

BACKGROUND PAPER: COMMUNITY NEEDS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Community Needs and Infrastructure background paper is one of a series of such papers which supplement the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan. This paper provides more detail and justification to the policies in Chapter 6. It explains how the policies have developed and evolved, whilst also providing a useful summary of the various studies and assessments which informed the development of these policies.
- 1.2 The plan area contains a variety of community facilities and services such as shops; schools; doctors' surgeries; village halls; places of worship; public houses; sports facilities; and public recreational open space. These are delivered and maintained by various businesses and other organisations.
- 1.3 The larger settlements in the plan area are recognised as the shopping, service and employment centres for a much wider area, serving the surrounding rural areas as well as their own populations. Smaller scale services and facilities in villages are also vitally important for many residents, and for maintaining a sense of community, though the additional cost of rural delivery, and market competition brought about by wider car ownership and delivery networks, have resulted in the loss of many of these local facilities in the last twenty years.
- 1.4 Limited public transport provision in many of the more rural parts of the plan area often results in poor accessibility to services, particularly for those who do not have access to private transport. That said, there are a range of bus services between the larger towns and villages and some demand-responsive services have been introduced in a number of the rural areas. The continued operation of these services often relies on public subsidies.
- 1.5 The Local Plan, planning obligations and neighbourhood plans will play an important role in supporting local community needs. The establishment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), in particular will transform the current method of collecting and distributing developer contributions, with local communities having greater opportunity to utilise these funds in support of community-led initiatives.

2 POLICY GUIDANCE

2.1 In plan-making, it is important to consider other policies and guidance to ensure that the policies set at a local level are consistent with other plans and programmes.

Table 1.1 Policy Guidance

PLAN/PROGRAMME	KEY OBJECTIVES / TARGETS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PLAN
INTERNATIONAL GUIDANCE		
EU Directive to promote electricity from Renewable Energy (2001/77/EC) ¹	<p>To promote electricity generation from renewable energy sources in the internal market;</p> <p>For member states to establish programmes to increase gross consumption of green electricity by 2010 by introducing an obligation to do so; and</p> <p>For member states to publish national targets for future consumption of electricity derived from renewable sources.</p> <p>The Directive includes a target for the U.K, which is for renewable sources to provide 10% of electricity consumption by 2010.</p>	The Local Plan should consider how development can contribute towards meeting national and European renewable energy targets.
NATIONAL GUIDANCE		
National Planning Policy Framework, 2012 ²	<p>There are a number of key principles within the National Planning Policy Framework which relate to this background paper, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places. • To support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. • To actively manage patterns of growth • To take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all. • These planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision taking. 	<p>The Local Plan should deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs</p> <p>The Local Plan should make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.</p> <p>The Local Plan should encourage the use of renewable energy resources.</p>

¹ Official Journal of the European Communities, Directive 2001/77/EC, September 2001, www.eur-lex.europa.eu

² National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012 www.communities.gov.uk

PLAN/PROGRAMME	KEY OBJECTIVES / TARGETS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PLAN
National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3), 2011 ³	Read in conjunction with statement EN-1, this document provides the primary policy for decision making on renewable energy for on-shore wind, biomass and / or waste generating infrastructure over 50MW generating capacity and off-shore wind generating more than 100MW. Does not cover wave or tidal generation.	National Policy Statements should be used in conjunction with the Local Plan when making decisions on planning applications.
Stern Review: The Economics of Climate Change, 2006 ⁴	Demonstrated that climate change will eventually harm economic growth and early action will reduce the likely costs. It highlighted the need for a transition to a low carbon economy and measures to adapt to climate change, supported by mitigation measures.	Inform policies relating to the provision of renewable energy.
The Climate Change Act, 2008 ⁵	Introduced a binding long-term framework to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, towards a target of at least an 80% reduction below 1990 levels by 2050. A system of ‘carbon budgets’, which limit UK emissions over successive five-year periods, will set the trajectory towards 2050 and drive the UK’s transition to a low carbon economy through a series of legally binding emission caps. The first three carbon budgets, covering the periods 2008–12, 2013–17 and 2018–22, were announced in April 2009, requiring emissions reductions of just over 22 per cent, 28 per cent and 34 per cent respectively, below 1990 levels.	Inform policies relating to the provision of renewable energy.
LOCAL GUIDANCE		
Corporate Plans for West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council, 2013-2017 ⁶	The objectives relating to this background paper are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve infrastructure to enable businesses to grow; • Facilitate sustainable leisure, culture 	The Local Plan should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the delivery of high-speed broadband, the Corporate Plan seeks to achieve 24MB p/s broadband access to 90% of domestic Dorset by

³ National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3), Department of Energy & Climate Change, July 2011, www.official-documents.gov.uk

⁴ http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/stern_review_final_report.htm

⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27>

⁶ Corporate Plans for West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council 2013-2017, www.dorsetforyou.com

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	<p>and community activities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure safe and thriving communities with respect for each other; • Create a planning framework which balances environmental protection with meeting community and economic needs; • Manage the implications of climate change, including flooding and coastal protection. 	<p>2016;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to seek highway and rail service improvements. • Support the development of a new arts centre in Sherborne by 2016. • Implement DTEP by 2016. • Provide a permanent Park & Ride site for Dorchester by 2017. • Convert the Shire Hall Dorchester into a sustainable heritage visitor centre by 2017.
<p>West Dorset Community Plan, 2010⁷</p>	<p>The vision for West Dorset is that by 2026 it will be a district where:</p> <p>People live, work and learn in more balanced communities with less need to travel; thriving market towns support the surrounding rural areas; and quality local facilities are available in villages. There is good IT and communications and other facilities are accessible by different modes of transport, including improved and more flexible public transport</p> <p>The community is safe, healthy, active, engaged and involved, with a diversity of cultural and leisure activities</p> <p>Measures have been taken to prevent, adapt to and raise awareness of the causes and effects of climate change. This includes avoiding flood risk and incorporating sustainable construction methods, energy efficiency and renewable energy in development.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to provide a safe transport route network for all types of travel and support the provision of greener travel options where practical. • Support the provision and retention of community facilities where appropriate. • Support the provision of renewable energy development through standalone schemes and through on-site provision.
<p>The Community Plan for Weymouth & Portland, 2013⁸</p>	<p>The objectives relating to this background paper are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To address disability, disadvantage and accessibility to services in the Borough; • To encourage more job opportunities, raise income levels and provide more work and training opportunities for young people. 	<p>The Local Plan should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support opportunities to improve route connectivity • Support the delivery of community travel exchanges to reduce the requirement for car borne trips. • Support the delivery of new educational establishments/extensions.
<p>Dorset Sustainable Communities Strategy⁹</p>	<p>The strategy believes that it would be good for Dorset if more people could</p>	<p>The Local Plan should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the delivery of community

⁷ West Dorset Community Plan, West Dorset Partnership, <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/communityplan/west>

⁸ The Community Plan for Weymouth & Portland, 2013, Weymouth & Portland Partnership www.weymouthandportlandpartnership.org

⁹ Sustainable Communities Strategy 2010-2020, Dorset Strategic Partnership www.dorsetforyou.com

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	<p>start their own business and calls for better education and training; better transport and better internet and phone connections.</p> <p>The strategy acknowledges that many people in Dorset have to travel long distances to visit their doctor, go to work, school and shops. The strategy calls for better information about public transport; providing buses and trains when people want them; providing pavements and cycle paths; providing better broadband so that people don't need to travel as much and by using places like community centres to bring services to people so they don't have to travel so far. The Dorset Strategic Partnership acknowledged that sport, good health and better roads and road safety make for better communities.</p>	<p>travel exchanges to reduce the requirement for car borne trips.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support proposals (including mixed uses) which are well located to existing services roads etc. • Support opportunities to improve route connectivity and bring about a comprehensive public rights of way network.
<p>Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)¹⁰</p> <p>Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Local Economic Assessment, 2011¹¹</p>	<p>The Dorset LEP's overall aim is to deliver growth through business enterprise whilst safeguarding the environment. Of particular relevance are the aims to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance the skills of Dorset's current and future workforce • improve digital and physical connectivity, particularly via high-speed broadband • create the right conditions for enterprise 	<p>The Local Plan should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the delivery of high-speed broadband; • Support the delivery of new educational establishments / extensions. • Ensure that the Local Plan and the accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Plan identify the needs of the plan area, drawing on the skills and resources of partner organisations
<p>Local Transport Plan 3, 2011¹²</p>	<p>Key objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the need to travel • Managing and maintaining the existing network more efficiently • Active travel and greener travel choices • Public transport alternatives to the car • Car parking measures • Travel safety measures 	<p>The Local Plan should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate development in ways that people can access services with less need to travel, and in sustainable ways • Encourage services, such as health and education, to be planned and delivered in ways that promote sustainable transport patterns. • Make better use of the transport network to maximise its efficiency

¹⁰ Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership, 2012 Mission Statement and Vision: <http://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/about-us/mission-statement-and-vision/>

¹¹ Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Local Economic Assessment, 2011, Dorset County Council, Bournemouth Borough Council and Borough of Poole, www.dorsetforyou.com

¹² Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Local Transport Plan 3, 2011 – Dorset County Council, <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/travel-dorset/roads-and-driving/road-information/road-and-transport-improvement-schemes/local-transport-plan-3>

PLAN/PROGRAMME	KEY OBJECTIVES / TARGETS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PLAN
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic infrastructure improvements 	<p>for all forms of transport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support walking and cycling infrastructure • Encourage low carbon travel behavior • Support targeted and major transport improvements
<p>West Dorset Climate Change Strategy, 2009¹³</p>	<p>The strategy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help residents, businesses and other organisations reduce their carbon emissions by 30% by 2020 from 2005 levels. • Set a leading example to all of West Dorset by ensuring its own operations are environmentally sustainable. • Develop and support community projects that set an example of best practice in carbon reduction, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability • Provide useful information to the local community and businesses on climate change and sustainability issues 	<p>The Local Plan should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support proposals for low carbon energy production and improved energy efficiency in new development. • Make better use of the transport network to maximise its efficiency for all forms of transport. • Support community led renewable energy schemes through allowable solutions (when guidance finalised).
<p>Dorset Renewable Energy Strategy, 2012¹⁴</p>	<p>The Strategy sets the agenda for renewable energy in Bournemouth Dorset and Poole to 2020 and identifies six key areas of focus. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the development of community renewable energy • Maximising the local economic benefits of renewable energy generation • Creating a more supportive planning system for renewable energy • Developing locally appropriate technologies • Delivering leadership and partnerships that support renewable energy • Improving renewable energy communications and learning 	<p>The Local Plan should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support community-led renewable energy schemes through allowable solutions (when guidance finalised). • Support proposals for low carbon energy production and improved energy efficiency in new development.
<p>Dorset Play Strategy, 2012¹⁵</p>	<p>Vision – For Dorset to be a place where all children and young people are able</p>	<p>The Local Plan should include appropriate mechanisms to enable the</p>

¹³ West Dorset Climate Change Strategy, 2009, West Dorset Partnership, www.dorsetforyou.com

¹⁴ Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Renewable Energy Strategy to 2020, Dorset Energy Partnership, March 2012, www.dorsetforyou.com

PLAN/PROGRAMME	KEY OBJECTIVES / TARGETS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PLAN
	<p>to play freely and safely, and make informed choices about how, where and when to play'. Key aims are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the local play offer by embedding opportunities for play in strategies for children, communities and spatial planning. • Improve access to high quality, free play opportunities that offer fun, variety, adventure, culture and challenge. • Develop play provision that meets the needs of all children and young people including children who are disabled. 	<p>delivery of new or improved plays areas to meet the needs of all children and young people.</p>

CONCLUSIONS – KEY AIMS

2.2 The review of international, national and local policy guidance has identified a number of common aims and objectives relevant to the local plan. These include:

- Supporting the retention of local community facilities where appropriate.
- Ensuring the provision of on-site infrastructure and securing planning obligations, including good quality provision and access to open spaces, culture and recreational facilities.
- Improving transport connections through the co-location of development and improved services e.g. community travel exchanges.
- The delivery of high speed broadband, important to support the growth of the local economy.
- Taking a proactive approach to meet local/national requirements for renewable energy generation, including the delivery of low carbon renewable energy, particularly in relation to community schemes.

¹⁵ Dorset Play Strategy 2012-2016, Dorset Play Partnership <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/children-and-young-people/play>

3 RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE

- 3.1 A wide variety of evidence exists which has helped to shape the community and infrastructure policies in the Local Plan. This evidence has been used to better understand the needs and demands on open spaces and recreational facilities, and the potential for renewable energy development. The majority of this evidence has been derived from a local level, reflecting the need to ensure that plan making is distinctive and of-the-place.

PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

- 3.2 Successful planning is about creating communities that work well. As a community grows larger, the infrastructure to support it, including community facilities, needs to grow with it. These facilities need to be in the right place so that people don't have to travel great distances to those that they use on a daily or frequent basis.
- 3.3 Strategic allocations provide an opportunity to take a more comprehensive and planned approach to development, with housing, employment and related facilities such as new schools, brought forward in balance. This approach allows for better control over the phasing and release of development, ensuring that there is a steady supply of land and better coordination of key infrastructure delivery. On the larger more complex allocations, some forms of infrastructure will be required to be provided as part of the development. Planning obligations, also known as section 106 agreements, will play an important role in providing the infrastructure necessary to support new development.
- 3.4 Infrastructure for smaller, less complex development sites will be met through the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), or through planning obligations where the infrastructure is not covered by the CIL charge.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

- 3.5 The Community Infrastructure Levy is a new system of developer contributions that is intended to supplement other public sector revenue streams to ensure that community infrastructure needed to support new development is provided. It will generally replace developer contributions provided through Section 106 agreements except in relation to affordable housing and on-site infrastructure.
- 3.6 The Community Infrastructure Levy is being introduced across the plan area. It will transform current methods giving local communities greater opportunity to use a 'meaningful proportion' of these funds in support of community-led initiatives. In areas where there is a neighbourhood development plan in place, the neighbourhood will be able to receive 25% of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy arising from development in their area, to spend on relevant projects. Under the proposals, the money would be paid directly to parish and town councils. Neighbourhoods without a neighbourhood development plan but where the Community Infrastructure Levy is still charged will receive a capped share of 15% of the levy revenue arising from development in their area. The remainder of the funding must be spent by the local planning authority on meeting infrastructure needs relevant to the plan. The councils will be able to decide on the order of spending on various projects across the plan area.
- 3.7 Work on the development of the Community Infrastructure Levy has been carried out in parallel for West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland. However, there will be two separate charging schedules, one for each authority area, taking into account the infrastructure needs and development viability in each area.

- 3.8 If the Levy is set too low there is the risk of missing out on opportunities to gain infrastructure funding, but if it is too high then it could deter development from happening. Provision of affordable housing with development is achieved through separate mechanisms but its viability implications must also be considered when setting the levy. In-house viability expertise, input from external consultants and consultation with local developers have all been used to inform the development of the levy so as to minimise these risks.
- 3.9 Charging rates for residential development, including built holiday accommodation, are proposed at £100/sqm throughout West Dorset and £93/sqm in Weymouth except Portland (which will be charged at £80/sqm). All other types of development (such as businesses, retail and leisure uses), will not be charged because they would not be viable to develop in current market conditions. The Community Infrastructure Levy will be examined alongside the Local Plan before adoption in 2014. More information is available at <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/communityinfrastructurelevy/west/weymouth>

INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN

- 3.10 A joint Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)¹⁶ has been prepared to provide an overview of the range of infrastructure projects required to support the growth in the Local Plan. It is a 'live' document, and will be updated and reviewed when required to keep track of critical infrastructure delivery to support growth during the plan period. It identifies the likely costs, means of funding through public finance and developer contributions sources, any funding secured, funding gaps and the delivery agencies.
- 3.11 Key components of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan include coast protection and flood risk management, transport and public realm improvements (including road safety schemes, footways and cycle routes, and public transport), education, green infrastructure and recreational facilities. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan helps justify the amount of levy sought from new development and will influence how the funds are prioritised and distributed.
- 3.12 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan also highlights the likely infrastructure requirements for the major strategic allocations, which are excluded from CIL as they will be subject to more detailed S106 planning obligation agreements including both on and off-site infrastructure provision.

LOCAL COMMUNITY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

- 3.13 The provision of community facilities is important for the social wellbeing of the community. The need for additional facilities is likely to arise through the plan period due to growth in homes and employment. Local shops, facilities and services should be able to develop and modernise for the benefit of that community. However space requirements and land values can make it difficult for these to be accommodated within existing town, village or local centres, where they would be most accessible.
- 3.14 There can be benefits from providing larger, more centralised facilities which would include a wider range of services that wouldn't be supported in a smaller community alone. Where more strategic facilities are needed, good planning should make sure that they are located so that people who live in the smaller outlying communities can get to them easily (whether or not they have a car), and ideally where people can visit more than one facility in one trip rather than several.
- 3.15 Where possible and practical (for example on larger developments), new facilities should be provided as part of the development, creating attractive and vibrant places to live. Good

¹⁶ West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2013, www.dorsetforyou.com

planning will make sure that the infrastructure needed is well located and phased to be brought in alongside new development.

- 3.16 Background information supporting the West Dorset District Council Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document¹⁷ has assessed the quantum and function of cultural and leisure facilities in West Dorset as of February 2010. This background information also highlights where proposals for improvements are sought. The evidence suggests that many existing settlements from small villages to towns have some sort of existing cultural or leisure facility whether this is a village hall, sports centre or school facility. The most common dual uses within these facilities provide meeting space and indoor sports facilities.
- 3.17 Ensuring that sustainable facilities are located in rural areas is particularly challenging. In rural areas, jobs and community facilities are not always located close to where people live. Providing alternative transport to the car is difficult and high levels of traffic congestion and pollution can arise as a result.
- 3.18 The Rural Functionality Studies¹⁸ undertaken by West Dorset District Council provided more detailed information about the sustainability of the District's rural areas. The nature of travel, work, shopping, education, services and leisure activities have been examined through 10 selected village and rural business case studies. Key findings from this evidence suggests that:
- Supporting development in villages with facilities is more sustainable because they will be utilised by local residents.
 - There is no clear relationship between an increase in household numbers over time and the retention of facilities in a village;
 - A substantial amount of development is required to support new and existing facilities;
 - There is a high reliance on the private car for journeys. Even where there was a bus service available;
 - People generally travel to their nearest settlement to carry out food shopping;
- 3.19 Further studies have examined the needs of rural communities. The Rural Trends in Dorset Report¹⁹ prepared by Dorset Community Action provides the following relevant key points:
- Life continues to be very hard for village shops and pubs with several closures;
 - Transport continues to pose difficulties. Particularly public transport demand responsive services;
 - There is a strong desire for high speed broadband in rural areas;
 - Library usage has dropped after the introduction of reduced hours.

PARISH PLANS

- 3.20 Parish and village plans provide further means for communities to identify what is important to them. They also help identify projects and actions to address concerns that have been raised. Approximately 50 parish plans currently exist and have been used in the development of Local Area Action Plans for the market towns and the West Dorset Community Plan.
- 3.21 The most common parish plan actions relating to community needs and infrastructure include:
- Promoting road safety (reduce/enforce speed limits).

¹⁷ <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/planningobligations/west>

¹⁸ Rural Functionality Study 1&2, West Dorset District Council, 2007, www.dorsetforyou.com

¹⁹ Rural Trends in Dorset Report, Dorset Community Action, June 2007 to May 2008, www.dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk

- Increase, improve, maintain footpaths, cyclepaths and rights of way.
- Promote safer walking and cycle routes/promote their use.
- Improve broadband coverage.
- Maintain and improve community facilities.
- Encourage greater use of local sports, leisure and arts facilities.
- Develop/improve local sports, leisure and arts facilities.
- Build/maintain village halls.
- Investigate more/improved allotments.
- Improve broadband coverage.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

- 3.22 The provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities not only promotes healthier lifestyles, but can help create better communities by providing opportunities for people to meet and interact. New homes are occupied by people who are likely to use public open space and sports facilities from time to time, and any increase in the population from new homes therefore places additional pressure on these facilities. These facilities may either need improving or new sites provided to continue to cater for local needs.
- 3.23 The responsibility for public open space and sports provision differs across the plan area. In West Dorset the responsibility is shared by the district and local town or parish council. The town or parish council for each area is normally responsible for playing fields, parks and allotments, and they have the ability to raise money for sport through their local precept. In Weymouth and Portland, the Borough Council has responsibility for maintaining open space and supports some sports provision.
- 3.24 The National Planning Policy Framework requires planning policies to identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports, and recreational facilities in the local area. Both local authorities have met this requirement by carrying out audits of open space, sport and recreational facilities across their respective areas. This information has been used to set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities. These assessments were prepared in line with Government advice in Planning Policy 17: Planning for Open Space; Sport and Recreation, and its companion guide²⁰.
- 3.25 West Dorset District Council commissioned consultants, Strategic Leisure Ltd, to work with the Council to undertake an Audit and Assessment of Open Space Sport and Recreation Facilities²¹ for the whole District. A detailed audit of all types of indoor and outdoor open space provision was undertaken, in partnership with key organisations and associations. The study included an assessment of the quality and accessibility of the spaces and facilities. It covers the nature and use of current provision and will assist the Council in its future planning of these facilities. The baseline information was updated in 2009 through consultation with town and parish councils. The findings were included as background information for the Planning Obligations Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document²² and informed the standards adopted in the SPD. This highlighted the need to ensure that all new housing development contributes to open space and recreation provision, in terms of its quantity and/or quality.

²⁰ PPG 17: Planning for Open Space; Sport and Recreation, and its companion guide, 2002, ODPM

²¹ PPG17 Study: Audit of Open Space, Sport & Recreational Facilities in West Dorset, Strategic Leisure Ltd, August 2007, www.dorsetforyou.com

²² West Dorset District Council Planning Obligations Guidelines, Supplementary Planning Document, February 2010, www.dorsetforyou.com

- 3.26 In Weymouth & Portland, the Council commissioned consultants Knight Kavanagh & Page to undertake their audit and assessment of open space sport and recreation facilities²³. The work commissioned broadly matches that of the West Dorset assessment. An additional component to the Weymouth and Portland assessment was the inclusion of an assessment of waterborne sports provision. A review of all sports facilities in Weymouth & Portland is planned in 2013 to help improve the strength of the baseline information. Key findings included the need to improve daytime access and public use of sports halls; the provision of community facilities in Littlemoor and Westham; an improvement of the outdoor sports provision in the Westham area; provision of allotments in the Littlemoor area; support for the Lorton Valley Nature Park.
- 3.27 The following table pulls together the findings of the two assessments and provides common guidance on the level of open space, sport and recreation provision that is generally expected across the plan area. On-site provision is likely to be sought for housing developments of 200 or more units or where the site area is 4 hectares or more, and may be triggered at a lower threshold of 50 or more units in relation to young people's play areas, if the standard would not otherwise be achieved in that locality.

Table 1.2 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision Standards.

Type	Main towns (2,500+ population)	Large villages (500+ population)
Parks, gardens and recreation grounds	All areas within 600m of a local park or 1,200m of large park.	
Outdoor sports provision	Provision for football, cricket, rugby, hockey, bowling and tennis within 2km of the town centre, sufficient to demonstrate a minimum of 2ha hectares per 1,000 population or that local teams are able to play at relevant times.	Provision of adult and junior pitches and tennis court / MUGA within 2km of the neighbourhood centre.
Indoor sports halls	Community venue/s accessible to all, of a good standard, able to accommodate arts performances, indoor sports and local meetings, and in 600m walking distance of most of the population.	
Leisure centres	Indoor leisure centre with multi-purpose sports hall within 15 minutes drive time of most of the population	n/a
Swimming pools	Swimming pool within 15 minutes drive time of most of the population	n/a
Young people's play areas	At least one Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play and facilities for teenagers, such as a skate park and MUGA, within 1km of the centre. A Local Equipped Area for Play within 600m walking distance of the remaining areas	At least one Local Equipped Areas for Play within 400m walking distance from the centre.

²³ PPG17 Audit of Open Space, Sport and Recreation in Weymouth & Portland, Final Report, Knight Kavanagh & Page, August 2007, www.dorsetforyou.com

Type	Main towns (2,500+ population)	Large villages (500+ population)
Allotments and community gardens	Sufficient provision of sites to meet minimum standard of 0.20 hectares per 1,000 population (or higher where there are waiting lists), located within 1km walking distance of most people's homes.	
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	One 20ha natural greenspace within 2km of the town. A natural greenspace of at least 2ha in size within 1km walking distance of most people's homes	A natural greenspace of at least 2ha in size within 1km of the area

EDUCATION AND TRAINING FACILITIES

- 3.28 A strong skills and knowledge base is an incentive for companies to move into a location; and a workforce that is well educated, well versed in IT, or well trained technically, means that new or expanding companies can start to operate more quickly and efficiently. A strong skills and knowledge base could be one of the main factors to offset the distance and access problems that face many parts of the plan area.
- 3.29 The Local Plan can have an important role in improving the quality and provision of education within the plan area. The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Policies should take a pro-active, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen the choice in education. However, where proposals result in adverse planning impacts which outweigh the desirability of establishing a school in that area, planning permission should be refused²⁴.
- 3.30 Within the plan area, Dorset County Council is the local education authority and therefore the key agency responsible for delivering education. The County Council is required by law to give all young people of school age the opportunity to receive appropriate education, by ensuring that there are enough schools in its area, and that the schools are of an appropriate standard. The majority of young people at school age receive their education in government-funded schools, with some requiring specialist support dependent upon their particular needs. Money for this service comes from central government grant, council tax and additional funds raised locally.

EDUCATION PROVISION

- 3.31 The current pattern of school provision is geographically based with the majority of secondary schools serving a discrete geographical part of the county fed by a number of Primary/First/Middle schools. There are no overall proposals for major change to this pattern. However this will be kept under review as the introduction of academies or free schools is assessed. The County Council wishes all schools to be successful so that parents can have access to an excellent local schooling without the need to travel great distances to alternative provision.
- 3.32 Current school facilities generally meet the needs off the local area. However, future residential development can put pressure on existing facilities. Some schools will have capacity to accommodate an increase in population while others will require additional accommodation or complete re-provision. There are also currently circumstances where a school is not full, but the educational infrastructure available is sufficient only for the pupils in the school. Future development proposals in neighbouring authorities of East Devon and

²⁴ National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 72, 2012, Communities & Local Government.

South Somerset will have a bearing on secondary school provision in Lyme Regis and Sherborne. These schools have a significant proportion of their school catchment outside of the plan area.

- 3.33 Where new (or continuing) housing proposals do emerge, it is expected that new pupils will be catered for through the expansion of existing provision. This provision may include the need for new or additional pre-school provision as necessary. Where appropriate the allocation of land to enable schools to be built or extended has been made a requirement. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) provides the most up to date picture of current schools provision and where site specific needs have been identified. Information is also included in the appendices to the background papers on the site specific chapters.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

- 3.34 Understanding the academic achievement of the plan area is important as it provides an important benchmark for the skills levels sought after in today's workplaces and society.
- 3.35 The Annual Population Survey (Jan-Dec 2010) suggests that the percentage of the resident population, aged 16-64 years, in West Dorset who have no qualifications is approximately 6%; in Weymouth & Portland, this figure is 8%. This is much in line with countywide average of 7% but less than the national average of 11%.
- 3.36 About 35% of West Dorset's resident population and about 30% of Weymouth & Portland's resident population aged 16-64 years have qualifications to NVQ level four or above. The countywide average is 32% and the national average is 31%²⁵.
- 3.37 GCSE results during the academic year September 2010 and August 2011 showed that in Weymouth, 77% of students achieved 5 or more GCSEs (grades A*-C). In West Dorset this figure was higher at 83%. The proportion of students achieving five or more GCSEs (grades A*-C) including English and Maths in West Dorset was 67%, while the figure in Weymouth & Portland was 57%. The average across England was 58%.
- 3.38 Statistics for young people aged 16 to 18 years who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) are collated by Connexions, who provide advice and information for young people. In Dorset, Weymouth & Portland has the highest proportion of young people who are NEET (8.0%); West Dorset has the second lowest proportion of young people who are NEET (5.3%). The average in England is 5.9%.

LOCAL TRANSPORT NEEDS

- 3.39 Transport underpins virtually all other planning policy matters, particularly homes, jobs and leisure activities, all of which involve considerable movements of people and goods everyday. The challenge of providing an effective and efficient transport system is at the heart of long-term planning policy. A key issue is how to secure a balanced approach to providing sustainable transport infrastructure and services whilst securing future economic prosperity.
- 3.40 The Government recognises that different policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas²⁶.

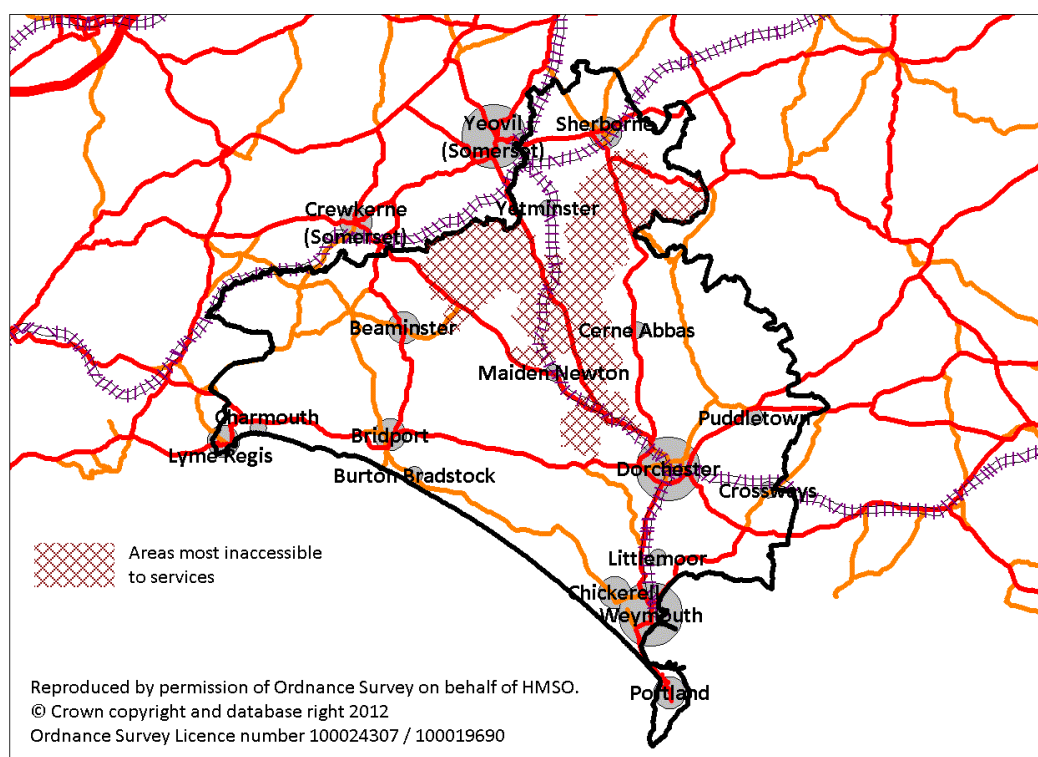
CURRENT TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

²⁵ Weymouth & Portland/West Dorset Economic Profile, September 2011, Dorset County Council

²⁶ National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 29, 2012, Communities & Local Government.

- 3.41 The nature of transport infrastructure varies considerably across the plan area. The A35 in West Dorset is a main road that passes east to west through the plan area. Westwards the road heads towards Bridport, Honiton, Exeter and the M5. Eastwards the road heads towards the A31, from which road users can travel in the direction of the M27, which provides links to Southampton, South East England and to the M3 that goes on to London. The A37 runs north from Dorchester towards Yeovil and then on to Bristol. One other main road in West Dorset is the A354, which runs north east from Portland, through Weymouth, Dorchester, Blandford Forum, Salisbury and on in the direction of the M4, which travels on to London or Bristol.
- 3.42 There are three railway lines that travel through the plan area. One is the Weymouth to London Waterloo line, which is an important commuter link to London with stations at Upwey, Dorchester South and Moreton. The line also stops at Southampton Airport and Parkway in Hampshire, providing access to the airport. The Weymouth to Bristol line has several stations in the plan area including Dorchester West, Maiden Newton, Chetnole, Yetminster and Thornford. Sherborne station is located on the Penzance (Cornwall) to London Paddington line, which is an important commuter link to London from the South West of England. The line runs through the north of the district.
- 3.43 There are a number of harbours within the plan area with registered fishing vessels. At the 1st April 2013, Weymouth had 57 vessels registered and Portland had 26 vessels registered to the harbour. The smaller fishing harbours of West Bay and Lyme Regis had 14 and 15 vessels registered respectively²⁷. Weymouth operates a passenger ferry service to the Channel Islands and St. Malo in France. Portland Port offers services for commercial shipping and cruises.

Figure 1.1 – Transport routes and accessibility to services



²⁷ Vessel lists April 2013, Marine Management Organisation, www.marinemanagement.com

COMMUTING PATTERNS

- 3.44 Table 1.3 below shows the comparison between the number of working age people living in the town (2011 Census) and the number of people working in the town (DCC, 2010) for the towns within the plan area. Both Chickerell and Dorchester have approximately twice as many people working in each town than economically active residents (meaning that people are commuting in to work). Weymouth meanwhile has half as many people working in the town than economically active residents (with significant out-commuting). (It should be noted that Chickerell includes the Granby industrial estate, the largest employment site within the Weymouth built up area, and that some of these commuting patterns are therefore taking place over a short distance within the greater Weymouth area).

Table 1.3 Distance of Workspace Travel

TOWN	NUMBER OF RESIDENTS	NUMBER OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE RESIDENTS	NUMBER OF PEOPLE WORKING IN TOWN
Beaminster	3,010	1,318	900
Bridport	13,568	4,032	5,000
Chickerell	5,515	2,748	5,000
Dorchester	19,060	9,619	18,400
Lyme Regis	3,671	1,539	1,300
Portland	12,844	6,338	4,000
Sherborne	9,523	3,920	4,800
Weymouth	52,232	32,103	15,400

- 3.45 Table 1.4 below shows the method of travel to work. The most common method of transport for both West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland is car/van. Car ownership is higher in the more rural parts of Dorset. In West Dorset, 83% of households have access to a car and 35% have two or more vehicles. In Weymouth & Portland, 74% have access to a car and 26% have no access to a car²⁸.
- 3.46 There is a higher rate of travelling by bus in Weymouth & Portland than in West Dorset, although levels of public transport usage as a means of travelling to work are generally low. Parts of West Dorset are not well served by public transport with indirect bus routes or services at a time or frequency not suited to commuters. Approximately 10% of the working age population of West Dorset live over an hour by bus away from any of the 34 major employment centres (towns and industrial estates). Whilst there will be some employment available locally, it is probable that employees living in these more remote areas will be dependent upon private transport to access employment.

Table 1.4 Method of Workspace Travel

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND (POP. 29,987)		WEST DORSET (POP. 45,714)	
Car/van	17,765 (59%)	Car/van	27,781 (61%)
Foot	4,557 (15%)	Foot	7,780 (17%)
Bus, minibus, coach	2,105 (7%)	Passenger in car	2,041 (4%)
Passenger in car	1,720 (6%)	Bicycle	1,130 (2%)
Bicycle	1,017 (3%)	Bus, minibus, coach	771 (2%)
Train	382 (1%)	Train	571 (1%)

TRANSPORT STUDIES & THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

²⁸ Weymouth & Portland/West Dorset Economic Profile, September 2011, Dorset County Council

- 3.47 In 2007, Dorset County Council appointed consultants Buro Happold to undertake transport studies for Weymouth & Portland and West Dorset. The studies explored a series of measures capable of delivering transport systems able to support future growth and in particular to provide evidence on: the current needs for transport infrastructure within the District/Borough; the transport infrastructure needs likely to be generated by future development; and the opportunities for seeking related planning obligations. In doing so, the studies have examined the capacity of the plan area's transport infrastructure and modelled the impact of various development scenarios. A studies overview document²⁹ was prepared in 2011 bringing together the key findings from each transport study.
- 3.48 Modelling of the existing transport network has identified heavy flows of traffic along the key strategic roads including the A35 with principal tension points identified in Chideock, Bridport and Dorchester. The largely unimproved county road network, which includes the A354 corridor and the A37, is considered to be generally well within its design capacity contrary to local perception that suggests otherwise. The A354 has been subject to a major highway improvement scheme referred to as the Weymouth Relief Road providing a new single carriageway bypass of Broadwey, Littlemoor and Upwey.
- 3.49 The degree of self containment, that is the extent to which a town's population undertake most of their activities within it, will influence the amount of trips made between key towns. Weymouth and Portland has a strong relationship with West Dorset, including significant travel by Weymouth & Portland residents to workplaces in Dorchester; the towns in West Dorset are generally well self-contained either within the town or within the District, though Dorchester has significant in-commuting to work, as referred to above. Seasonal variations in traffic flows in Dorset are significant due to it being a tourist destination, particularly in the summer months when traffic flow increases.
- 3.50 The Department for Transport approved SATURN modelling platform has been used to inform the best locations for sustainable development from a transport perspective. Not surprisingly, study sites close to town centres were shown to have better accessibility to essential services. Various development scenarios were examined against the capacity of the main highway routes across the plan area. The results showed there were capacity problems on the A35 Trunk Road, particularly east of Dorchester and also problems on the A352 at Warmwell under some of the scenarios. The studies recommended that many of the potential development sites will require on-site highway improvements and off-site junction improvements in order to accommodate the likely traffic generation.
- 3.51 Many of the transport strategy recommendations apply to the whole study area, although specific measures are targeted at defined movement corridors in West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland. Many of the recommendations have been captured through the Local Transport Plan process.
- 3.52 In Weymouth & Portland, the transport study concluded that up to 2016 a strategy is adopted focusing on tangible deliverables such as infrastructure improvements and travel demand management measures. Beyond 2016, the transport study requires a step-change in transport provision due to the constrained nature of the Borough. The study identified potential to bring about substantial improvements to both services and connectivity throughout the Borough to minimise the use of the car as the primary means of transport. The transport study also identified opportunities to improve walking and cycling connectivity, and opportunities to improve public transport connectivity which is currently poor in Weymouth Town Centre.

²⁹ Transport Studies Overview, 2011 – Buro Happold on behalf of Dorset County Council, www.dorsetforyou.com

- 3.53 In West Dorset, the strategy seeks to minimise the use of the car as the primary means of transport. There is greater emphasis on meeting travel demand in rural areas through the use of community travel initiatives and travel plans.
- 3.54 The strategy and implementation proposals originating from the transport studies were collectively brought together in the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) 2011-2026³⁰. This sets out the aspirations, strategy and policies for transport in the whole of Dorset and provides the basis for Dorset County Council's expenditure plans. The most recent Local Transport Plan was approved in April 2011; it differs to previous plans in that there is a stronger focus on strategic issues such as promoting the economy, especially tourism, and a stronger focus on green issues, low carbon travel and links with the health agenda. It is also a longer term (15 year) strategy, which helps to plan more effectively for major improvements.
- 3.55 In 2010, a feasibility study was undertaken into the provision of a Park & Ride facility for Dorchester. This study was updated in May 2013 to take account of 2011 census data, the concept of providing a park and ride facility with a Trunk Road Service Area (TRSA) and the opening of the Weymouth Park and Ride Site in 2011.
- 3.56 Major road schemes have been identified in previous plans, and indeed some of these schemes have recently been completed, e.g. Weymouth Relief Road. However, a reduction in funding sources, particularly for capital (infrastructure type) schemes, means the Local Transport Plan identifies little in the way of major road improvements during its plan period to 2026. Local Transport Plan 3 retains an aspiration for route improvements of non-trunk road networks that carry regional and national destination traffic through Dorset, or that contribute to growth but have little or no chance of being built by 2026. The following major highway schemes will not be built due to environmental and funding constraints.
- A354 Portland Road Relief Road "Western Route"
 - A354 Underhill Relief Road

SAFE TRANSPORT NETWORKS

- 3.57 Where development generates a significant amount of movement, there is an expectation on planning applications to demonstrate that sustainable transport modes have been explored (with regard to the nature and scale of development) in order to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure. Travel Plans are required for all developments which generate significant amounts of movement. The National Planning Policy Framework and Local Transport Plan give priority to non-car modes, providing safe environments, ensuring the efficient delivery of goods and consider the needs of the disabled.
- 3.58 Dorset County Council publishes statistics on the number of road traffic casualties on Dorset's roads. The tables below show the casualties by month for 2012 against the 2005-2009 average.

³⁰ Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Local Transport Plan 3, 2011 – Dorset County Council, www.dorsetforyou.com

Table 1.5 Road Traffic Casualties

	WEST DORSET				WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND			
	KILLED OR SERIOUSLY INJURED		ALL CASUALTIES		KILLED OR SERIOUSLY INJURED		ALL CASUALTIES	
	05/09 avg.	2012	05/09 avg.	2012	05/09 avg.	2012	05/09 avg.	2012
January	4	3	4	3	2	1	14	9
February	5	8	5	8	1	1	11	9
March	6	5	6	5	1	6	14	18
April	6	7	6	7	2	1	12	15
May	5	7	5	7	2	5	19	27
June	8	5	8	5	1	3	16	16
July	10	9	10	9	3	1	21	10
August	8	7	8	7	3	5	21	15
September	8	8	8	8	2	0	12	9
October	11	6	11	6	2	0	18	9
November	6	3	6	3	2	2	24	14
December	5	8	5	8	4	2	16	10
TOTAL	82	76	82	76	24	27	198	161
Monthly Average	7	6	7	6	2	2	17	13

PARKING PROVISION

- 3.59 The lack of, or poor planning of, parking provision can have a negative impact on the public realm and highway functions. Over-provision and poor management can lead to the inefficient use of land. Under-provision can lead to congestion and clutter on the roads and related access problems. In response, the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Residential Parking Study³¹ was prepared by Dorset County Council, following a study undertaken by consultants.
- 3.60 This study brings forward new maximum, recommended guidelines for residential parking to reflect the reality of car ownership levels in different types of location, and sustainable travel. The study provides robust up-to-date evidence to inform negotiations on development proposals. The study is based on local evidence and gives guidance on the optimum parking space provision that would accommodate the expected demand on a specific site. The approach takes into account the characteristics of the development, its accessibility to facilities and local car ownership levels.
- 3.61 In respect of motorcycle parking for residential development, motorcycles will be able to use car parking spaces in most situations, but in some cases it will be appropriate to provide designated motorcycle parking areas, particularly:
- where there is a high density of development and where car parking is likely to be intensively used; and
 - where demand for motorcycle parking is expected to be significant.
- 3.62 More information in relation to motorcycle parking requirements can be found in the publication 'Manual for Streets'³².

³¹ Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Residential Car Parking Study 2010, www.dorsetforyou.com

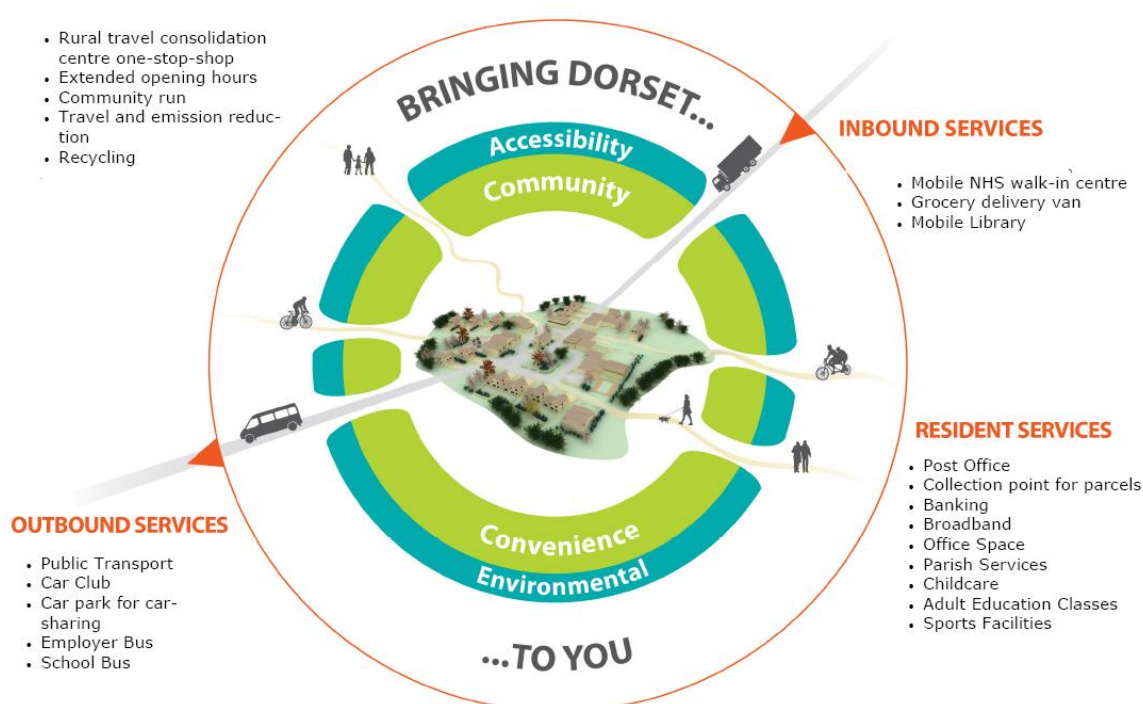
³² Manual for Street, Department for Transport, 2007

- 3.63 With regard to non-residential development, Dorset County Council as the Local Highway Authority has prepared generic parking standards³³ to meet the likely and operational requirements of various establishments and business uses.

TRAVEL EXCHANGES

- 3.64 The continued contraction of rural (and some suburban) commercial bus services coupled with increasing financial constraints means that alternative, innovative and flexible solutions must be sought in these area to maintain and where possible improve levels of accessibility. In such places, a 'Community Travel Exchange' may provide the best solution to deliver mobile services (such as mobile banking and libraries) and co-ordinate outbound travel (for example through demand responsive transport, car clubs, and car sharing). This means the identification of a single centre in the community that can become the focus of such services.

Figure 1.2 Community Travel Exchange



- 3.65 This approach would mean communities having more responsibility in transport initiatives, with appropriate support from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors, and should also bring economic benefits for local businesses. A typical exchange facility could utilise an existing community or village hall. Community travel exchanges will differ depending on the needs of the community; the catchment population; and the provision of existing local services such as shops, and telecommunications. There is scope through the use of Neighbourhood Plans to tailor the needs of each exchange facility.

WATERBORNE TRANSPORT

- 3.66 A study commissioned by the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) partnership and Dorset County Council investigated whether small scale privately operated marine based transport along the coast, integrated with existing transport modes, could provide a sustainable transport option³⁴. Potential routes within the plan area include:

³³ <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=160941&filetype=pdf>

³⁴ www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/our-work/coastal-corridor/waterbornepassesgertransportstudy

- Route 1 – Sidmouth, Seaton, **Lyme Regis, West Bay**
 - Route 3 – **Weymouth and Portland**
- 3.67 The feasibility study indicated that the Dorset and East Devon coast has a demand, as yet substantially untapped, for widening travel choices by including waterborne transport, and that waterborne transport can play a significant role if an environment can be created in which reliable services can operate with useful regularity at an affordable price. The study highlighted a number benefits, particularly for commercial operators but also landward visitor attractions. The study also recognised risks including the potential for higher than anticipated operating costs, higher than anticipated downtime, and demand not materialising at the price point estimated.
- 3.68 Route 1 would require investment in infrastructure, i.e. landing facilities, while route 3 would not require investment in infrastructure as a service could operate from existing facilities. If the infrastructure is provided, the study shows that it is possible to operate a viable commercial service.

UTILITIES

- 3.69 The provision of necessary utilities is necessary before any development can proceed. Such utilities may include energy supplies, water supplies, telecommunications (including broadband), drainage, sewerage, and sewage treatment. Where adequate capacity is not available within existing systems, assurances will be required that the necessary infrastructure will be provided.
- 3.70 In most cases there are established operators and the councils and developers work with these utility service providers to assess the quality and capacity of energy supplies, water supplies, telecommunications, drainage, sewerage, and sewage treatment provision, and their ability to meet forecast demands.

BROADBAND

- 3.71 A modern economy is increasingly reliant on good communications technology. Without modern broadband, business, employment and community development opportunities will be restricted. Away from the conurbation of Bournemouth and Poole, much of Dorset's existing local communications infrastructure, including mobile phone coverage and broadband speeds, are not fit for purpose in the 21st century.
- 3.72 The provision of broadband and electronic communications technology is therefore a key emerging piece of infrastructure. It is important to ensure the continued improvement of the telecommunications network within the plan area provided that it does not have an adverse impact on those features that contribute to the attractiveness and amenity of the area.
- 3.73 One of the government's top priorities is to stimulate private sector investment to deliver the best superfast broadband network in Europe together with increased coverage in the UK by 2015. Monies have been allocated by government to support broadband provision in Dorset together with contributions from all the local authorities within the County³⁵.
- 3.74 The first priority is to improve broadband connectivity and speeds for businesses, particularly those in rural areas. The ultimate goal is to achieve 100% superfast broadband coverage at speeds in excess of 30mbs for all premises in Dorset. This is in line with the Digital Agenda

³⁵ <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/superfast>

for Europe³⁶ where, by 2020, 100% of premises will have at least 30mbs connectivity and 50% of premises will have connectivity of 100Mbs.

- 3.75 It is recognised that for some premises in rural areas, access to superfast broadband may be very difficult to achieve in the short term. For these isolated instances, the goal is to achieve a reasonable level of broadband coverage which will allow participation in society, business and commerce on a day to day basis. These improvements will help deliver significant positive social impacts through improved access to information and services online with particular benefits to the inclusion of remote communities and key groups such including older people.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- 3.76 Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. However, telecommunications development, particularly in rural areas raises a number of issues. While telecommunication networks can bring substantial benefits to both business and social users in rural areas, such development, if insensitively sited can detract enormously from the natural landscape and setting. The numbers of radio and telecommunications masts and the sites for such installations can be kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network. Existing masts, buildings and other structures can also be used.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- 3.77 The development of renewable energy is now legally required and encouraged by a host of emerging and existing international, national and local policies. The updated Renewable Energy Strategy for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole³⁷ provides a relevant and focused strategic framework for the development of renewable energy in Dorset.
- 3.78 The strategy for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole proposes an aspirational target of 15%, but focuses on a 'secondary target' of 7.5% for the proportion of total energy demand that will be met from local renewable energy resources, over which we have more influence and control. This recognises that half of the aspirational target is expected to be met from the national projects. The 7.5% target equates to the area having enough local renewable energy resources to generate just under 1,200 GWh of energy per year – enough to power about 250,000 homes or to heat around 85,000 homes. As part of the strategy's preparation, an assessment of potential local renewable energy resources in Dorset has been carried out to confirm that this could be achieved.
- 3.79 Evidence to support the delivery of renewable energy technology comes from the Local Energy Plan for West Dorset³⁸. The plan has mapped all existing renewable energy installations in West Dorset and identifies potential locations for large scale renewable energy technology, taking into consideration local constraints and renewable energy resources e.g. landscape and wind speed. Without some larger scale renewable energy projects being built in the area, there is unlikely to be a shift in energy consumption of any significant scale away from fossil fuels. This piece of evidence will be used to help consider whether the locations of renewable energy proposals are suitable.
- 3.80 Annual Monitoring Reports record the annual renewable energy installed by type. Table 1.6 below shows the installed capacity for 2012.

³⁶ Digital Agenda for Europe, European Commission, May 2010

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/documents/digital-agenda-communication-en.pdf

³⁷ Renewable Energy Strategy for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole, www.dorsetforyou.com

³⁸ West Dorset Local Energy Plan, Regen South West, 2011, www.dorsetforyou.com

- 3.81 A key consideration in determining the suitability of sites for renewable energy development is the high quality local environment which is a major asset. It does present challenges in ensuring that the planning and siting of renewable energy systems is sensitive to this but it does not necessarily preclude all forms of renewable energy production. Their impact on the local environment, including the impact on the landscape character and rural amenity of the countryside or resident population will need to be demonstrated. The potential impacts of any large scale project on the local environment would need to be considered carefully as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

Table 1.6 Total Renewable Energy Installed Capacity, 2012

WEST DORSET			WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND		
Type	Electricity generation (MW)	Thermal generation (MW)	Type	Electricity generation (MW)	Thermal generation (MW)
Biomass	-	1.089	Biomass	-	0.270
Heat Pumps	-	0.460	Heat Pumps	-	0.156
Onshore Wind	0.097	-	Onshore Wind	0.0645	-
Small Hydro	0.007	-	Small Hydro	0.0150	-
Solar Photovoltaic	5.398	0.231	Solar Photovoltaic	0.1161	-
Anaerobic Digestion	0.480	-	Anaerobic Digestion	-	-
Solar Thermal	-	0.231	Solar Thermal	-	0.027
Total	7.993	2.011	Total	0.1956	0.453

- 3.82 The principle of smaller-scale renewable energy proposals across the plan area will be supported, depending on local circumstances. Such schemes are likely to be easier to integrate with the highly valued natural and built environment and make an important contribution towards the target for installed capacity. There may be the potential for the growth of energy crops and the use of agricultural or forestry residues for biomass boilers or for neighbourhood-scale decentralised renewable or low-carbon energy sources, such as combined heat and power schemes.
- 3.83 Opportunities for district heating systems have been examined in detail in Bridport, Chickerell, Dorchester and Sherborne. The settlement strategy supports significant new housing and employment growth potential in these areas. In Weymouth & Portland, there could be further opportunities linked to development sites in Weymouth Town Centre i.e. where pipes can be laid at the same time as other utilities and heat distribution systems can be fitted when properties are built.
- 3.84 There are also potential opportunities for new developments to fund investments in standalone renewables through developers being authorised to provide a proportion of carbon savings through offsite “allowable solutions”. Such community-led solutions have the potential to provide significant environmental, economic and social benefits at the local level, which help to address global concerns. Further work is required to fully support community-led schemes through the use of planning obligations such as the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 3.85 There is also considerable potential for making use of renewable energy in non-domestic buildings, both for retro-fitting and as part of new build. Public and community buildings, and infrastructure (e.g. schools, council offices, street lighting, and village halls) could be ideal exemplars for renewable energy installations. There is also significant potential for demand reductions from the commercial sector to contribute towards the carbon reduction target.

- 3.86 The recent introduction of financial incentives, such as the 'Feed in Tariff' has seen installation rates of certain renewable electricity technologies grow significantly. Integrated renewable energy has an important role to play mainly in reducing energy demand in new and existing buildings. The retro-fitting of existing properties with renewable energy technology will be encouraged to reduce overall carbon emissions.
- 3.87 Planning permission is no longer required for some microgeneration technologies on homes and buildings in gardens. Permitted development rights are subject to the equipment being sited to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the area (so far as practicable). Planning permission is still needed if permitted development rights have been removed by planning condition, and there are more stringent requirements in conservation areas and on listed buildings. Proposals involving listed buildings will normally require listed building consent in any case, which will not be forthcoming if the proposals adversely affect the historic character or appearance of the building.

4 CONSULTATION: WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD US

- 4.1 Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is an essential component of plan preparation.
- 4.2 Through the previous work on the two Councils' Local Plans; the production of the Community Plan and more recently the joint Local Plan, both councils have already carried out several consultation events gauging local views on the future of the plan area.
- 4.3 In 2007, both councils undertook 'Issues and Options' consultation which established the vision and objectives for the plan area. In 2009, Weymouth & Portland Borough Council undertook further consultation on a series of policy options, and West Dorset consulted on options for growth around Weymouth. These policy options were developed from the findings of the previous consultation stage and the emerging evidence base.
- 4.4 In 2011, the two councils decided that the best way forward for preparing replacement local planning policy would be through a new Joint Local Plan. The joint plan would set the strategic context for development across both local authority areas and deal with a range of policies and sites in detail. Members agreed that the work already undertaken in the preparation of replacement planning policy (including the research and consultation results) should be used to inform the preparation of the new plan.
- 4.5 Intensive consultation took place with a range of businesses, organisations and members of the public during the autumn and winter of 2011. Consultation covered West Dorset District and Weymouth & Portland Borough. A series of events were held, discussing a range of topics. The headline issues relating to Community Needs and Infrastructure are given below:
- the provision of public transport - particularly in rural areas where access to reliable services is limited.
 - the need for strategic road enhancements/safeguarding;
 - the importance of locating housing and employment in sustainable locations;
 - improving the provision of broadband, particularly in rural areas;
 - providing infrastructure head of development where feasible/viable;
 - recognising the importance of education and leisure to sustainable development;
 - the approach to delivering renewable energy.
- 4.6 After these events, people got together to put forward their ideas. They formed smaller 'working groups' and met on one or two occasions. Comments were invited on the suggestions put forward by the working groups. Other key agencies involved in planning such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Highways Agency were also asked to comment on these ideas. A summary of the working group findings in relation to this background paper are given in the table below. For more information on the consultation so far, please see the Issues and Options consultation summary report.
- 4.7 The working group findings were used to help shape new policies being drafted for the Local Plan. A pre-submission draft Local Plan was prepared during the spring of 2012 and agreed by both councils in April-May 2012 for consultation. The pre-submission plan contained a number of detailed Development Management policies covering various themed chapters as well as sites specific policies for the main towns and areas of growth. The pre-submission plan was consulted upon during June and July of that year. Full details of this consultation can be found online at www.dorsetforyou.com/newlocalplan/west/weymouth

Table 1.8 Summary of consultation findings relating to Community Needs & Infrastructure

WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND ISSUES & OPTIONS 2007 AND PREFERRED OPTIONS 2009	WEST DORSET ISSUES & OPTIONS 2007	JOINT LOCAL PLAN MULTI-ISSUE CONSULTATION – 2011	JOINT LOCAL PLAN PRE-SUBMISSION 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New community halls and sports facilities are the most requested community facilities • Most important sustainable future transport modes = rail improvements and park and ride. • Opportunities for sport, walking and cycling provision considered sufficient. • Most common healthcare requirement = NHS dentists. • Most favoured renewable energy technology = wind. • Top transport priorities = enhancing road, rail and maritime links. • Increased pedestrianisation in Weymouth Town Centre. • Support to lower the threshold of development to improve the provision of open space in new development. • Support for approximately 50 allotment plots in the Littlemoor area. • Support for a sub-regional athletics centre at the Marsh. • Objection to proposals for an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the provision of more demand responsive bus services; • Support for real time passenger information to be installed on key routes, more frequent rural bus services, and bus provision by large employers to collect workers from outlying villages; • Support for permanent park and ride facility in Dorchester and other market towns; • Little support for limiting the amount of parking provided through development in the district, but more support for limiting the amount of parking provided through developments where there is access to facilities and other forms of transport; • Support for alternatives to reduce car use; • Consensus that the provision of community facilities in the District’s towns is not adequate; • Strong support for shops, post offices, mobile shopping facilities and halls in villages; • Key villages need to improve their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility in applying planning contributions/make all development eligible for contributions to CIL • Support decentralised renewable energy& renewable energy in Poundbury • Provide local benefits from renewable energy generation • Support energy efficiency measures and renewable energy in new development • Protect/not identify areas for large scale renewable energy development • Support a target for renewable energy generation. • Using contributions from CIL to support community energy schemes, improved broadband provision, homeworking • Allocate/safeguard land in all communities for community halls • Support the provision of meadows, woodlands and pastures in new development, support the provision of local food hubs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current evidence base is not up-to-date in respect of outdoor sport supply and demand. • There is a lack of flexibility for the provision of indoor/outdoor sports facilities where the needs outweigh the loss. The policy (as drafted) only allows the replacement of facilities to suitable locations where there is a deficiency in provision in that location. • The Local Plan should give greater weight to protect and enhance footpaths and bridleways. • No reference is made to the provision of parking for motorcycles. • There are no environmental safeguards to the renewable energy policy.

<p>educational academy on Portland because of fears on local infrastructure; impact on nature conservation and increased traffic causing damage to the Fleet SAC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for parking and network management; car parking reductions; walking, cycling and public transport. • Support improved functionality of the park & ride site at Mount Pleasant. • Support for the principle of new town centre bus routes and strategic cycle networks. • Strong objection to a proposal for Bus Rapid Transport, which would re-use the Rodwell Trail as a public transport corridor. • Support from the RSPB, Dorset County Council and Dorset Wildlife Trust to remove the Western Relief Road safeguarding. • Support for all new development to contribute towards a wider package of planning obligations. 	<p>self – containment, support for small scale facilities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of facilities for young people; • Support for sports and leisure facilities in specific settlements including; • Retaining existing facilities is important. • The Harbourside/Esplanade and in particular Custom House Quay would benefit from increased pedestrianisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver site specific needs and deficiencies in open space, sport and recreational facility typologies, providing provision standards for allotments. • Protect playing fields from development • Safeguard public transport links and infrastructure, maximise rail interchanges • Incorporate cycle paths and footways in new development. • Provide cycle parking in town centres and outside public buildings. • Protect important existing transport hubs. • Identify possible routes for bridleways and expand bridleways • Make sure affordable housing and infrastructure are priorities. • Safeguard corridors for future road schemes. • Identify and allocate park & ride and secure parking. • Support the expansion of education and training. 	
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CONCLUSIONS – KEY ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.8 Based on this review of background information and consultation findings; the key aims for community needs and infrastructure within the plan area are:
- That community facilities are important to the wellbeing and sustainability of towns and villages. Where new facilities are proposed, careful consideration of their location should be given to help ensure social interaction as well as minimise the need to travel by car. Proposals which result in the loss of existing local facilities should consider the changing needs in society against the business case for their retention.
 - To recognise that mixed use development (which include community facilities) can contribute towards creating self contained sustainable communities and should be considered where possible and practical creating attractive and vibrant places to live.
 - To recognise the importance of the strategic highway network and recent investment in transport infrastructure;
 - To provide a safe transport route network for all types of travel; provide choices for “greener” travel options where practical and build upon recent investment.
 - To recognise that some community facilities or infrastructure provide a much wider, strategic role in our communities, such as flood defences, the strategic road and rail network and communications technologies.
 - To plan for infrastructure, with development contributing towards their delivery through either planning obligations or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

5 POLICY OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES CONSIDERED

- 5.1 In plan-making there are usually alternative approaches to any proposed policy. It is important to consider these in order to justify the preferred approach. The following section sets out the reasonable strategic alternative policy options considered in relation to the Community Needs and Infrastructure chapter of the joint Local Plan.
- 5.2 Further consideration of these policy options are given in the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal where each of the policy options are measured against a set of sustainability objectives.

MAKING SURE NEW DEVELOPMENT MAKES SUITABLE PROVISION FOR COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5.3 Ensuring community facilities are provided alongside development is a key component of sustainable development. Where practicable, planning obligations will often help deliver these facilities to ensure that the impact of new development is appropriately mitigated. It is important that policies do not discourage development; therefore the application of a criteria-based approach is important.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B	POLICY OPTION C
To seek planning obligations on larger developments only.	To seek planning obligations from all development types.	To seek planning obligations from all development types (except for affordable housing and community facilities)

- 5.4 The quantum and scale of development often has a bearing on the ability to deliver planning obligations, and viability assessments are commonly used to establish what forms of development can contribute and whether thresholds can be applied to avoid the application of unreasonable charges. Policy Option A seeks planning obligations on larger development sites only with a threshold to be defined. This approach would avoid any risk of deterring small scale windfall development. The disadvantage of this approach is that the costs of infrastructure provision could be loaded onto the larger developments, and therefore, the cumulative impact of smaller developments would not be addressed by developers.
- 5.5 Policy Option B could be used to obtain planning obligation payments from affordable housing as well as open market housing and other development types. This would reflect the fact that occupiers of affordable housing often share the same infrastructure and community facilities. However, affordable housing is a planning obligation in its own right, and is difficult to achieve without public subsidy. Taking this policy approach could be a significant deterrent to the delivery of affordable housing, particularly rural exception sites for 100% affordable housing.
- 5.6 Policy Option C addresses the cumulative impacts of smaller development as well as the need for on-site provision of facilities on larger sites. It does not seek contributions from affordable housing development and community facilities, in recognition of the costs of providing affordable housing and the fact that the latter is sought as a planning obligation in its own right. This approach is consistent with the policy position for obtaining planning obligations in the West Dorset District Council 2006 Adopted Local Plan.

OPTION 'C' WAS THE PREFERRED APPROACH TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN

NEW OR IMPROVED LOCAL COMMUNITY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

- 5.7 Community facilities are important as they contribute to the social well being of the community by providing places to meet, interact and socialise. The future growth in homes and employment will lead to a need for new community buildings and structures. This growth may not be readily accommodated within existing town, village or local centres. The following policy options have considered how best to deal with this issue.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B
Providing community buildings within or adjoining settlements or through the re-use of rural buildings.	Providing community buildings within or adjoining settlements only.

- 5.8 Many community uses are required on a daily or very frequent basis, so it is important that they are close to where people live. Others are required less often, and may be best located close to each other enabling people to visit several different facilities in a single journey. Policy Option A recognises this and supports new community buildings and structures within or adjoining settlements i.e. towns and villages - an approach which matches the Local Plan settlement strategy. This policy approach could support the creation of larger, more centralised facilities that could incorporate a wider range of services. Option A also supports the re-use of rural buildings for community related uses. Applying this policy should result in a greater provision of facilities that are closer to the needs of the end user. As such there should be greater opportunities to travel by non-car modes.
- 5.9 Policy Option B does not support the re-use of rural buildings. This in turn would result in a less permissive approach to proposals in rural areas and a greater reliance for people living in these areas to travel (more often) using less sustainable modes of transport. Less access to community facilities could result in a lower quality of life.

OPTION 'A' WAS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN

THE RETENTION OF EXISTING LOCAL COMMUNITY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

- 5.10 The planning system cannot prevent local community facilities closing, but it can protect against a change of use. However, an empty and derelict building may be considered a greater problem to the local community than an alternative use. It is recognised that such facilities are usually lost because it is no longer viable to provide them. Although under some circumstances, particularly in the case of local shops and public houses, an alternative management regime and/or diversification of the business can result in long-term viability of the facility being secured. The following policy options apply to the retention of existing local community facilities.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B	POLICY OPTION C
Protect all community buildings from change of use.	Protect all community buildings from change of use unless it can be proven the existing and alternative community uses are no longer needed or will not be viable.	Not protect community buildings from change of use.

- 5.11 Policy Option A would mean that if a community facility were relocated to new larger premises in the same settlement, the old building could only be changed to another community use. This could potentially provide opportunities for the provision of new community facilities and retain the mix of uses in settlements, including the retention of centrally located buildings in community use. However it could discourage the provision of new or improved facilities as the sale of the original building for housing often provides a significant source of funding towards the development of a new facility.
- 5.12 Policy Option B also seeks to prevent changes of use, but takes a more permissive approach recognising that the retention of community uses is not always viable. This policy option would allow change of use of where it can be demonstrated that the retention of the existing use is not viable and that appropriate alternative community facilities have been explored and are either not needed as a result or unviable.
- 5.13 Policy Option C does not protect against the loss of community uses. Again, this option recognises that community uses are not always viable, and would allow a wider range of alternative uses if a community use fails or is relocated. However, it would give no protection to community facilities in situations where the facility is viable but an alternative use would enable the property to be sold for a greater amount, or where the facility would be viable under different management. The loss of local community facilities and services can have a detrimental effect on a community’s ability to meet its day to day needs.

OPTION ‘B’ WAS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

NEW OR IMPROVED LOCAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

- 5.14 Recent trends towards increased leisure time, greater mobility, increasing popularity of active pursuits and a greater disposable income have led to a rising demand for recreational facilities. Furthermore, new development results in new homes being occupied by people who are likely to use public open space and sports facilities from time to time. The following policy options consider the most appropriate means of delivering these new recreational facilities.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B
Provide facilities in locations where they are most accessible to the population they serve only.	Provide facilities in the most appropriate locations and support facilities in coastal and countryside locations.

- 5.15 Policy Option A would mean that new recreational facilities would be provided in locations where they are accessible to the local catchment. Typically, this would limit development opportunities to sites within or the edge of existing settlements. This would be contrary to the objectives of sustainable development.
- 5.16 There are a variety of open spaces and sports provided across the plan area, some of which are dependent on the physical landscape characterises such as access to the sea or countryside. Policy Option A would result in less open space and recreational facilities coming forwards in these areas, thus putting greater pressure on the quality and provision of existing facilities.
- 5.17 Policy Option B provides a more flexible approach recognising the appropriateness of the location to the development and the demand for a range of recreational facilities in the countryside which require associated buildings and structures and access to the water.

OPTION ‘B’ WAS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

THE RETENTION OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

- 5.18 Recreational open space and buildings can be hard to replace, particularly because their value and availability in accessible built-up locations can be hard to come by.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B
Restrict development on or change of use of open spaces and recreational facilities under certain circumstances.	Allow development on or change of use of open spaces and recreational facilities.

- 5.19 Policy Option A recognises that such facilities should normally be retained but gives consideration to re-using them to meet other needs for recreation in the wider community. The policy approach recognises that retention may not be the best option, particularly if the development proposal adds recreational value i.e. allows redevelopment for other sporting or community uses, or it can be demonstrated that the proposal does not affect the number, size and quality of existing sites. This proposal is in line with National Planning Policy and existing Local Plan practice.
- 5.20 Policy Option B allows development on or change of use of open space and recreational facilities. This approach would recognise that protecting against the loss of open space and recreational facilities would recognise that such uses are not always viable, and would allow a wider range of alternative uses if a recreational use fails or is relocated. This approach would be contrary to national policy and potentially reduce the finite opportunities that exist for recreation within settlements.

OPTION 'A' WAS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

CHANGES AS A RESULT OF THE PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION

- 5.21 In response to consultation on the Pre-Submission Local Plan, this policy will continue with Policy Option A, but will also allow other recreational uses (indoor and outdoor) where the benefit to the development of sport outweighs the detriment caused by the loss of open space or recreational facilities. It would also support proposals which are better placed to the community it serves and where there is clear community benefit.

THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING FACILITIES

- 5.22 Population growth and future residential development will put pressure on many existing educational facilities. When these facilities become overstretched the most cost effective solution is to extend existing school buildings. However this approach often requires the redevelopment of school playing fields. Policies must therefore consider the balance between providing appropriate education provision and suitable recreational facilities.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B
Support the provision of new/replacement facilities or the expansion of existing education and training facilities onto playing fields where appropriate.	Support the provision of new/replacement facilities, but ensure that all existing school playing fields are retained.

- 5.23 Policy Option A is intended to support this demand by allowing new or extended facilities to be built to serve the needs of the local catchment. Existing facilities such as playing fields are often lost as a result of education expansion - this policy approach ensures that re-provision is made in order to avoid a net loss of provision. This approach is in line with the National

Planning Policy Framework which seeks to ensure that the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.

- 5.24 Policy Option B would allow the provision of educational facilities on existing playing fields/open space without compensation or re-provision. While this could support the necessary expansion due to planned growth, it could result in an undersupply of appropriate open space for the needs of the schools placing increased demand on other (perhaps unsuitable resources) which may not be suitably located.

OPTION ‘A’ WAS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

CREATING A SAFE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORT NETWORK

- 5.25 Nearly all journeys made in the plan area use the highway network, whether by car, lorry, bus, bicycle or on foot. It is therefore essential that the overall highway network be managed in an efficient and effective manner. The Local Plan has a strategic objective to provide greater opportunities to reduce car use; improve safety; ensure convenient and appropriate public transport services; and seek greater network efficiency for pedestrians and cyclists. Policy making has to consider the needs of all road users and the implications of new development on existing infrastructure.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B
<p>Locate development that generates significant movement where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes will be maximised. Ensure road safety is not compromised as a result of new development and ensure that the strategic cycle network and public rights of way are supported.</p>	<p>There are no alternative realistic options.</p>

- 5.26 Policy Option A is intended to ensure that development does not compromise road safety, it can be safely accessed, and the surrounding road network is suitable to carry the volume of traffic that will be generated. In addition to road safety considerations, the impact of development proposals which involve a large number of people and trips often made by car will require the submission of a travel plan.
- 5.27 Policy Option B would be to not include a policy which recognises the impact of increased traffic on the highway network and would mean that development proposals could cause unnecessary traffic congestion, road safety problems and community severance leading to a progressive deterioration of the highway network. This option would also have a detrimental impact on local amenity.

OPTION ‘A’ WAS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

CHANGES AS A RESULT OF MORE INFORMATION

- 5.28 Policy option A remains the preferred approach, but in addition, development should be located where the need to travel will be minimised and where the use of sustainable transport modes will be maximised in order to reduce impacts on the highway network. This will conform with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

TRANSPORT INTERCHANGES AND COMMUNITY TRAVEL EXCHANGES

- 5.29 Transport interchanges play an important role as the gateways for commuters and visitors to our key settlements. For convenience, they are located in the heart of a settlement but more recently, there has been a trend for park & ride facilities in edge of centre locations. Both transport interchanges and park & ride aim to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in key towns.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B
Support the provision of community travel exchanges and proposals for public realm enhancement in existing interchange locations.	Not support the provision of community travel exchanges.

- 5.30 Policy Option A encourages the improvement of public realm in these areas in order to enhance their attraction as gateway sites. Secondly, this policy approach intends to provide a solution to the growing contraction of rural and some suburban commercial bus services and increasing financial constraints on the use of private car. The policy would support the greater use of existing community facilities as 'hubs' and improve levels of service and linked mode connectivity.
- 5.31 Policy Option B would not support the provision of community travel exchanges. This would result in a greater need for people living in rural areas to travel by car in order to meet their shopping needs. It would also mean that existing community facilities which could be consolidated or retained as a central hub may be lost as demand reduces due their peripheral location.

OPTION 'A' WAS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

PARKING STANDARDS IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 5.32 Parking policies have an important role in ensuring that land is used efficiently. Parking standards have been applied by the Councils for a number of years. The following policy approaches have been considered to take forward parking provision from new development.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B
Apply varying standards that take into account the different parking needs and local circumstances and the nature of the development proposed.	Apply standard parking provision requirements, in accordance with established practices for residential and non residential development.

- 5.33 Policy Option A intends to find the correct balance of parking provision in new residential development in order to avoid negative impacts on public realm and highway functions. This policy proposes to employ methodology specific to the location in which it is applied rather than a standard amount of parking to be provided on all residential developments. The policy is likely to provide a more accurate estimation of parking provision taking into consideration the characteristics of the development such as its accessibility to facilities and local car ownership levels.
- 5.34 Policy Option B would involve applications being considered against a general 'plan-wide' standard of parking provision for residential and non-residential development. The benefits of this option would be that it would be more straightforward to use, but would not fully

take into account the varying accessibility of different locations within the plan area and the varying characteristics of different developments.

OPTION 'A' WAS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

THE PROVISION OF UTILITIES SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5.35 National planning policy requires local authorities to work with utility service providers to assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B	POLICY OPTION C
Permit development where inadequate infrastructure capacity can be overcome; require broadband infrastructure on housing allocations.	Permit development where inadequate infrastructure capacity can be overcome; require broadband infrastructure through planning obligations.	Permit development regardless of whether inadequate infrastructure capacity can be overcome;

- 5.36 The purpose to Policy Option A policy is to ensure that planned development is deliverable, by requiring necessary utilities infrastructure, e.g. energy, water, draining, telecommunications and sewage treatment be provided where inadequate capacity exists within existing systems. The policy option also acknowledges the importance of supporting broadband infrastructure in new development and coincides with a Government allocation of funding to roll out improved broadband connectivity in Dorset. A requirement for provision on-site will ensure that new development can benefit beyond the programme of improvements.
- 5.37 Policy Option B proposes a similar approach to Policy Option A. The distinct difference being that the provision of broadband is not a direct requirement on-site, instead delivered through planning obligations e.g. the Contributions Infrastructure Levy. This approach was considered ahead of the Government's decision to invest in providing Superfast Broadband in Dorset. Had this not have occurred, the cost of providing this provision would have been a considerable charge on development and may not have been fulfilled in light of other planning obligation priorities such as affordable housing and flood defence.
- 5.38 Policy Option C would effectively allow development regardless of whether there are infrastructure capacity constraints. This option may result in an ad-hoc approach to delivery resulting in an inadequate standard of service infrastructure to meet the needs of new and existing development.

OPTION 'A' WAS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

- 5.39 Studies have shown that there is considerable potential to generate renewable energy from within the plan area, but the high quality environment is a major asset and presents challenges in ensuring that renewable energy systems and planned properly. The following options consider these competing demands.
- 5.40 Policy Option A supports the Councils in meeting their proposed target of 7% renewable energy by 2020. The policy recognises the wealth of potential renewable energy resources available in the plan area and the constraints of the local environment. As such, the policy recognises the need for proposals to be allowed only where their impact on the landscape and townscape can be satisfactorily assimilated.

POLICY OPTION A	POLICY OPTION B	POLICY OPTION C	POLICY OPTION D
Support in principle proposals for generating heat or electricity from renewable energy sources where it is appropriate for the location.	Support in principle proposals for generating heat or electricity from renewable energy sources in all locations but excluding the Dorset AONB.	Support in principle proposals for generating heat or electricity from renewable energy sources in all locations, regardless of other constraints.	Apply an approach requiring certain types of development to provide a proportion of renewable energy on site.

- 5.41 Policy Option B proposes to restrict the location of renewable energy development because of the landscape and visual importance of the AONB. This option would preserve the most vulnerable locations from development such as wind farms. However, this approach could significantly reduce the ability to generate enough renewable energy to meet the proposed target of 7.5%.
- 5.42 Policy Option C proposes not to set any restrictions on where proposals for renewable energy development could be deemed acceptable. This would mean that the Council could meet its target for generating renewable energy development more quickly, however, this option would have strong negative impacts on landscape and townscape interests.
- 5.43 Policy Option D proposes that renewable energy generation be a direct requirement of new development through a prescribed set of thresholds and targets. However this approach is often difficult to apply and may result in the cheapest and least appropriate technology being installed to meet the target. Furthermore, Code for Sustainable Homes is likely to provide a more effective approach to delivering on-site renewable energy technology.
- 5.44 Policy Option E proposes to weigh up the sustainability of renewable energy development by considering the benefits against the harm that may arise as a result. The option seeks to reduce adverse impacts by way of mitigation.

OPTION 'A' WAS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

CHANGES AS A RESULT OF THE PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION

- 5.45 In response to consultation on the Pre-Submission Local Plan, this policy will continue with Policy Option A but will make clear the need to also consider environmental safeguards and mitigation such as the protection of designated wildlife sites, nature conservation interests and biodiversity. The policy will also weigh up the benefits of renewable energy development against the harm caused.