: It has been agreed that the stance of the Council based on the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2) is to hold the line in relation to the coast and this means that it will now not be necessary to identify a Coastal Change Management Area or to draw up policies to restrict or limit development within it.

2.357 Environment Agency

- The second paragraph does not relate to coastal erosion as the title of the Option suggests.

2.358 Response: This Option was considered as the most appropriate Option to bring forward the issues in relation to the Christchurch Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

2.359 Environment Agency

- Supporting evidence should be based on the “Poole and ChristchurchBays Draft Shoreline Management Plan” and not the “Strategic Flood Risk Assessment”.

2.360 Response: This is accepted.

Consideration of Evidence and Policy

The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2)

2.361 The Council has always maintained a positive response to coastline management, recognising the amenity and heritage value of its coastline. It is intended to continue this approach in the future. The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) was originally drawn up to co-ordinate efforts to ensure a minimal risk of sea caused flooding and shoreline erosion. Its scope covers the whole of the Christchurch foreshore and is drawn up to take account of conditions both east and west of the Christchurch area. A revised SMP (Oct 2010) continues this approach using the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment evidence prepared to inform the Core Strategy.

2.362 Research has therefore allowed the Authority to come to an informed decision to “hold the line” for the future. This means that it is not foreseen that flooding will greatly alter the coast. As a consequence there is no need to apply policies to restrict or limit development in the coastal locations as no risk areas are considered to be extant at present. It is also intended to review SMP2 in 8-10 years to further assess the ongoing situation. In relation to the preferred options this means that there is no reason to progress or develop ME18.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework, 2011. CLG.

2.363 ME18 is worded in the context of PPS25 whereas it is very likely that the Draft NPPF will be the relevant vehicle for emerging Central Government views. ME18 is therefore not an appropriate approach to controlling development in areas at risk of coastal erosion. It is however broadly in line with advice in the Draft NPPF.

‘Options for Consideration’ Sustainability Appraisal

Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	Preferred Option ME 18
2: Sustainable use of resources	Positive Impact
6: Safe and secure environment	Strong Positive Impact

Table 2.37

2.364 Option ME18 achieves a positive assessment under the few relevant objectives as it would prohibit unsuitable development but permit it when safe and suitable. No negative impacts were identified. Another positive impact is that the evidence from the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment which has been prepared to inform the Core Strategy would be available to inform the future approach towards this issue. Option ME18 is appropriate for the current situation, but allows for changes of direction in future Core Strategy policy to identify Coastal Change Management Areas and associated policies if the policy approaches in the Shoreline Management Plan change resulting in the erosion of sea line defences.

‘Options for Consideration’ Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.365 The HRA assessment for this option concluded that this option does not result in development in itself.

‘Options for Consideration’ Health Impact Assessment

2.366 The HIA assessment for this option does not identify any adverse impacts but identifies a positive impact on adaptation to mitigate the effects of climate change.

‘Options for Consideration’ Equalities Impact Assessment

2.367 The EqIA did not identify any impacts in relation to Option ME 18.

Infrastructure Requirements

2.368 Option ME 18 does not involve any infrastructure requirement.

Conclusions

2.369 Option ME18 is neither opposed or supported by the consultation. It is supported by the evidence base and consistent with national policy. The SA identifies an overall positive impact for this Option. The HRA, HIA, and EqIA assessments do not identify any significant adverse impacts. In the interim since the production of the preferred options the decision to adopt a policy of “holding the line” in relation to coastal matters within the plan area has been agreed. The decision means that it will not be necessary or a requirement to identify a Coastal Change Management Area, or policies relevant to that area. In conclusion Preferred Option ME18 is no longer considered to be necessary, and further debate of this Preferred Option within the Core Strategy is not considered to be appropriate.

3 Pre Submission Options

3.1 The following policies for managing the natural environment have been established following consideration of consultation responses, sustainability appraisal, habitats regulations assessment and the health and equalities impact assessment.

Policy ME1

Safeguarding biodiversity and geodiversity

The Core Strategy aims to protect, maintain and enhance the condition of all types of nature conservation sites, habitats and species including:

- Internationally designated sites (SPA, SAC, Ramsar)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Strategic Nature Areas.
- Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)
- Local Nature Reserves.
- Identified priority species and habitats.
- Important geological and geomorphological sites.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace.

Where development is considered likely to impact upon particular sites, habitats or species as set out within the Dorset Biodiversity Protocol, it will need to be demonstrated that the development will not result in adverse impacts. To determine the likelihood of harm occurring, there should be an assessment of effects on any existing habitats, species and/or features of nature conservation importance, and the results of this assessment documented. The method of survey and level of detail will vary according to the size and type of development and whether any priority species and habitats exist on site. The survey should involve consultation and advice from Natural England, the Dorset Wildlife Trust, and Dorset County Council.

Based on this assessment, the following criteria should be addressed when development is proposed:

- Avoidance of existing sensitive habitats and species through careful site selection, development design and phasing of construction and the use of good practice construction techniques.
- Retention of existing habitats and features of interest, and provision of buffer zones around any sensitive areas.
- Enhancement of biodiversity where possible through improving the condition of existing habitats or creation of new ones. Particular attention should be paid to priority habitats referred to in the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy, and the Strategic Nature Areas identified on the Dorset Nature Map.

- Where harm is identified as likely to result, provision of measures to adequately avoid or mitigate that harm should be set out. Development may be refused if adequate mitigation cannot be provided.
- Provision of adequate management of the retained and new features.
- Monitoring of habitats and species for a suitable period of time after completion of the development to indicate any changes in habitat quality or species numbers, and put in place corrective measures to halt or reverse any decline.

In addition, and in recognition of the function of the New Forest National Park, the Core Strategy will carefully consider any adverse impacts on the New Forest as a result of development.

Policy ME2

Protection of the Dorset Heathlands.

In accordance with the advice from Natural England, no residential development will be permitted within 400m of protected heathland.

Any residential development within 400m and 5km of these areas will provide mitigation through a range of measures as set out in the Dorset Heathlands Joint Development Plan Document, including:

- Provision of on-site alternative natural greenspace. (also see Policy ME3 below).
- Contributions to off-site greenspace or recreation projects.
- Contributions to Heathland management projects.

On development proposals of up to 50 dwellings, where adequate mitigation measures cannot be provided on-site as part of the development, a financial contribution to the Councils will be required.

The Dorset Heathlands Joint Development Plan Document will set out the type of development circumstances, a list of projects which will be funded by developer contributions and the calculated contribution amounts as they apply to different types of development. Projects delivered through the Development Plan Document will include Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), heathland access and management, wardening, education, habitat re-creation and other appropriate measures.

Policy ME3

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) is required to mitigate the impact of developments of over 50 dwellings. The provision of SANG must meet the following standards which have been agreed by Natural England:

- 8 to 16 ha of SANG land or any standard within an adopted Heathlands Development Plan Document shall be provided in perpetuity per 1,000 new occupants through direct provision as an element of the development. The area of SANG must provide the key features set out in this policy to ensure it performs the function of attracting people away from the heaths.
- Where the planning authority is satisfied that direct provision as an element of the development is not reasonable, the planning authority will require contributions towards the provision of SANGs identified through the Heathland Supplementary Planning Document, or a replacement Heathlands Development Plan Document.
- Contributions will be required towards strategic access management and monitoring Measures.
- During the phasing of development the effectiveness of SANGs will be monitored and enhancements will be required if the SANGs are not functional according to the criteria set out in this policy.

SANGs must have the features described below without their functionality being compromised by unsuitable size, shape, location, topography or other inherent characteristics and SANGs must be compatible with other planning policy.

For all sites there must be adequate parking for visitors, unless the site is intended for local pedestrian use only, i.e. within easy walking distance (400m) of the developments linked to it. The amount of car parking space should be determined by the anticipated numbers using the site and arriving by car. If the site is intended for local pedestrian use only, then there must be excellent access for people arriving by foot, with a range of access points directly linking housing and the SANG.

- All SANGs with car parks must have a circular walk which starts and finishes at the car park.
- It should be possible to complete a circular walk of 2.3 – 2.5km around the SANG, and for larger SANGs a variety of circular walks.
- Car parks must be easily and safely accessible by car and should be clearly sign posted.
- The accessibility of the site must include access points appropriate for the particular visitor use the SANG is intended to cater for.
- Access points should have signage outlining the layout of the SANGs and the routes available to visitors.
- The SANG must have a safe route of access on foot from the nearest car park and / or footpath/s.
- SANGs must be designed so that they are perceived to be safe by users; they must not have trees and scrub covering parts of the walking routes.
- Paths must be easily used and well maintained but most should remain unsurfaced to avoid becoming too urban in feel. A majority of paths should be suitable for use in all weathers.

- SANGs must be perceived as semi natural spaces without intrusive artificial structures, except in the immediate vicinity of car parks. Visually-sensitive way-markers and some benches are acceptable.
- All SANGs larger than 12ha must aim to provide a variety of habitats for users to experience (e.g. some areas of woodland, scrub, grassland, heathland, wetland, open water).
- Access within the SANG must be largely unrestricted with plenty of space provided where it is possible for dogs to exercise freely and safely off lead.
- SANGs must be free from unpleasant visual, auditory or olfactory intrusions (e.g. derelict buildings, intrusive adjoining buildings, dumped materials, loud intermittent or continuous noise from traffic, industry, flood lighting, sewage treatment works, waste disposal facilities).
- SANGs should be clearly sign-posted or advertised in some way.
- SANGs should have leaflets and or websites advertising their location to potential users. It would be desirable for leaflets to be distributed to new homes in the area and to be made available at entrance points to car parks.

The establishment of a SANG should be accompanied by legal agreements to secure the future protection and management of the site.

Policy ME4

Sustainable development standards for new development.

Residential and non residential development including new homes, and the extension of existing homes will be expected to meet national sustainable development standards. Schemes that meet higher standards will be considered more favourably. Developments will be required to incorporate carbon reduction, water and energy efficiency measures and to demonstrate they have explored a range of sustainable and low carbon options. The most appropriate range and type of measures for each development should be informed by the code for Sustainable Homes Design Categories. These will include:

- Water and energy efficiency.
- Orientation and solar gain (natural lighting and heating).
- Use of renewable and low impact materials.
- Minimising waste, pollution and water run-off, incorporating Sustainable Drainage where possible.

Developments involving the conversion or alteration of historic buildings will be expected to demonstrate that they have explored a range of sustainable and low carbon options for construction and energy use and incorporated them into the design where practically possible, provided that this does not harm the character of the building or increase the risk of long-term deterioration to fabric or fittings.

Policy ME5

Renewable energy provision for residential and non-residential developments

The provision of renewable, decentralised, and low carbon energy will be encouraged in residential development of 10 or more dwellings (or sites of 0.5 hectares or greater), and non residential development of 1,000m² gross floorspace (or 1 hectare or greater). This will include new development, and the extension and refurbishment of existing homes or premises.

The expectation will be that 15% of the total energy used in these types of development will be from such energy sources (unless having regard to the type of development involved and its location and design, this is not feasible or viable - in which case the highest levels of this type of energy generation possible will be sought). If applicable national standards call for a higher percentage of such energy, the national standards will be applied.

The Councils will require all schemes or phases with a development to meet a set overall site pre-development target for sustainable energy generation rather than allowing a piecemeal approach. Where new national standards increase the requirement then such standards will be required to be integrated into any further ongoing development on the site.

Within larger developments and new neighbourhoods/urban extensions, the Councils will require the investigation of options for district heating and/or power facilities. Developments may be required to connect to district heating and/or power facilities where appropriate, feasible and viable. Developers will be expected to assess a range of suitable options including district wide and/or micro generation in respect of their sites, with the suitability of the chosen technology being judged on a site-specific basis.

Energy provision should normally be provided on-site, particularly on larger developments, or if not viable, through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Policy ME6

Flood management, mitigation, and defence.

When assessing new development, the local authorities will apply the sequential and exception tests set out in PPS25.

All developments (including redevelopments and extensions which require planning permission) within areas at risk of flooding will be required to incorporate appropriate flood resistance and resilience measures as a means of "future proofing" against the effects of climate change. Historic buildings and sites may be exempt from this Policy where measures would harm their character or increase the risk of long-term deterioration to fabric or fittings.

All developments will be required to demonstrate that flood risk does not increase as a result of the development proposed, and that options have been taken to reduce overall flood risk. Post-development surface water run-off must not exceed pre-development levels and options should have been sought to reduce levels of run-off overall. This will primarily be through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and a range of flood resistance and resilience measures. Space for such measures should be set aside within larger developments.

The design, construction, operation and maintenance of SUDS must meet national standards. Plans for the new drainage systems will need to be approved by Dorset County Council (as SUDS approval body) before construction can start.

Strategic flood defences are identified in the Core Strategy Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and delivery of these schemes will be supported by a range of funding sources including the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Section 106 planning obligations will continue for implementation of site specific flood defence improvements where required. Where development is of a sufficient scale to fund flood alleviation works to make that development safe throughout its design life, works in kind will be considered where appropriate.

For developments within a flood risk area which pass the sequential test, but where risk can not be adequately mitigated on site, a flood management strategy and delivery plan will be required prior to the grant of consent. The strategy will identify the measures required to reduce flood risk and surface water run-off at the site for the duration of its design life, making it safe (including unaided access/egress during flood events) and ensuring that flood risk does not increase elsewhere as a result. The delivery plan will identify the level and source of funding required for such measures and set out a realistic and achievable timetable for implementation. For very large schemes, area wide flood attenuation measures may be required.

Policy ME7

Protection of Groundwater

Groundwater Source Protection Zones will be identified on the proposals map. Where development is proposed in a location likely to affect a Groundwater Source Protection Zone, an assessment of the impact and any mitigation measures proposed must be provided.

This assessment should cover the following:

- The nature of the development, and its anticipated impact on groundwater in terms of contaminants both during construction, and upon completion.
- The need for the development to be in a location affecting Groundwater Source Protection Zones.
- Proximity and impact on licenced and unlicenced water supply.
- Impact on underground aquifers.

The assessment should reflect advice contained in the Environment Agency's document "Groundwater Protection: Policy & Practice (GP3).