

11 Verwood and West Moors Housing and Centre Options

11.1 This chapter considers a number of important issues for Verwood and West Moors. These include:

- Whether there should be new housing on the edge of Verwood and, if so, where and how?
- How can we improve the provision of open space at Verwood to encourage residents away from heathlands and increase access to the countryside?
- How can we maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of Verwood and West Moors town centres?

11.2 Overview of Verwood

11.3 Verwood is situated on the eastern border of Dorset in a relatively isolated position to the north of the main urban areas of East Dorset and the Bournemouth/Poole conurbation. The Town has expanded quickly over recent years having been identified in previous plans as a place where large scale strategic growth should occur. Most of the planned housing growth has been completed, but about 300 homes were unable to be built because they were on land within 400 metres of heathland where restrictive policies had come into force.

11.4 As the population has grown new facilities have been provided, so that the Town now has a wide range available. Nevertheless, residents still need to travel to other nearby towns for some services including secondary education.

11.5 The town centre is small compared to the size of the population. Nevertheless, recent developments and pedestrian enhancements have made it more vibrant. It is also supported by Morrisons and its associated shops off Pennine Way.

11.6 Where are we now?

Key Facts

- The population of the settlement has grown rapidly over the last 50 years – from 2,820 in 1961 to 14,792 in 2008 to make it the second largest in East Dorset.
- Verwood does not suffer from deprivation with all areas being in the least 20% deprived in the Country according to the 2007 Government survey.
- The proportion of residents over retirement age is about 27% which is lower than that of the District as a whole, but above the national average of 19%.
- Existing house prices are higher than the National average, but lower than the District average.
- The town has a limited public transport system, and has a very high rate of car ownership, with a correspondingly high level of multiple car ownership per household. Only 8% of households in 2001 had no car, compared to about 25% Nationally.

11.7 The town is set within the South East Dorset Green Belt. There are no critical strategic gaps between Verwood and any other settlements.

11.8 The Natural Environment

11.9 Verwood lies adjacent to significant areas of protected heathland. The sites that are protected under European legislation, due to their fragility and nature conservation importance, are very sensitive to the impacts of nearby additional residential development. Therefore, housing development is not permitted within 400m of these areas. This has an implication on the areas suitable for residential development, especially within the existing built up area, and the need to provide Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces to reduce the pressure of existing and proposed residential development on these sensitive areas.

11.10 Existing Retail, Community Facilities Provision and Future Requirements.

11.11 The town has two shopping areas. The main town centre is based around Ferret Green and offers a variety of shops, services and community facilities. The other shopping area is off Pennine Way and is made up of a large supermarket and associated smaller shops. This area had been planned as a new town centre for the growing town, but nature conservation restrictions prevented the plan from being fully implemented.

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

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

11.14 Sports and Recreation

11.15 The Town has one dedicated sports hall at Pennine Way which is limited in size and does not provide the range of facilities needed for the community. Outdoor sports are largely provided at Potterne Park, to the south of the town. In 2007 the Council commissioned a Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 Survey of Open Space, Sport and Recreation. The study concluded that there were insufficient facilities for children and young people and that there is a need for a synthetic/multi-use sports area, which could be provided at Potterne Park. Additionally, there was a need for allotments.

11.16 Education

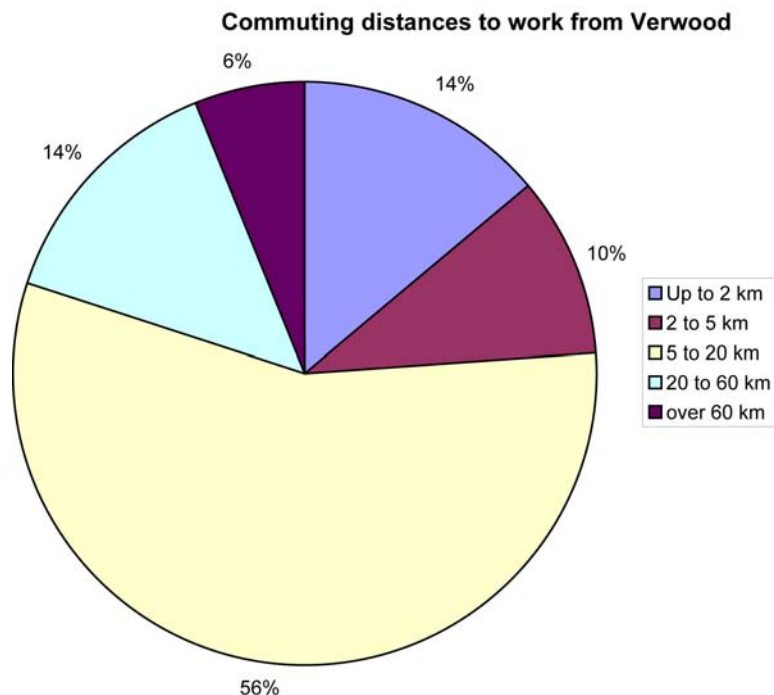
11.17 Verwood has three First Schools and a Middle School. Additional residential development in Verwood would have significant implications for school provision. Verwood is the largest town in Dorset to have no secondary school provision. Secondary school provision is currently provided in Ferndown and Wimborne at schools that could face capacity issues associated within possible new housing in those towns. If options for new neighbourhoods are supported at Verwood it may be that a secondary school would have to be provided in the town. Additionally, there would possibly be a need to expand one of the three First schools, or build a new one.

11.18 Transport

11.19 The town has limited bus services. However, it does have a good road link to the the A31(T) and A338. The 2001 Census showed that about 90% of commuters either drove or were passengers in a car.

11.20 Employment

11.21 As of the 2001 Census there was a working population of about 5,000 people. This is likely to have increased by about 1,500 people as the population grew. The Ebblake Industrial Estate is a large source of employment in the town covering about 17 hectares of land. Small offices and other commercial uses in the town centre also provide employment opportunities. As of 2001 33% of the workforce worked and lived in the town and 22% travelled to Bournemouth and Poole, 11% to the main towns of East Dorset and 12% to New Forest District or Salisbury. For proposals relating to possible additional employment opportunities within the parish of Verwood and Three Legged Cross please see Chapter 15 - Creating Prosperous Communities.



11.22 The Housing Debate

11.23 The Key Strategy Chapter of this document sets out the over-arching issues relating to the provision of additional residential development within the Plan area by way of the need for new neighbourhoods to existing settlements and the justification for amending the Green Belt boundary. It has been recognised for many years that there is a significant need to provide affordable housing in East Dorset. This is because house prices are high compared to wages, the number of public sector homes is very low and there are, consequently, a large number of residents who cannot afford to live in the private sector and cannot access appropriate affordable housing. The Council recognises this problem and, therefore, considers it necessary to put forward new neighbourhood options for communities to comment upon.

Key Issue

- Can sites for new neighbourhoods on the edge of the town be provided in a sustainable form so as to add to the vitality and viability of the town and if so, where and how?

11.24 Options set out in this section have been established following responses received to the Core Strategy Issues and Options Consultation (March 2008) and informed by the evidence base. For further detail concerning development options contained in this chapter please refer to the following documents:

- Verwood Area Profile (2010)
- East Dorset Housing Options Master Plan Report (2010)
- East Dorset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2008 and 2009)
- Dorset Survey of Housing Need and Demand (2008)

11.25 For supporting information regarding the need for, and provision of, open spaces to support these options please refer to the following documents:

- Protecting the Natural Environment Key Issue Paper.
- Improving Sports and Leisure Facilities Key Issue Paper.

11.26 Rules, Regulations and Advice

11.27 National

11.28 The Government's key housing policy goal is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. (PPS3)

11.29 The specific outcomes that the planning system should deliver are:

- High quality housing that is well-designed and built to a high standard.
- A mix of housing, both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural.
- Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.

11.30 Bring forward sufficient land of a suitable quality in appropriate locations to meet the expected needs for housing, ... taking into account issues such as accessibility and sustainable transport needs, the provision of essential infrastructure, including for sustainable waste management, and the need to avoid flood risk and other natural hazards. (PPS1)

11.31 Local

11.32 *Dorset Community Strategy*

11.33 The main issue facing the south-east part of the County is how to reconcile the pressures to improve prosperity and meet demands for housing with the need to conserve and enhance the internationally and nationally recognised environmental quality of the area.

11.34 Dorset's economy is affected by the housing market. Locally the shortage of affordable homes can lead to recruitment and retention problems.

11.35 With a growing number of older people there will be an increased demand for accessible and supported housing.

11.36 *East Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy*

11.37 Ensure that any new homes address, in particular, the need for affordable housing and are developed and built with adequate community facilities and associated infrastructure so that there is minimal impact on the environment and quality of life of existing communities.

11.38 Support the provision of increased affordable housing opportunities for young people in order that they can have the same opportunities to live and work within their own local communities.

11.39 Support initiatives which seek to ensure families are appropriately housed near to services they require.

11.40 What you said at Issues and Options

11.41 When the Council consulted at the Issues and Option stage of the Core Strategy there were no proposals within the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for development at Verwood. As a result, views were not sought as to how to provide new homes in Verwood over and above those envisaged within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

11.42 **The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment**

11.43 This was carried out in 2008 and 2009, and considered how many homes could be built within the existing built area of Verwood. It identified that about 180 new homes could be provided over a 15 year period, although this assessment will have to be revisited in the light of the Coalition Governments recent announcements on 'garden grabbing' and densities.

11.44 Consideration of Options

11.45 The following considers further options for new housing which includes land within the existing South East Dorset Green Belt.

11.46 The Council, before the Regional Spatial Strategy was revoked, engaged a firm of consultants to prepare master plans for the three urban extensions proposed in East Dorset as part of its evidence base to inform the Core Strategy. This work has been amended to reflect the abandonment of the Regional Spatial Strategy. The consultants have now been asked to identify reasonable options for the provision of new homes at the Main Settlements in the District, taking into account:

- The environmental impact.
- The impact on the purposes of the Green Belt.
- Infrastructure capacity, including access.
- The opportunity to support and improve services and facilities.
- The effect on local communities.

11.47 This has involved an assessment of areas promoted by landowners for development as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. The fact that the land has been promoted means that if options are taken forward they are likely to be deliverable. However, this must be balanced with the need to create sustainable communities and not all of the locations being promoted will meet sustainability objectives.

11.48 The options put forward include a range of sizes, including some that are too small to normally be considered within a Core Strategy. However, they are included at this stage in order to provide information about whether comprehensive strategic planning scenarios are required for the area, involving transport, green spaces, provision of facilities and any necessary changes to Green Belt boundaries.

11.49 The Areas of Search set out below are confined to the north-west and south-west of the existing settlement. These are the only substantial parcels of land adjacent to the existing built-up area that are not constrained by proximity to protected heathlands, floodplain or the boundary with Hampshire.

11.50 For more detail on the assessment of options please refer to:

- East Dorset Housing Options Master Plan Report (2010)

11.51 Verwood North

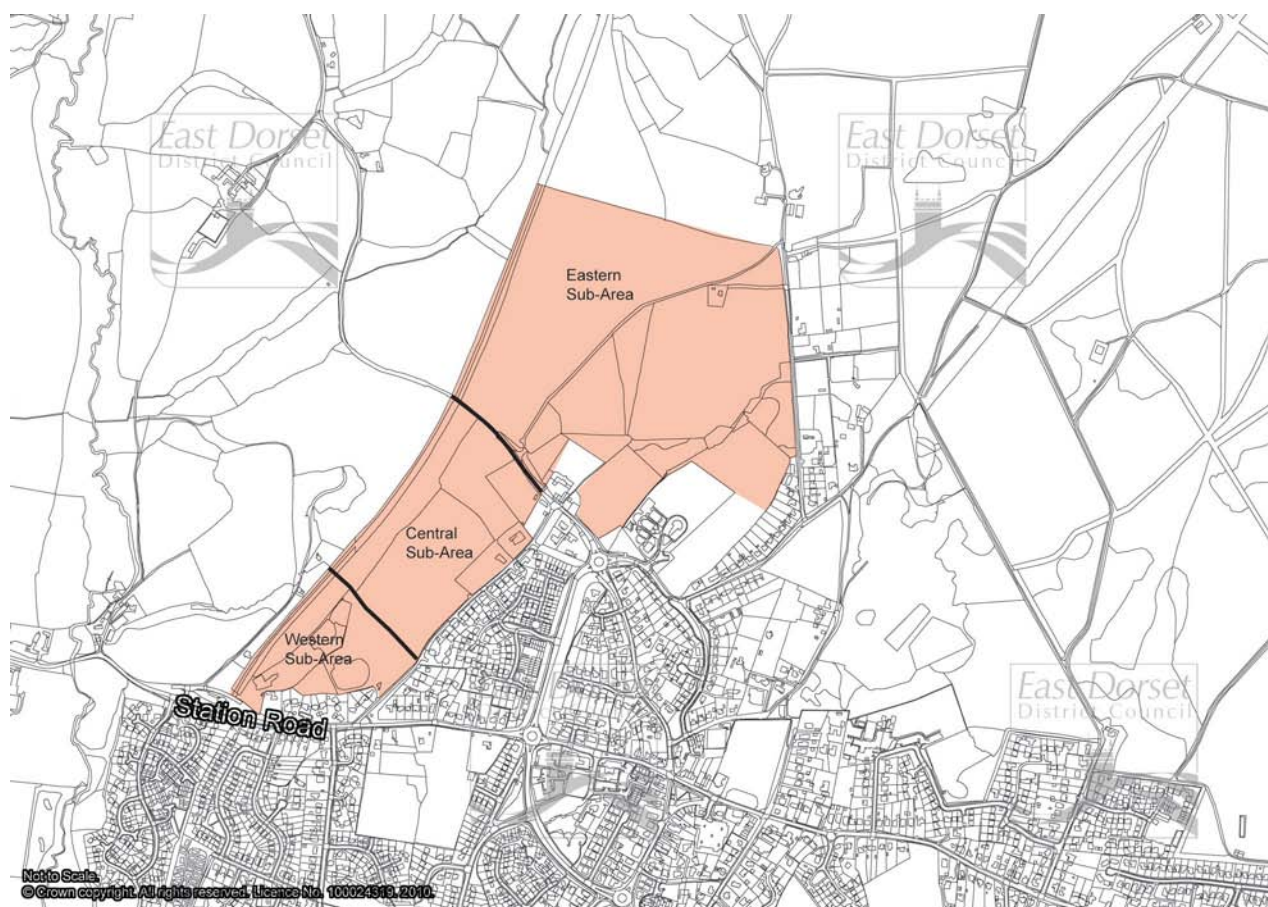
11.52 Area of Search

11.53 The area of search covers an area of approximately 43ha and is bounded by Burrows Lane to the east and Station Road to the south. The course of the dismantled railway bounds the site to the north and Edmondsham Road transects the centre of the site. The area consists of rolling countryside and is largely undeveloped.

11.54 No coalescence issues are presented by developing any of the areas of search considered. Similarly, all the areas considered are in reasonable proximity to existing facilities in the town.

11.55 The area of search is shown in the Verwood North plans.

11.56 Refined Areas of Search



11.57 The area of search has been broken down into three sub-areas (eastern, central and western). These are illustrated on the attached plans for Verwood North.

11.58 They are appraised briefly below:

11.59 *Eastern sub-area*

11.60 The sub-area largely consists of land designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value and the easterly part of the site lies within 400m of heathland. The area is not particularly well contained and opens out into the wider countryside, with no natural edge. The area does, however, have good accessibility on foot to town centre facilities. The Area of Great Landscape Value is important, but only comprises a local designation and it is considered that the urban fringe has already been compromised by the development of Trinity School, which provides the potential for some infill and contained development either side (albeit, land to the east is within 400m of the heathland). *Given these constraints, only land close to the urban edge of the settlement should be considered appropriate for development.*

11.61 *Central sub-area*

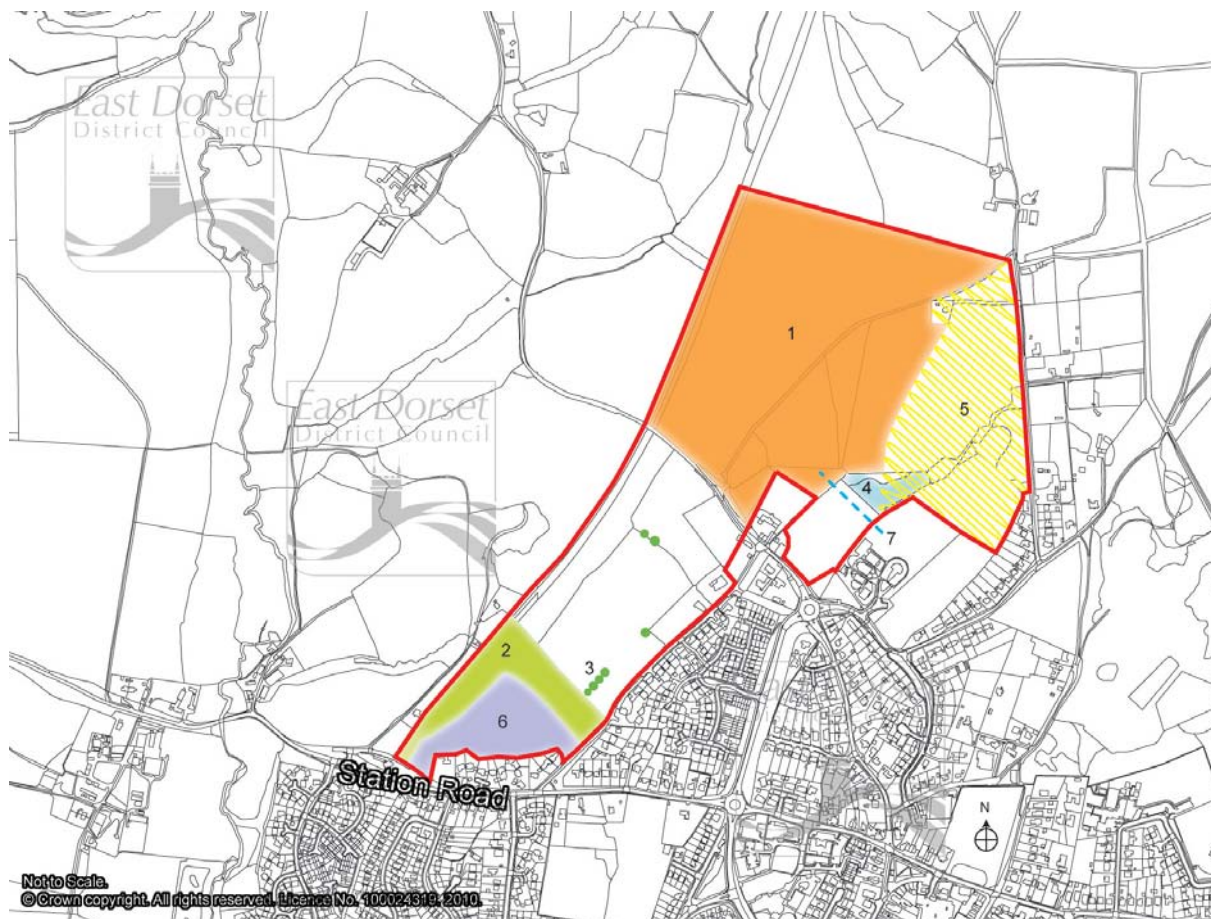
11.62 As with the eastern sub-area, the central sub-area is also covered by an Area of Great Landscape Value designation. However, unlike the eastern sub-area, this sub-area is naturally contained by Eastworth Road and, importantly, the disused railway track to the west which helps to form a natural edge to the town. It is considered that the wider Area of Great Landscape Value would not be compromised by development in this area. This area also allows the opportunity for an improved gateway to the town from the west and could connect into the housing development to the east. *This area is considered suitable for development.*

11.63 Western sub-area

11.64 The western sub-area is largely made up of a Site of Nature Conservation Interest and the remainder is heavily wooded. *This area should not be considered for development.*

11.65 Site Specific Constraints

11.66 The majority of the central sub-area and the urban edges of the eastern sub-area were considered appropriate locations for further consideration. The bullet points (number referenced to the attached plan) identify land areas within these locations that we consider are unsuitable for development.



11.67 Landscape

1. The Area of Great Landscape Value area should largely be retained. It largely comprises open and gently undulating countryside which forms a key strategic structural landscape element. The two exceptions to this comprise, firstly, the area along the urban edge between Trinity School and the residential property north of the junction between Edmondsham Road and Eastworth Road. This parcel of land is contained to the east and west by built form and to the north by a relatively strong tree belt. The second area should comprise the land south of Edmondsham Road, which is contained by the urban area to the east and the disused railway line to the west.
2. The heavily wooded area in the western sub-area between Eastworth Road and Brickyard Lane should be avoided.
3. The significant tree line and landmark trees within central sub-area would need to be retained and incorporated into any development.
4. There is a significant tree cluster to the north of Trinity School which helps contain the parcel of land to the south. This tree cluster should be retained

11.68 Environmental and conservation designations

5. The area within 400m of heathland should be discounted.
6. The area of Site of Nature Conservation Interest should be discounted.

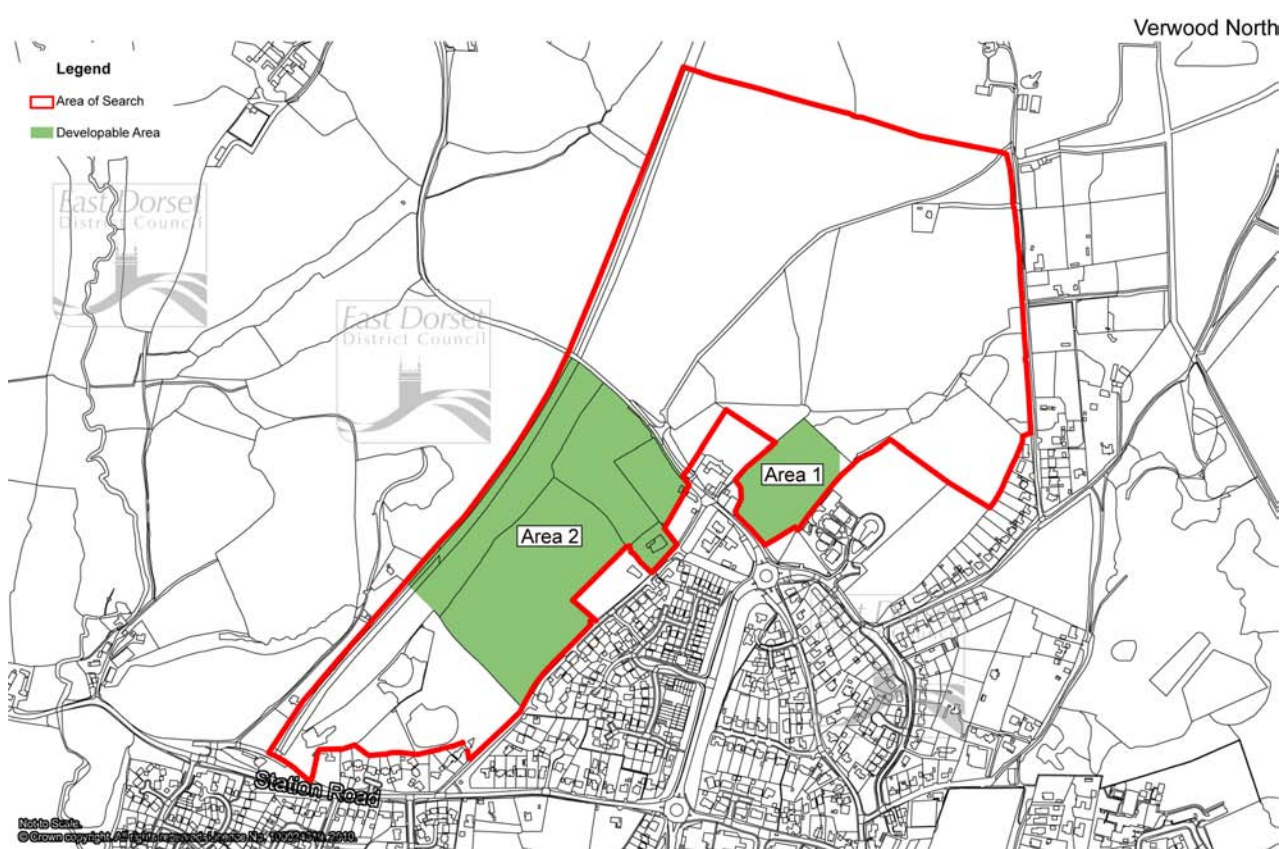
11.69 Other

7. A power line cuts the top of the area to the west of Trinity School. However, this is unlikely to restrict development on the site.

11.70 Sites Considered Suitable for Development

11.71 It is considered that the following sites should be considered for development

- Land west of Trinity School
- Land west of Eastworth Road



11.72 Verwood South

11.73 Area of Search

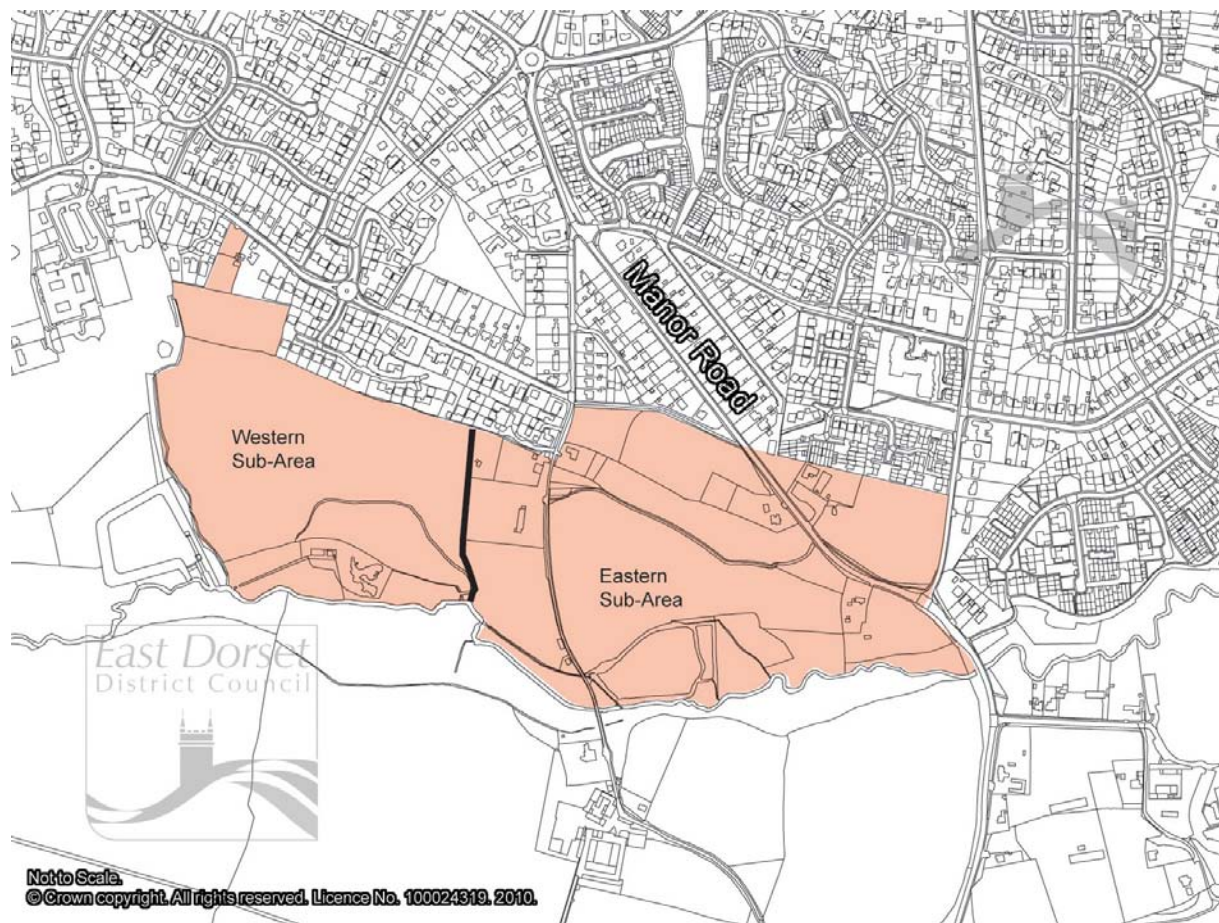
11.74 The area of search covers an area of approximately 27ha and stretches east from Verwood Church of England first school and Emmanuel middle school up to and including the Potterne Hill area - a small (1 ha) remnant of dry recently restored heath with secondary woodland edge.

11.75 The River Crane bounds the area of search to the south and Howe Lane/Summer Fields bounds the site to the north. The area is largely semi-enclosed fields and is mostly undeveloped, though there are a number of residential buildings within, including St Michael's Cottage, and Oak Tree Cottage, which are listed. Parts of the site are used as horse paddocks.

11.76 No coalescence issues are presented by developing any of the area of search considered. Similarly, all the areas considered are in reasonable proximity to existing facilities in the town.

11.77 The area of search is shown in the Verwood South plans.

11.78 Refined Areas of Search



11.79 The area of search has been broken down into two sub-areas (eastern and western). These are illustrated on the attached plans for Verwood South.

11.80 They are appraised briefly below:

11.81 *Eastern sub-area*

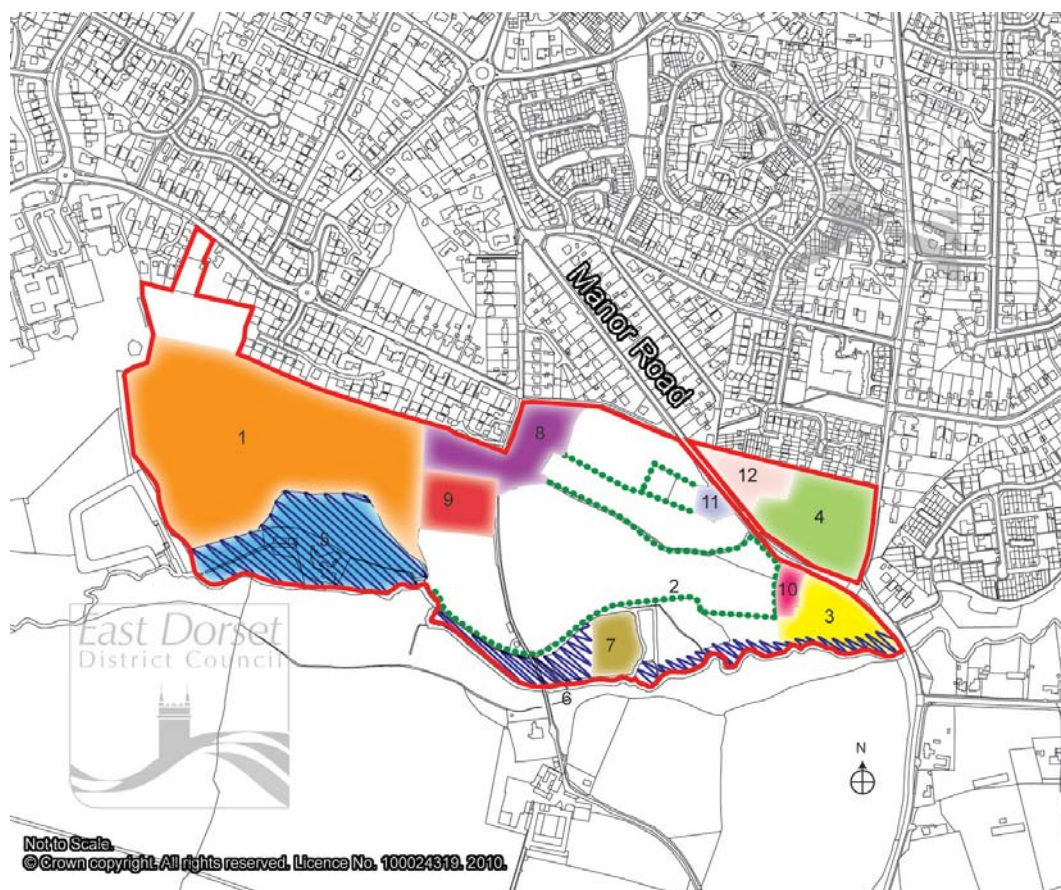
11.82 The eastern sub-area consists of semi enclosed fields, with levels falling south to several ponds and the river. It also contains a number of existing properties, important tree belts (some of which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders) and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. The area also includes a parcel of land that lies within 400m of the heathland. However, there are large areas that are unconstrained. *The majority of the land south of Manor Lane should be considered for development.*

11.83 *Western sub-area*

11.84 The western sub-area consists largely of wooded heath and areas of SSSI. A small compact area to the north west of the sub-area presents the only development opportunity. *Only the land south of Howe Lane and west of Summer Fields should be considered for development.*

11.85 Site Specific Constraints

11.86 A large portion of the eastern sub-area, south of Manor Lane and a small area in the western sub-area, south of Howe Lane were considered appropriate locations for further consideration. The bullet points (number referenced to the attached plan) identify land areas within these locations that we consider are unsuitable for development.



11.87 Landscape

1. The area of wooded heath should be discounted
2. Significant tree line and landmark trees within eastern sub-area would need to be retained and incorporated into the development.

11.88 Environmental and conservation designations

3. This area is within the 400m buffer of heathland and should not be considered for development.
4. The area of Site of Nature Conservation Interest should be discounted
5. The area of SSSI should be discounted
6. The area within Flood Zone 3 should be discounted
7. The ponds (Flood Zone 2) should be discounted

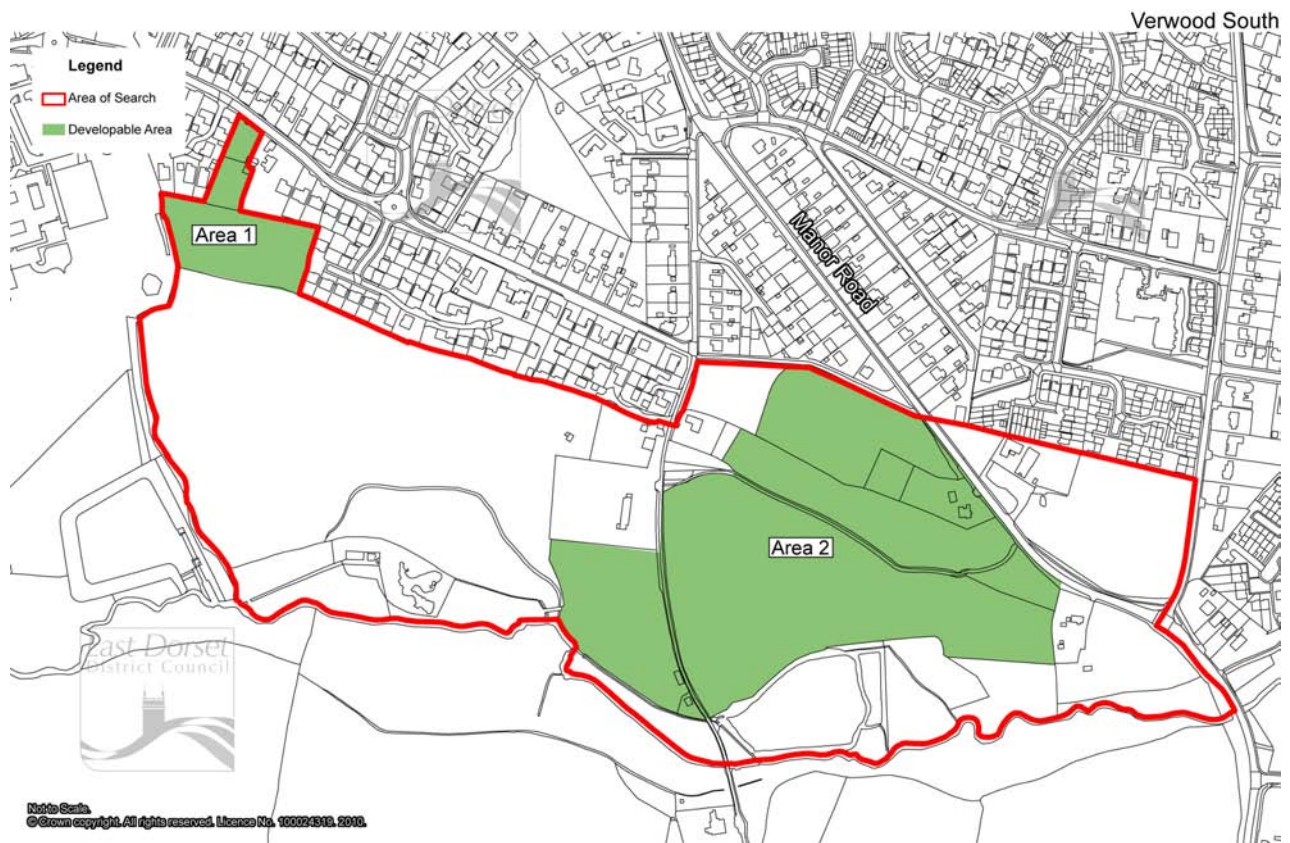
11.89 Land use

8. The area of existing properties and wooded areas should be discounted
9. St Michael's Cottage is a listed building and should be discounted
10. The properties to the north of Manor Road (above the 400m heathland boundary) should be discounted
11. The properties south of Manor Road should be avoided
12. The properties south of Manor Road (next to the Site of Nature Conservation Interest) should be avoided

11.90 Sites Considered Suitable for Development

11.91 It is considered that the following sites should be considered for development:

- Land south of Howe Lane
- Land south of Manor Road



11.92 Infrastructure Requirements/Thresholds

11.93 The following social and community infrastructure could be required as part of the development of this area:

- Possible new secondary school at Verwood. Potential site already identified and purchased by Dorset County Council next to existing Emmanuel School
- Sports, recreation and open space (between 2.04ha and 4.08ha)
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (between 4.36ha and 17.43ha)

11.94 **Common Requirements**

11.95 All of the options will require:

11.96 **Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces will need to be provided in perpetuity to mitigate the impact of people on nearby heathlands, with provision to be phased in advance of the occupation of dwellings on the site.**

11.97 **If new neighbourhoods are provided it will be expected that at least 40% of the new homes will be affordable, i.e social rented or shared equity.**

11.98 **The Green Belt boundary to be revised to incorporate necessary land into the urban area of Verwood required for development .**

11.99 Progress of any option will need to take into account amongst many factors:

- Mix of house types and densities
- Open space and play space provision
- Design
- Access and movement.
- Possible new upper school in Verwood.

11.100 Reasonable Options for Consideration

11.101 Land west of Trinity School

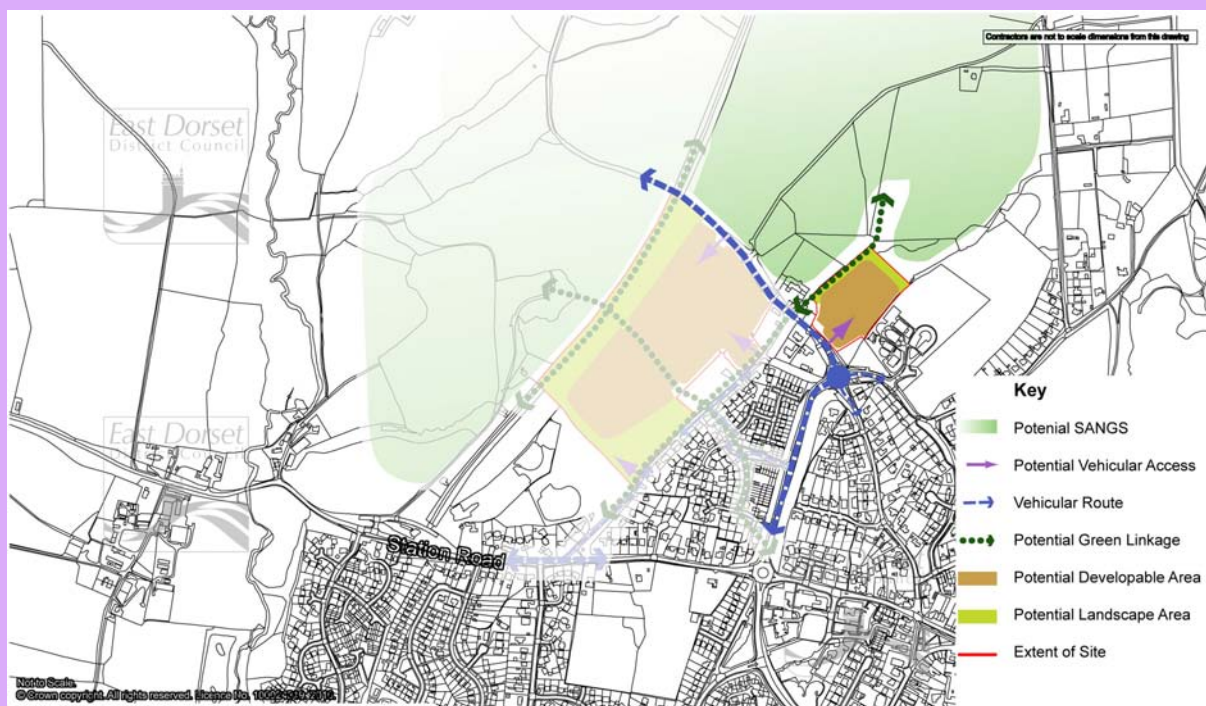
- The site should be considered for housing.
- Development should be restricted to the roadside field parcel which is naturally buffered by existing woodland to the north and built form to the east and west.
- Vehicular access may be possible to the north of Edmondsham Road. Alternative access may be possible via existing access west of Eastworth Farm.
- The power cable running across the site will have to be carefully incorporated, realigned or buried underground.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces could be provided to the north of Edmondsham Road.
- Likely to be archaeological deposits and detailed surveys would be required.

Option VWM 1

Development could take place on land on the north western edge of the existing town involving land to the west of Trinity School.

This could involve:

- The provision of about 30 homes.



Why is it an Option?

The option provides an opportunity to meet some of the local housing needs.

This is a good location in terms of accessibility to important services, facilities and work opportunities.

The development could provide valuable green infrastructure that would benefit residents and divert pressures away from heathlands.

Does it conform to the rules, regulations and advice?			
National	Yes	Local	Yes
Is it informed by evidence?			Yes
The East Dorset and Christchurch Housing Needs and Demands Surveys (2008)			
The East Dorset and Christchurch Housing Market Assessment (2008)			
The East Dorset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009)			
East Dorset Housing Options Master Plan Report (2010)			

11.102 *Land west of Eastworth Road*

- The site should be considered for housing.
- There is a significant tree line across the eastern part of the site and several landmark trees to the north which would need to be incorporated into the development.
- Primary access may be possible to the south of Edmondsham Road.
- The play space adjacent to the site should be retained and become a central area between the existing and new development.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces could be provided to the north of Edmondsham Road.
- Likely to be archaeological deposits and detailed surveys would be required.

Option VWM 2

Development could take place on land on the north western edge of the existing town involving land to the west of Eastworth Road.

This could involve:

- The provision of about 200 homes.



Why is it an Option?

The option provides an opportunity to meet some of the local housing needs.

This is a good location in terms of accessibility to important services, facilities and work opportunities.

The development could provide valuable green infrastructure that would benefit residents and divert pressures away from heathlands.

Does it conform to the rules, regulations and advice?

National

Yes

Local

Yes

Is it informed by evidence?

Yes

The East Dorset and Christchurch Housing Needs and Demands Surveys (2008)

The East Dorset and Christchurch Housing Market Assessment (2008)

The East Dorset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009)

East Dorset Housing Options Master Plan Report (2010)

11.103 Land South of Howe Lane

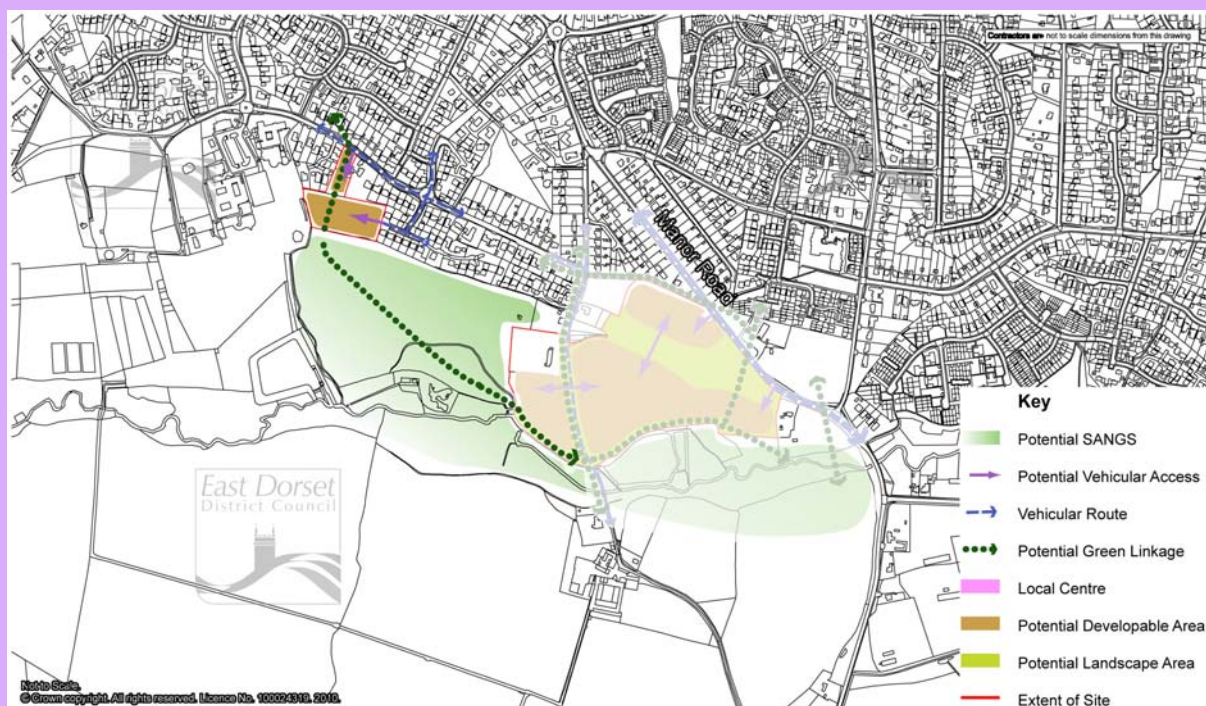
- This site could be considered for housing.
- The site is suitable for low density housing in keeping with surrounding development, possibly replicating the existing street pattern of Summer Fields.
- Difficult to form satisfactory safe vehicular access from Howe Lane, access may be better from Summer Fields.
- Access would need to respect large existing trees if taken from Howe Lane.
- Land ownership issues would have to be resolved if access was to be taken from Summer Fields.
- Potential for archaeological deposits in the area.
- The setting of the Listed Building, Oak Tree Cottage, must be respected when considering the potential development of the site.

Option VWM 3

Development could take place on land on the south western edge of the existing town involving land to the south of Howe Lane.

This could involve:

- The provision of about 20 homes.



Why is it an Option?

The option provides an opportunity to meet some of the local housing needs.

This is a good location in terms of accessibility to important services, facilities and work opportunities.

The development could provide valuable green infrastructure that would benefit residents and divert pressures away from heathlands.

Does it conform to the rules, regulations and advice?

National

Yes

Local

Yes

Is it informed by evidence?

Yes

The East Dorset and Christchurch Housing Needs and Demands Surveys (2008)

The East Dorset and Christchurch Housing Market Assessment (2008)

The East Dorset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009)

East Dorset Housing Options Master Plan Report (2010)

11.104 Land south of Manor Road

- This site should be considered for housing.
- The site has a number of sensitive boundaries, including a Site of Nature Conservation Interest to the west and wooded heath to the east, requiring careful consideration.
- Significant tree lines run through the site which would need to be retained and enhanced.
- Several Tree Preservation Orders are present across the site and should be retained.
- The setting of the listed building, St Michael's Cottage, would need to be respected and incorporated into the development.
- Access points to the east of the site via Manor Road would be preferable for a number of reasons, including width available near St Michael's Road/Howe Lane.
- Potential for area to the south to deliver semi-natural circular walks (River Crane).
- Environmental Agency flood maps indicate that the flood outlines are constrained to the area around the watercourse, however, further investigation would be required to confirm this at a later date.
- Likely to be archaeological deposits in the area and detailed surveys would be required.

Option VWM 4

Development could take place on land on the south western edge of the existing town involving land to the south of Manor Road.

This could involve:

- The provision of about 165 homes.

A prerequisite for this would transport improvements including the implementation of the Springfield Distributor Road.



Why is it an Option?

The option provides an opportunity to meet some of the local housing needs.

This is a good location in terms of accessibility to important services, facilities and work opportunities.

The development could provide valuable green infrastructure that would benefit residents and divert pressures away from heathlands.

Does it conform to the rules, regulations and advice?

National

Yes

Local

Yes

Is it informed by evidence?

Yes

The East Dorset and Christchurch Housing Needs and Demands Surveys (2008)

The East Dorset and Christchurch Housing Market Assessment (2008)

The East Dorset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009)

East Dorset Housing Options Master Plan Report (2010)

Verwood Town Centre

11.105 This section considers the future of the shopping centre of Verwood. It should be considered in conjunction with chapter 3 which identifies the hierarchy of centres throughout the area. This puts forward the preferred option that Verwood should be categorised as a Town Centre where new development is to be encouraged that will improve vitality and viability. For further information please refer to:

- Key Issues Paper: Town, Village and Neighbourhood Centres
- Verwood Area Profile (2010)

11.106 Where are we now?

Key Facts

- Verwood has about 40 commercial units in the main town centre, with additional shopping associated with a Morrison's foodstore at Pennine Way.
- Over 60% of the units are used for service or miscellaneous uses.
- The other units were retail and only one was vacant when surveyed in 2008.

11.107 Rules, Regulations and Advice

11.108 National

11.109 local authorities should:

- Assess the detailed need for land and floorspace for economic development, including for all main town centre uses over the plan period.
- Identify any deficiencies in the provision for local convenience shopping and other facilities to serve people's day to day needs.
- Define the extent of the centre and the primary shopping area, distinguishing between defined primary and secondary frontages in designated centres (PPS4).

11.110 Local

11.111 The East Dorset Local Plan identified a town centre boundary.

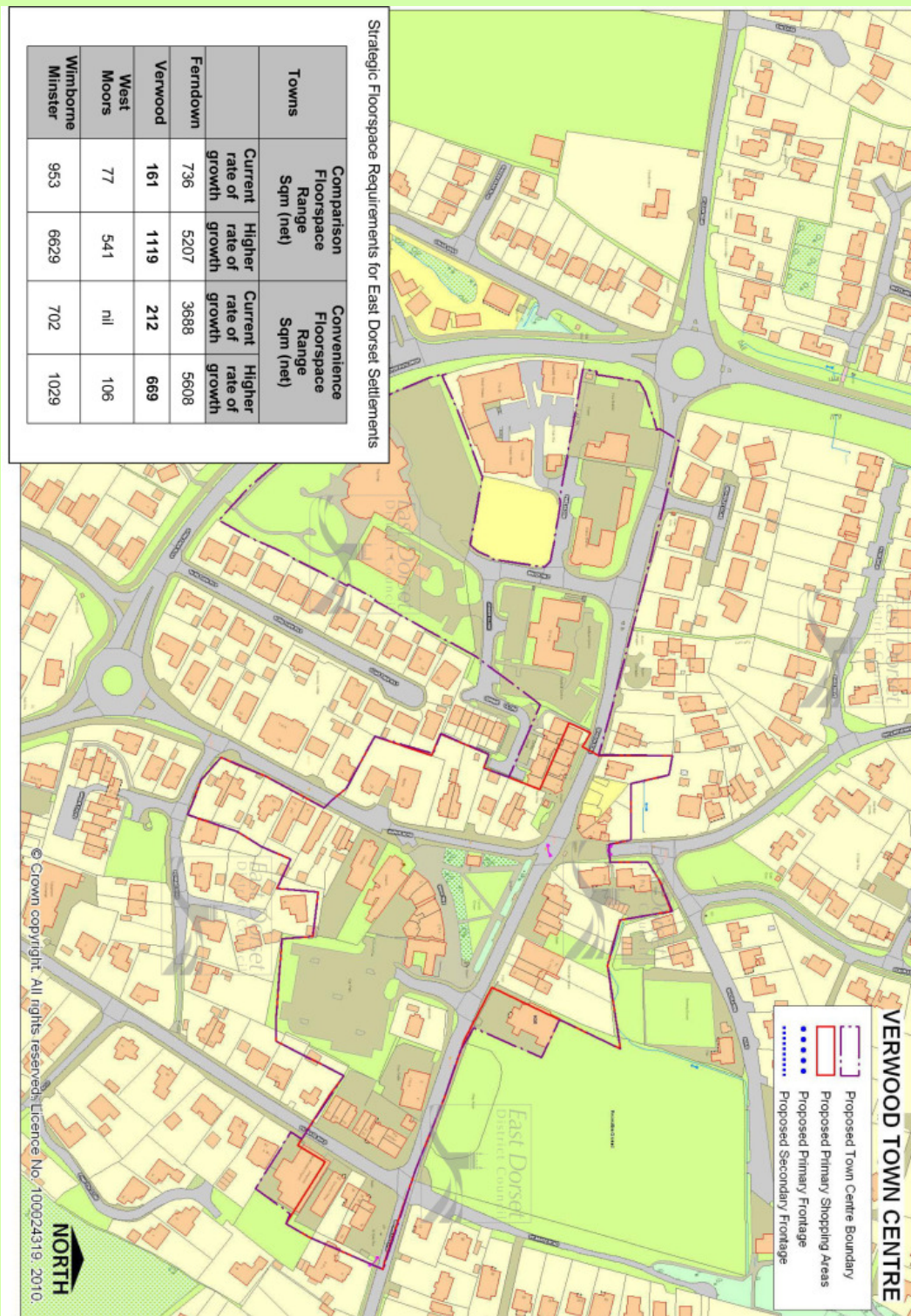
11.112 What you said at Issues and Options

11.113 Responses supported promotion of retailing, recreation/open space, employment, cafés and restaurants in the centre.

11.114 Issue: Should a town centre boundary be designated for Verwood?

Preferred Option VWM 5

Designate a Town Centre boundary for Verwood as shown below.



Why is it the Preferred Option?

The boundary will help focus appropriate uses within the town centre. The boundary has been drawn to include commercial and community facilities as well as areas with potential for future

town centre related development, as identified by the Joint Retail Assessment. It is also a sustainable location with good public transport access.

Does it conform to the rules, regulations and advice?

National

Yes

Local

Yes

Is it informed by evidence?

Yes

Joint Retail Assessment (Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners 2008).

11.115 What should the vision be for Verwood Town Centre?

Preferred Option VWM 6

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

To achieve this vision:

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

Why is it the Preferred Option?

This option provides a clear strategy for the future of the town centre, which aims to build on commercial, retail and community strengths, improving accessibility, making best use of resources, and the street environment.

Does it conform to the rules, regulations and advice?

National

Yes

Local

Yes

Is it informed by evidence?

Yes

Joint Retail Assessment (Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners 2008)

Verwood Educational Requirements

11.116 This section considers the need for additional Schools in Verwood. It puts forward the option that there would be a need for a Secondary School in Verwood, which will be dependent on the level of additional residential development in the town. For further information please refer to the following documents:

- Key Issue Paper: Community Facilities
- Verwood Area Profile (2010)
- East Dorset Housing Options Master Plan Report (2010)

11.117 Where are we now?

11.118 Verwood has three First Schools and a Middle School. Verwood is the largest town in Dorset to have no secondary school provision. Secondary school provision is currently provided in Ferndown and Wimborne at schools that could face capacity issues associated within possible new housing in those towns. If options for new neighbourhoods are supported at Verwood it may be that a secondary school would have to be provided in the town. Additionally, there would possibly be a need to expand one of the three First schools, or build a new one dependant on the level of growth within the town, and the final educational system operated. The County Council, as Education Authority, has land reserved for a possible upper school site adjacent to the Howe Lane schools campus.

11.119 Rules, Regulations and Advice**11.120 National**

11.121 Development Plans should promote development that creates socially inclusive communities, including suitable mixes of housing. Policies shouldaddress accessibility (both in terms of location and physical access) for all members of the community to jobs, health, housing, education, shops, leisure and community facilities. (PPS1)

11.122 Local**11.123** *Dorset Community Strategy*

11.124 The Strategy recognises that improving services and opportunities for young people across the County is vital to ensure a viable workforce in the future to maintain the economic well being of the area.

11.125 *East Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy*

11.126 Recognises that young people as a group are currently poorly represented in the District and that their needs and aspirations need to be fostered by improving access to services and facilities for the young across the District.

11.127 *East Dorset Local Plan*

11.128 Policy V8 allocates land off Coopers Lane for an additional Middle School and it is noted that the Local Educational Authority has land reserved at the Howe Lane schools campus for an upper school if, or when the need arises.

11.129 What you said at Issues and Options

11.130 There was general support for the need for additional facilities for young people across the area.

11.131 Issue: Is there the need for an upper school in Verwood?**Preferred Option VWM 7**

An Upper School will be constructed adjacent to the Howe Lane schools campus. The inner Green Belt boundary will be revised to include land within the urban area of Verwood to accommodate the school buildings and associated facilities. The playing fields will remain in the Green Belt.

Why is it the Preferred Option?

There is the need for an upper school in Verwood if the level of residential development set out elsewhere in this Plan takes place. The site at Howe Lane has been safeguarded by the Education Authority for many years to accommodate an upper school when the need arose.

Does it conform to the rules, regulations and advice?**National****Yes****Local****Yes****Is it informed by evidence?****Yes**

East Dorset Housing Options Master Plan Report (2010)

West Moors Town Centre

11.132 This section considers the future of the shopping centre of West Moors. It should be considered in conjunction with chapter 3 which identifies the hierarchy of centres throughout the area. This puts forward the preferred option that West Moors should be categorised as a District Centre where limited future development is expected. For further information please refer to:

- Key Issues Paper: Town, Village and Neighbourhood Centres
- West Moors Area Profile (2010)

11.133 Where are we now?

11.134 West Moors is a small town of about 7,400 people lying to the immediate north of Ferndown. It has a high proportion of elderly residents at about 35% compared to the National average of about 19%. The town has good transport links being close to the A31(T) and benefits from a regular bus service. The main shopping area is situated on Station Road along with the library, village hall and a First school. The shops are comparatively small and there is no major foodstore, although Sainsbury's is just outside the town on the northern fringe of Ferndown. An important small neighbourhood shopping area is situated at Pinehurst Road, which provides valuable local services to the community.

Key Facts

- There are 44 shop and commercial units in the town centre.

- The 2008 Town Centre Survey identified that 52% of the units in the centre were used for services or miscellaneous uses.
- 42% of units were retail.

11.135 Rules, Regulations and Advice

11.136 National

11.137 local authorities should:

- Assess the detailed need for land and floorspace for economic development, including for all main town centre uses over the plan period.
- Identify any deficiencies in the provision for local convenience shopping and other facilities to serve people's day to day needs.
- Define the extent of the centre and the primary shopping area, distinguishing between defined primary and secondary frontages in designated centres.

11.138 Local

11.139 The East Dorset Local Plan identified a town centre boundary.

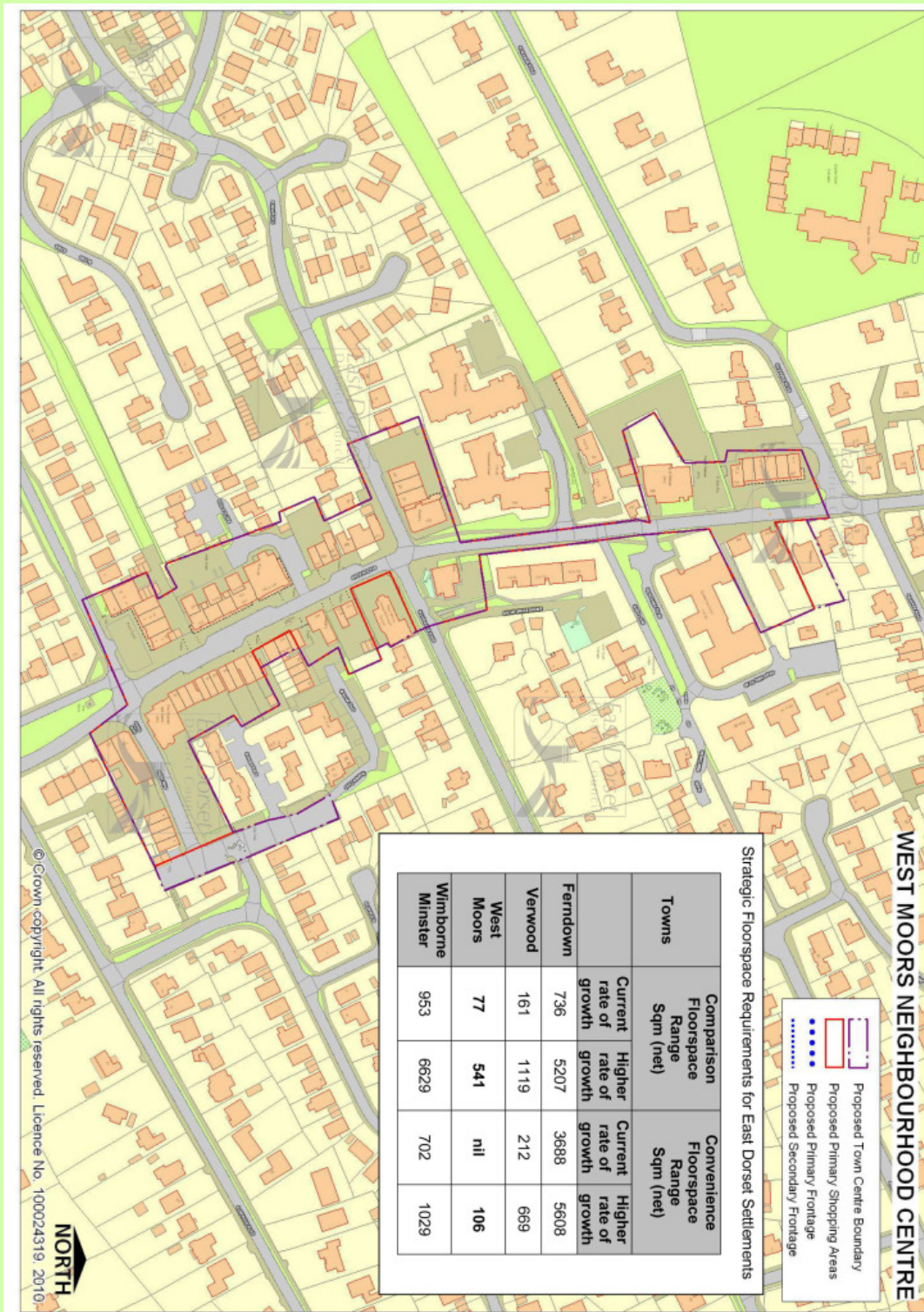
11.140 What you said at Issues and Options

11.141 Responses supported promotion of retailing, recreation/open space, cafés and restaurants in the centre.

11.142 Should a District Centre boundary be designated for West Moors?

Preferred Option VWM 8

Designate a District Centre boundary for West Moors as shown.



Why is it the Preferred Option?

The boundary will help focus appropriate uses within the District Centre. The boundary has been drawn to include commercial and community facilities as well as areas with potential for future

town centre related development, as identified by the Joint Retail Assessment. The development is located in a sustainable location with good public transport access.

Does it conform to the rules, regulations and advice?

National

Yes

Local

Yes

Is it informed by evidence?

Yes

Joint Retail Assessment (Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners 2008).

11.143 What should the vision be for West Moors District Centre?

Preferred Option VWM 9

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

To achieve this vision:

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

Why is it the Preferred Option?

This option provides a clear strategy for the future of the centre, which aims to build on commercial, retail and community strengths, improving accessibility, making the best use of resources, and the street environment.

Does it conform to the rules, regulations and advice?

National

Yes

Local

Yes

Is it informed by evidence?	Yes
Joint Retail Assessment (Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners 2008)	