

## EASTERN AREA (DORCHESTER, CROSSWAYS & SURROUNDS)

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### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This background paper focuses on the site specific proposals and allocations for the Eastern area. The Eastern area covers the county town of Dorchester and its surrounding villages within West Dorset. The area immediately adjoining Weymouth is considered in another background paper.
- 1.2 The overall strategy for development is contained within the background paper on the Sustainable Pattern of Development. The conclusions from the overall strategy were that the distribution of development should take account of:
- the needs, size, and roles of the area’s settlements, taking into account any current imbalances
  - the benefits of concentrating most development in locations where homes, jobs and facilities will be easily accessible to each other and there is a choice of transport modes;
  - the availability of land, and whether it has been previously developed (brownfield);
  - the environmental constraints of the plan area (including landscape and nature conservation designations and areas of flood risk and coastal erosion).

### 2 LOCAL STRATEGIES

#### CORPORATE PLANS

- 2.1 The corporate plans 2013 – 2017 for West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council were adopted in June 2013. Preparation of the new Local Plan is one of the corporate priorities under the Environment aim in both plans. The Local Plan also includes policies and proposals meeting priorities under the Economy and Communities aims, as well as others under the Environment aim. These priorities include providing development land for employment; supporting town centres; delivering affordable housing and providing transport, communications and community infrastructure.

- 2.2 Specific priority actions relating to this area of the district include the implementation of the Dorchester town centre retail development, Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan, and replacement park-and-ride site for Dorchester.

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## COMMUNITY PLANNING

- 2.3 The West Dorset Partnership is a partnership of voluntary and community, public and private sector organisations working together to improve the quality of life in the district. It includes partners from the various Local Area Partnerships, so that they can feed in priorities that need to be considered at a district-wide level. The West Dorset Community Plan was reviewed in 2010 to provide a long-term strategy for the local area, for the period up to 2026. It included a vision for Dorchester, which was to:

- Enhance its role as county town and a quality sub-regional centre with good quality public transport links to the surrounding towns and rural areas
- Achieve a balance between housing and jobs by further housing development to provide choice for people to live and work locally and help reduce commuting
- Develop the offer of retail, health, cultural, leisure and community facilities, including significant redevelopment in the town centre, and environmental and traffic management improvements in the town
- Encourage development that is to a high standard of design that promotes the character and heritage that is special to Dorchester

- 2.4 The Dorchester Area Community Plan is a plan for the wider Dorchester area, covering 49 surrounding parishes including many of the larger villages in the district. The current action plan (<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=138062&filetype=pdf>) covers the period 2009-2012 and is soon to be reviewed and rolled forward. The main aims from the 2009 plan that were outstanding at its last review were:

- To encourage an increase the supply of affordable homes in the area
- To encourage an increase energy efficiency and sustainability of housing stock in the area
- To encourage an increase in the supply of rentable social housing for families and those on low wages
- To support local parishes to develop Neighbourhood plans where appropriate
- To identify the impacts of new housing development on the local infrastructure and ensure they are fully considered when planning applications are appraised
- To maintain the character of the built environment in the partnership area
- To implement the Dorchester Traffic & Environment Plan (DTEP).
- To improve signage between Dorchester West & South Stations
- To promote use of Park & Ride services in Dorchester
- To increase provision of cycle paths, and safe cycle lanes, in Dorchester and the villages.
- To increase number of long & short stay parking spaces to give full access to all amenities in Dorchester
- To improve high speed broadband in Dorchester and surrounding villages.
- To improve and promote environmentally sustainable living in Dorchester and the surrounding parishes.
- To improve air quality in town by reducing traffic through town
- To support the protection of wildlife and the natural environment in Dorchester and the surrounding areas
- To retain local facilities and services including Post Offices /Shops/ Libraries/Pubs.
- To maintain and improve a variety of shops in town centre.

- To boost the tourism economy, support all year round tourism in the area by promoting Dorchester and the surrounding area as a place to visit.
- To explore opportunities and potential support which can be offered for small business/community interest companies start ups.
- To reduce anti- social behaviour, crime and fear of crime in the area
- To promote healthy life style changes for all ages.
- To establish a dedicated performing and visual arts gallery / theatre in Dorchester.
- To maintain and support local play, sport and leisure facilities.
- Promote the rich heritage of Dorchester and the surrounding area.
- To improve leisure, social and cultural activities and facilities in Dorchester and the surrounding villages for children and young people.

2.5 There are parish plans for many of the villages in the area. The completed plans are ticked in the table below, and those in preparation are marked with an asterisk.

Abbotsbury (Chesil Bank)	✓	Maiden Newton / Frome Vauchurch	✓
Bradford Peverell	✓	Martinstown (Winterborne St Martin)	
Broadmayne / West Knighton	✓	Osmington	✓
Buckland Newton	*	Owermoigne	✓
Cattistock	✓	Piddlehinton (Piddle Valley)	✓
Cerne Abbas	✓	Piddletrethide (Piddle Valley)	✓
Charlton Down		Portesham (Chesil Bank)	✓
Charminster		Puddletown	*
Cheselborne	✓	Stratton	✓
Crossways	✓	Sydling St Nicholas	
Dewlish	✓	Toller Porcorum	✓
Evershot	✓	Tolpuddle	*
Fleet (Chesil Bank)	✓	Plush (Piddle Valley)	
Frampton	✓	West Stafford	
Litton Cheney	✓	Winterbourne Abbas / Steepleton	
Langton Herring (Chesil Bank)	✓	White Lackington (Piddle Valley)	✓
		Warmwell	✓

2.6 These parish plans include various local priority actions, with common themes being picked up in the Dorchester area and West Dorset community plans. None highlight the need for significant development, although most refer to needs for more affordable housing, especially for young people, and a number propose to establish local housing or neighbourhood plan groups. Other common themes were the needs for better public transport, improved recreation and other community facilities, improved broadband and small-scale employment units.

#### ADJOINING LOCAL PLANS

2.7 Paragraphs 178-181 of the National Planning Policy Framework highlight the importance of joint working to meet development requirements that cannot be wholly met within a single local planning area, through either joint planning policies or informal strategies such as infrastructure and investment plans. The guidance states that ‘Local planning authorities should work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans’. The NPPF also refers to the cooperation between county and district authorities in delivering sustainable development.

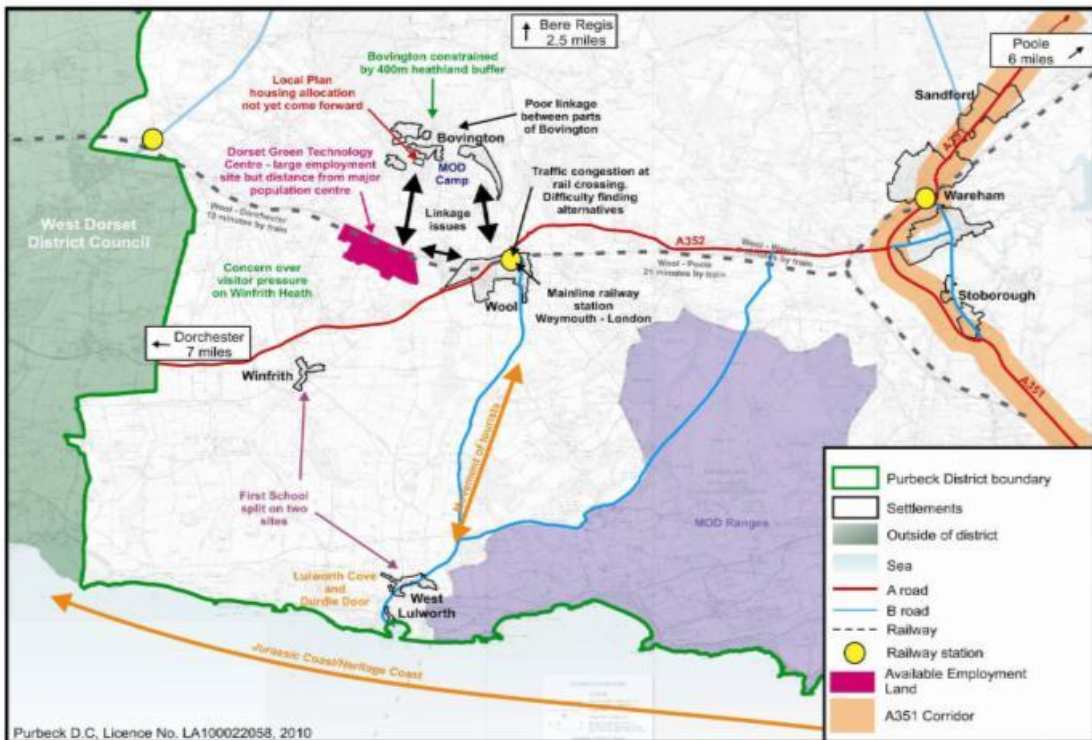
2.8 The introduction to the local plan includes a section on the duty to cooperate. It highlights that the joint plan shows how the cross-boundary issues between Weymouth and the adjoining areas of West Dorset are being addressed. This primarily relates to growth at Littlemoor. It also identified three further areas where West Dorset District Council is liaising on cross-boundary working. These are:

- Lyme Regis / Uplyme working with East Devon District Council
- Crossways / Moreton working with Purbeck District Council
- Edge of Yeovil working with South Somerset District Council

**PURBECK**

2.9 Purbeck District Council has produced a Local Plan (Part 1) for its area, which sets out the strategic vision and planning policies for Purbeck for the period 2006 - 2027. The plan was adopted on 13 November 2012.

2.10 The south-western part of Purbeck adjoins the eastern area, and no major proposals have been proposed for the areas immediately adjoining the boundary. In the general area, the plan proposes that the settlements of Wool, Bovington, Winfrith Newburgh and West Lulworth will provide the focus for service provision, where development will be managed through the use of settlement boundaries. Further development within the existing employment site of up to 20 hectares at Dorset Green Technology Park is also planned.



2.11 At the examination held in April 2012, the proposed development close to the boundary with Purbeck contained in the draft West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland local plan, was brought to the attention of the Inspector.

2.12 Following the adoption of Part 1 of the Local Plan, Purbeck District Council will undertake a Partial Review to further investigate ways of meeting housing needs. The Partial Review will plan for growth in the medium to longer term and will be started during 2013. The Partial Review will need to consider the following:

- A district housing target that seeks to address local housing needs as identified in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment, with associated mitigation measures, tested against the Habitats Regulations and transport constraints;
  - The contribution Purbeck makes to meeting the housing and employment needs of Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole;
  - The role of Purbeck in facilitating strategic growth at Crossways as proposed in the emerging West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan;
  - Additional settlement extensions to help satisfy Purbeck’s housing needs;
  - A longer term strategic view to Green Belt including the potential to identify land for future growth;
  - Identifying opportunities to work with large landowners to ensure that the cumulative impact of new housing in the countryside provides opportunities to improve the sustainability of rural settlements, enhance landscape character and biodiversity and provide mitigation measures for European protected sites;
  - The enhancement of biodiversity and habitats.
- 2.13 The plan notes that West Dorset District Council (WDDC) is proposing strategic growth at Crossways. It states that Purbeck District Council will work with WDDC to help deliver the associated infrastructure that is required in Purbeck District, in particular links to Moreton railway station.
- 2.14 Although cross-boundary working will be essential to integrating Moreton Station with any proposed growth at Crossways, currently there are no significant strategic housing and employment allocations proposed within Purbeck District that could contribute to meeting the development needs of West Dorset, or that will have an impact on adjoining areas of West Dorset.

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## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

- 2.15 The Localism Act introduced new powers for local communities to produce neighbourhood development plans, which when adopted will become part of the statutory development plan for the area. It also provided powers for local communities to produce a neighbourhood development order, effectively giving permitted development rights for certain types of development in a specified area. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations set out some of the more detailed procedural requirements for these neighbourhood planning tools.
- 2.16 Cerne Valley is a frontrunner neighbourhood planning group parish, and prepared a draft plan for consultation in 2013. Neighbourhood plan areas have been approved in Buckland Newton and the Piddle Valley, and there has been interest in other areas such as Maiden Newton with Frome Vauchurch, Stratton, Bradford Peverell, Toller Porcorum (including Compton, and Wynford Eagle), Chesil Bank and Puddletown.

## 3 RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE

### DORCHESTER

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- 3.1 Dorchester is the County Town and an important service area, and relies on a much wider area (including both nearby villages and Weymouth to the south) for its workforce and economic success.
- 3.2 Dorchester itself has a population of over 19,000 (2011 census). The population of the surrounding parishes and villages included in the partnership area is about 22,000.

Dorchester has rapidly grown over the past few years and continues to grow with the further development of Poundbury.

- 3.3 Dorchester is the commercial, industrial, educational, medical and leisure hub for a wide area of rural and surrounding communities. The town currently also has around twice as many jobs (18,400) as it has economically active residents (9,619). Workers commute in from nearby towns (particularly Weymouth) and from the surrounding rural area. The main employment areas are: wholesale and retail, hotels and restaurants, banking and building societies, estate agency, construction, health and social work, local authorities, HM Prison Service and social housing associations. Two of the largest local employers are Dorset County Hospital and Dorset County Council, which between them employ 50% of people working in Dorchester. Unemployment is relatively low.
- 3.4 Dorchester is the centre for many services and activities in the locality, including shopping, education, healthcare and library services. The town centre retail and leisure sectors are growing, with the development of Charles Street and the Brewery Site.
- 3.5 Dorchester has two railway stations; one is on the Weymouth to Waterloo line the other on the Weymouth to Bristol line. Bus services between Dorchester and the villages are inconsistent; some villages receive a good service and some have no buses at all.
- 3.6 Key conclusions from the 2008/2010 Joint Town Centre Retail and Leisure Study show that Dorchester currently provides about 3,000 sqm net of convenience floor space and a further 19,800 sqm net of comparison floor space. The town centre has an attractive and healthy shopping core with low numbers of vacancies and a high level of demand registered from operators in the town. The town's leisure offer is more limited, and whilst the current level of provision is acceptable, it could be reinforced by the provision of bars and restaurants. The proposals at Charles Street will increase the current floorspace in the town centre. It is recommended that further provision is made for in the region of 480 sqm net of convenience floor space and 1,400 sqm net of comparison floor space.

## THE VILLAGES

- 3.7 The main service villages in the area are Broadmayne / West Knighton, Cerne Abbas, Crossways, Maiden Newton / Frome Vauchurch and Puddletown. These all have significant populations, some local employment opportunities and a good range of local community infrastructure, including a school, doctor's surgery, general shop, village hall and associated leisure facilities. Other significant villages in the area include Charlton Down, Charminster, Portesham, Winterborne Abbas/Steepleton and Piddletrenthide.

Village	Population (parish area)	School	General Shop	Village Hall	Railway Station	Good road links	Doctors	Major Employment	Leisure facilities
Abbotsbury	481		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Bradford Peverell	370			✓		✓			✓
Broadmayne / West Knighton	1204+375	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Buckland Newton	622	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Cattistock	509		✓	✓					✓
Cerne Abbas	784	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Charlton Down*	1,440		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓

Village	Population (parish area)	School	General Shop	Village Hall	Railway Station	Good road links	Doctors	Major Employment	Leisure facilities
Charminster*	1,500	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Cheselborne	298	✓		✓					✓
Crossways	2,267	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dewlish	284			✓					
Evershot	334	✓	✓	✓					✓
Frampton	524			✓		✓			✓
Litton Cheney	359	✓		✓					✓
Maiden Newton / Frome Vauchurch	1,119+ 149	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Martinstown (Winterborne St Martin)	755		✓	✓		✓			✓
Osmington	673			✓		✓			✓
Owermoigne	467		✓	✓		✓			✓
Piddlehinton	403			✓		✓		✓	✓
Piddletrenthide / White Lackington	647	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Portesham	685	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Puddletown	1,405	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Stratton	592			✓		✓			✓
Sydling St Nicholas	414			✓					✓
Toller Porcorum	307		✓	✓					✓
Tolpuddle	452			✓		✓			✓
West Stafford	291			✓					✓
Winterbourne Abbas / Steepleton	355+297	✓	✓			✓		✓	

\*Charminster and Charlton Down are two settlements in one parish

### 3.8 Key conclusions from the 2007 Rural Functionality Study were that:

- The settlements around Dorchester, such as Puddletown, Charlton Down and Crossways, act as dormitory villages for the town.
- Supporting development in villages with facilities is more sustainable, although it does not necessarily mean that facilities will be retained, as a substantial amount of development is often required to support new and existing facilities.
- Remoter villages have a higher proportion of home working, but those who do commute to work travel longer distances. Settlements like Puddletown and Charlton Down which are closer to larger settlements with good transport connections had the lowest proportion of home workers.

### 3.9 As part of the early work on identifying possible development sites in the area, development opportunities in the larger villages were assessed. More detail is given in the following section.

## THE AVAILABILITY OF LAND, AND WHETHER IT HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED

- 3.10 There are two major sites within Dorchester that will deliver significant growth over the early part of the plan period. These are the final phases of Poundbury and the Brewery Square, and details of the planning permissions are summarised below:

Poundbury Phases 3 and 4	1/D/09/001363 Outline	Develop land by the erection of 1,200 dwellings, a new 450 children primary school, 25,000m <sup>2</sup> of non-residential development and associated roads, drainage and other infrastructure. Make alterations to the existing Monkey's Jump roundabout on the A35(T)
Poundbury North East Quadrant, Phases 3 and 4	1/D/12/000082 Full	Erect 505 dwellings, 6,254 sq. m. of commercial floorspace together with associated garages, roads, accesses and open space. Reserved matters pursuant to outline planning permission 1/D/09/001363. (Reserved Matters)
Brewery	1/E/06/002390 Full	Development of land for new apartments and houses (537), including assisted care accommodation (category 2½); new non-residential accommodation including – A1 retail (2,333m <sup>2</sup> ) and A3 restaurant/café accommodation (774m <sup>2</sup> ); nursing home of 71 units (C2); cinema; station building; offices (B1) (354m <sup>2</sup> ); landscaping, open space, play areas; public realm; substations and plant (including underground services); new highways; parking servicing and refuse storage facilities; improvements to station forecourt; and modifications to vehicular and pedestrian accesses to Weymouth Avenue and Culliford Road. Alterations and extensions to Bonded Stores in association with conversion to provide function room /auction house (813m <sup>2</sup> ); retail/restaurant accommodation (1,736m <sup>2</sup> ), and six flats. Alterations and extensions to Brewhouse in association with conversion to provide (i) hotel (48 bedrooms) with spa and ancillary accommodation; and (ii) 23 apartments.

- 3.11 The main site options for delivering growth, in addition to the above sites, have been assessed through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, last updated in 2010. This technical study identifies the theoretical potential of sites in the district for future housing development. The assessment included an analysis of the sites' current planning status and history, ownership, potential constraints (topography/ground condition, flood risk, access, contamination, infrastructure, landscape/townscape character), availability, suitability and achievability, an estimate of potential capacity and delivery/phasing.
- 3.12 Appendix C of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment lists all the "included sites" that were submitted to the council and considered to be deliverable in terms of their suitability, availability and achievability. Appendix D lists all the "excluded sites", and the reason why they were considered no to be a plausible option for delivering housing.



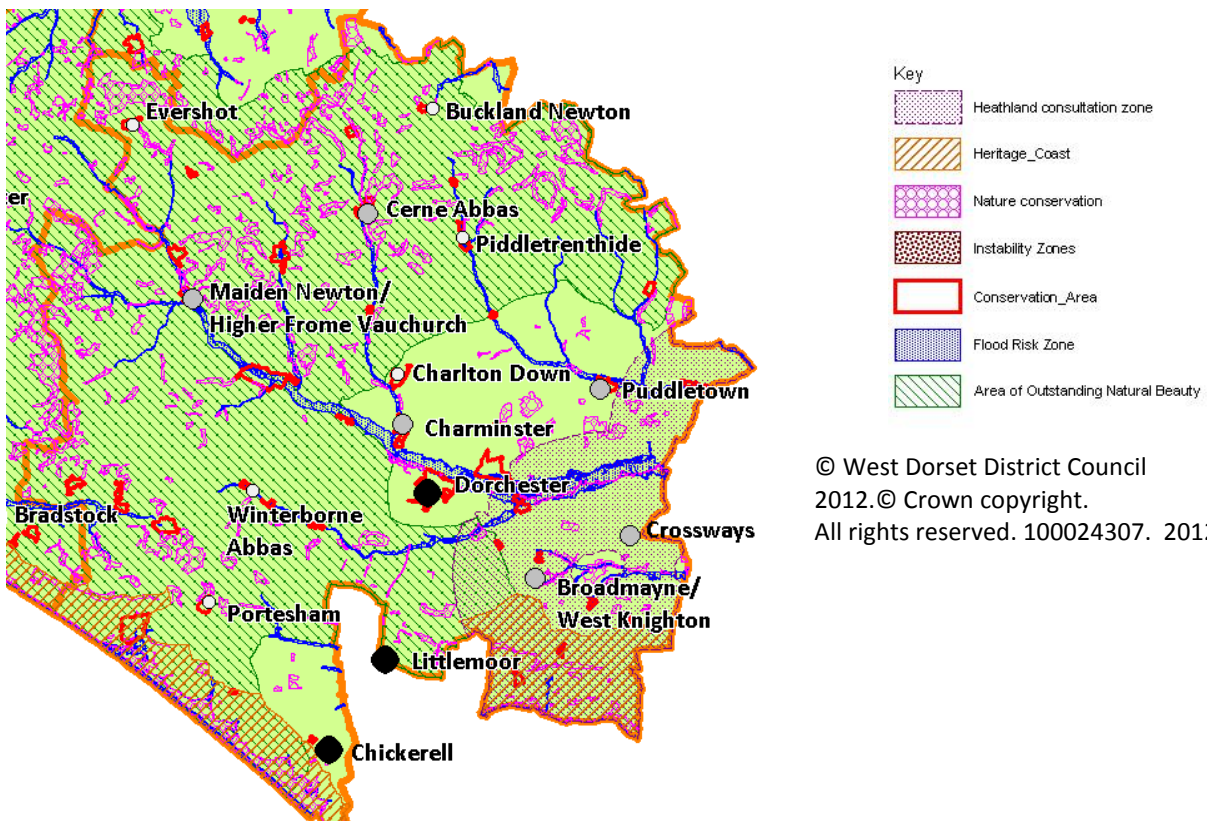
- 3.13 The availability of previously developed (brownfield) sites outside current development boundaries in the Eastern area is very limited. There were only 4 suitable sites identified through the assessment, one at Broadmayne (1/08/017/0001), one at Cerne Abbas (1/09/027/0003) and two at Winterborne Steepleton (1/08/133/0003 and 0004).
- 3.14 The Halcrow Urban Extension Study 2008 considered the implications of the draft regional spatial strategy for the South West proposed changes, which recommended a large urban extension of 3,000 homes at Dorchester for the period to 2026. The study considered five possible growth options in terms of both environmental constraints, the scale of infrastructure investment required and economic viability implications. The capacity of the strategic and local highway networks and the strategic electrical distribution and sewage treatment infrastructure were identified as fundamental constraints for development in the area. Although a lesser amount of development may be feasible, any option would be difficult to provide in locations that were well-connected to the existing settlement. The options are reported in Appendix E of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
- 3.15 Based on the above studies, the following potential strategic sites were highlighted for more detailed consideration during the preparation of the draft plan:

Settlement	Site	Capacity (approximate)
<b>Dorchester</b>	Land to the north of the watermeadows	Mixed use urban extension, about 6,800 homes
	Land to the south-east of the A35 (extending from the A352 in the east to the A354 in the west)	Mixed use urban extension, about 2,500 homes
	Land to the west of the A37	Mixed use urban extension, about 1,000 homes
<b>Crossways</b>	Land to the north and north-west	About 700 homes
	Land to the south-east	About 700 homes
	Land to the south-west	About 14ha of employment land
<b>Cerne Abbas</b>	Francombe Farm	About 36 homes and retention of the existing employment.
	Simsay Fields	About 30-40 homes
<b>Charminster</b>	Charminster Farm / Wanchard Lane	About 130 new homes and 1ha of employment
	Land off Westleaze	About 170 homes and 2-3ha employment land as part of a mixed-use development.
<b>Maiden Newton</b>	The Quarr	About 20 homes, no employment.
	Land south of Neil's View	About 1.3ha of employment.
<b>Puddletown</b>	Land south of Athelhampton Road	About 90 new homes
	Land Off Three Lane End	Up to 2ha of employment land.

- 3.16 In addition, sites around Chickerell and Littlemoor on the edge of Weymouth were also considered as having potential to meet some of the district's housing needs in the eastern part of the area: see the background paper on Weymouth, Portland, Littlemoor and Chickerell.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

- 3.17 Environmental considerations are covered in the local plan at Chapter 2 – Environment and Climate Change, however there are site specific issues that are discussed in more detail in this section.
- 3.18 In common with the rest of West Dorset, the Eastern area contains a rich and wide variety of landscape, natural and built heritage features. The Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers much of the countryside (although Dorchester and areas to the north and east are excluded). The Dorset AONB document on Conserving Character identifies landscape types and character areas and identifies management proposals for those areas considered to be in decline. Within the eastern area, the following landscape character areas have been identified as being in decline:
- | Landscape Type         | Character Area          | Condition          |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Open Chalk Downland    | South Dorset Downs      | moderate declining |
| Open Chalk Downland    | Dorchester Downs        | moderate declining |
| Chalk Ridge Escarpment | South Dorset Escarpment | moderate declining |
| Ridge & Vale           | Osmington Ridge & Vale  | moderate declining |
- 3.19 The eastern area around Crossways is in close proximity to internationally important heathlands.
- 3.20 The Frome catchment feeds into Poole Harbour which is a SPA/Ramsar Site, based on its importance for breeding, migration and over-wintering of birds. Any development in the catchment has the potential to increase the nitrogen loading discharge into Poole harbour, primarily through sewage treatment and disposal. A draft nitrogen reduction strategy has been prepared jointly by the Environment Agency, Natural England and Wessex Water.
- 3.21 The coastal cliff face is designated as a World Heritage Site, known as the Jurassic Coast. There are a number of RIGS sites within the area also.



CULTURAL & HISTORICAL ASSETS

3.22 There is a wealth of historical assets in the area around Dorchester in terms of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, archaeology and pre-historic remains. In addition to numerous Listed Buildings, the high quality of the built environment is reflected in the number of towns and villages that have designated Conservation Areas. A list of those conservation areas that fall within the eastern portion of the plan area is set out below.

Abbotsbury	Maiden Newton
Alton Pancras	Melbury Osmond
Bradford Peverell	Minterne Magna
Buckland Newton	Osmington
Burton Bradstock	Owermoigne
Cattistock	Piddlehinton
Cerne Abbas	Piddletrethide
Charminster	Portesham
Charminster (Herrison)	Poxwell
Chedington	Puddletown
Chickerell	Stinsford and Lower Bockhampton
Dewlish	Swyre
Dorchester	Sydling St Nicholas
Evershot	Tolpuddle
Frampton	Warmwell,
Frome St Quintin	West Knighton
Godmanstone	West Stafford
Higher Kingston	Whitcombe
Langton Herring	Winterborne St Martin
Littlebredy	Winterbourne Abbas
Litton Cheney	Winterbourne Steepleton
Long Bredy	

3.23 The author and poet Thomas Hardy was born in a cottage on the western edges of Puddletown Forest in Higher Bockhampton. He designed, built and lived in a house to the east of Dorchester at Max Gate. The author set a number of his novels in and around Dorchester. There are further literary associations of the area with the poet William Barnes.

3.24 During the Second World War, the airfield at Crossways (RAF Warmwell) played an important part in World War II, being a major fighter base during the Battle of Britain, and offering fighter protection for Portland Naval Base and other important south coast areas. The Fleet lagoon was used for testing the prototype Bouncing Bomb. Many gun emplacements and lookout posts from this time still survive in the landscape, particularly near the coast.

3.25 There is also a high concentration of important Scheduled Monuments and other archaeological remains in the area. The South Dorset Ridgeway runs east to west between Dorchester and Weymouth and has been identified as a nationally important prehistoric ceremonial landscape.

3.26 More detail in terms of the identified development sites is provided in the Strategic Site Assessments Document.

## CONCLUSIONS

- One of the challenges is to try to improve the balance between housing and jobs in the town of Dorchester.
- However significant growth at Dorchester beyond that currently planned appears to be significantly constrained by environmental and infrastructure factors.
- There are very limited opportunities to focus development on previously developed (brownfield) sites.
- Growth in the villages could be sustainable but may not necessarily provide the community facilities they wish to have. There is already early interest in developing neighbourhood plans.

## 4 CONSULTATION: AUTUMN 2011

- 4.1 The Eastern Area working group highlighted some key principles they felt important in determining the right location and scale of growth. These were:
- Avoid creating dormitory settlements – ensure infrastructure is delivered alongside new development and aim for self-containment.
  - Where sites are suitable for development, employment uses should be prioritised
  - Any development should be in harmony with or enhance the sense of place.

They also considered the potential sites highlighted in 3.16, and their thoughts were displayed at the final consultation events. The indicative maps used are shown in appendix 1.

- 4.2 The urban extension options around Dorchester were not favoured by the working group members, due to impact on the character and setting of the town (particularly in terms of Thomas Hardy's heritage) and poor access connections to the town. However feedback at the final consultation events indicated a desire for local growth in this location if a workable option could be found.
- 4.3 The working group felt that Crossways could deliver a step-change in growth with significant level of development to the north and east, and further employment to the south, if housing, infrastructure and jobs were phased to ensure a balanced community not reliant or dormitory to Dorchester, and issues regarding HGV traffic could be overcome. Infrastructure provision is essential. It was recognised that community involvement in preparing a masterplan is needed. Feedback at the final consultation events highlighted ongoing concerns about the potential impact on existing services / infrastructure (and continuing HGV traffic to the quarries) and whether local people would be in support and whether Crossways would generate that level of demand.
- 4.4 The sites at the other village locations were considered positively by the working group. There were very few comments made at the final consultation event. 1 comment raised concerns about the Quarr site being a possible Medieval Village. There was mixed response on the Charminster sites, with more support for employment although concerns that junction to A352 will require re-design to accommodate traffic movements.
- 4.5 The planning stakeholder group (comprising the county council, Dorset AONB team, Natural England, English Heritage, the Environment Agency and the Highways Agency,) were given an opportunity to comment on the sites as part of the consultation. The main concern raised was in respect of the potential impact of an urban extension at Dorchester. It was recognised that any scale of development proposed at Crossways would need suitable mitigation through suitable alternative natural greenspaces (SANGs) because of proximity to the internationally important heathland.

## CONCLUSIONS

- 4.6 The autumn 2011 consultation concluded that growth at Dorchester (beyond the current development sites still being implemented) was not currently indicated to be deliverable, but that work should continue to focus on bringing forward potential sites in the longer term if at all feasible. The development of smaller sites at the villages could be delivered, but there was limited local input as part of the consultation. It has been concluded that rather than allocate sites or set targets for development at villages, the local plan should allocate sites at the larger settlements and allow any development at smaller settlements to come forward through community-led neighbourhood development plans.
- 4.7 The main opportunity for growth in the area, beyond that currently being delivered at Poundbury and the Brewery site, was considered to be at Crossways and on the edge of Weymouth at Littlemoor and Chickerell.

## 5 POLICY OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES CONSIDERED

### CONTINUED POLICIES

- 5.1 A number of policies have been carried forward from the adopted local plan. Opportunities have been taken to simplify the policies where possible, taking into account the changes to the generic policies and the stage of planning or development reached.

New Policy	Old	Notes
DOR 1 Poundbury Mixed Use Development	EA17 EA19	Combined and simplified due to adoption of SPD and phase of development reached (part built, part under construction and outline permission granted for remaining phases)
DOR 3 Dorchester Roman Town Area	EA13	Simplified
DOR 4 Charles Street	EA14	Simplified due to phase of development reached (part under construction, outline permission granted for remaining phase)
DOR 6 Weymouth Avenue Brewery Site	EA15	Simplified due to phase of development reached (part built, part under construction, full permission granted for remaining phase)
DOR 7 Red Cow Farm, St. George's Road	EA20	Simplified due to phase of development reached (full permission granted)

### EASTERN AREA - DELIVERING GROWTH

- 5.2 Based on the above studies and consultation feedback, the potential strategic sites identified through the consultation were taken forward as the main options for consideration, together with additional small sites on the edge of Dorchester. These three relatively small parcels of land lie within the Defined Development Boundary of Dorchester but in the 2006 local plan were designated as Land of Local Landscape Importance. However the pony paddocks are surrounded on two sides by built development, with planning permission granted for the Red Cow Farm development to the north. The elevated section of the A35 bisects the area north-south, with the Weymouth to Waterloo railway line cutting across east to west. Although the site is currently open to views to the north, only houses on the eastern side of Syward Road benefit from views over the south

eastern quadrant (to the south of the railway) with other adjacent residential areas backing onto the site. On this basis, the land was considered to have development potential.

- 5.3 The combined options, if all put forward for development, would deliver more than 10,000 new homes and over 50ha of employment land, which is well in excess of the forecast demand for the area. However, at the time of preparing the pre-submission draft of the plan, there was considerable uncertainty about the delivery of an urban extension at Dorchester, as evidenced in the Halcrow study. Development options at Cerne Abbas, Charminster, Maiden Newton and Puddletown were not included in the final draft plan. As the sites in these villages were not considered to be able to deliver a strategically significant level of growth, they should instead be encouraged to come forward through neighbourhood planning.
- 5.4 Without the Dorchester urban extension it was clear that there would be a shortfall in the supply of new homes towards the end of the plan period, although the development of sites around Chickerell and Littlemoor on the edge of Weymouth (see Weymouth background paper) would go some way towards meeting the overall demand. In response, a more detailed analysis of the Crossways sites was undertaken (see Appendix 2) as initial work carried out for SHLAA had indicated that there was land around the village with significant development potential. The fact that the village is outside the Dorset AONB designation, relatively free from other constraints and benefits from existing community facilities and rail access to Dorchester, meant that allocations in this area could deliver sustainable development in a relatively unconstrained environment. Without a significant allocation at Crossways it was unlikely that the required level of development would come forward through the neighbourhood plan process.
- 5.5 Significant development at Crossways would also provide an opportunity for the village to secure the rationalisation and improvement of the existing community facilities. Currently, the school, village hall, youth centre, shop, library and doctors' surgery are dispersed in different parts of the village. The village hall in particular is remote from the main body of the settlement, being located as part of the former airfield where it was used for recreational use and mess facilities by the aircrews.

#### STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)

- 5.6 The following sites were all subject to the Strategic Environmental Appraisal.

Site / Capacity (approximate)	Initial SEA appraisal
<b>DORCHESTER</b> <b>Land to the north of the watermeadows</b> Mixed use urban extension, about 6,800 homes	The provision of housing at this site is likely to require a new bypass which, along with the development itself, would result in a series of environmental impacts, including those relating to flood risk and landscape character. The distance from the town centre is likely to negatively impact upon access to services and facilities, with the river acting as a barrier between these services and facilities, and the new development. Development in this area would result in the loss of productive soils, habitats and biodiversity. Due to this site being open and elevated, and physically separate from Dorchester, it is likely to be visible from a wide distance.
<b>DORCHESTER</b> <b>Land to the south-east of the A35</b>	This housing allocation would require a significant improvement in the road network, to enable access to services and facilities and prevent congestion. The areas

Site / Capacity (approximate)	Initial SEA appraisal
Mixed use urban extension, about 2,500 homes	surrounding Dorchester to the southeast contains features of archaeological and heritage importance, which may be impacted upon negatively, either directly or indirectly (through an impact upon setting, for example) by any development. The allocation may also result in the loss of high grade agricultural land and habitat, impacting adversely upon biodiversity.
<b>DORCHESTER</b> <b>Land to the west of the A37</b> Mixed use urban extension, about 1,000 homes	Although this site is relatively close to community facilities and other services, the A35 bypass prevents easy access to them for residents. This may encourage the use of unsustainable methods of transport to access these facilities and services. The allocation may also result in the loss of high grade agricultural land and habitat, impacting adversely upon biodiversity.
<b>DORCHESTER</b> <b>Land off Alington Avenue / St Georges Road</b> Relatively small sites for housing or employment, about 100 homes	Provision of housing and land for employment use, on the eastern edge of Dorchester. Significant adverse landscape impacts of the development would need to be mitigated. The retention of footpaths would improve accessibility by sustainable modes of transport, reducing carbon emissions associated with transport and reliance on the motor car. The allocation may also result in the loss of habitat, impacting adversely upon biodiversity.
<b>DORCHESTER</b> <b>Poundbury Parkway Farm</b> <b>Business site extension</b> Small employment site of about 1ha	Provision of employment and the infrastructure for economic growth. This allocation is within the Dorset AONB, and there is likely to be a negative landscape impact upon this designation. Provided close to existing settlement, reducing the need to travel by unsustainable means and decreasing the greenhouse gas emissions. The development will involve the loss of productive agricultural land, impacting negatively upon soil quality and climate change vulnerability. This allocation results in the loss of habitats and biodiversity.
<b>CROSSWAYS</b> <b>Land to the north and north-west</b> About 700 homes	Provision of a large amount of housing and employment land. Whilst the site is situated next to the Dorset Heathlands Special Area of Conservation, the large scale green open space provided by the scheme would prevent a significant adverse impact upon this designated area. However, development in this area would result in the loss of soils, habitats and biodiversity, with potential landscape impacts also. Whilst essential services in this area are barely adequate to support the new residents, the new development will provide a town centre, new facilities and a generally improved infrastructure. A railway station is located in close proximity, giving access to sustainable transport methods and reducing reliance on less sustainable transport methods.
<b>CROSSWAYS</b> <b>Land to the south-east</b> About 700 homes	
<b>CROSSWAYS</b> <b>Land to the south-west</b> About 14ha of employment land	

## EASTERN AREA – PREFERRED OPTIONS FOR GROWTH

- 5.7 Due to the uncertainties over potential delivery raised by the Halcrow report, the allocation of land for an urban extension at Dorchester was not included in the pre-submission draft of the plan. Much of the demand could be met from growth at Crossways (1,200 – 1,500 residential units and 7.2 ha of employment) together with the allocation of land at Chickerell and Littlemoor, which would have delivered in the region of 1,250 new homes within West Dorset. Policy CRS 1 of the pre-submission draft of the plan refers.
- 5.8 However, to acknowledge the desirability of delivering growth around Dorchester, the plan included a proposal that further work would be undertaken to fully explore the potential for development in and around Dorchester, to clarify the long-term strategy for this area. This was intended to allow an allocation to be brought forward through a review of the plan, to facilitate development in the last phase of the plan period - if neighbourhood development plans did not bring about significant growth. Policy DOR 11 of the pre-submission draft of the plan refers.
- 5.9 The small parcels of land at Allington Avenue and St Georges Road were also included as allocations in the pre-submission draft. Although limited in size, they represent an opportunity to deliver housing and employment opportunities close to existing services and facilities within Dorchester. Policies DOR 8 and DOR 9 of the pre-submission draft of the plan refer.

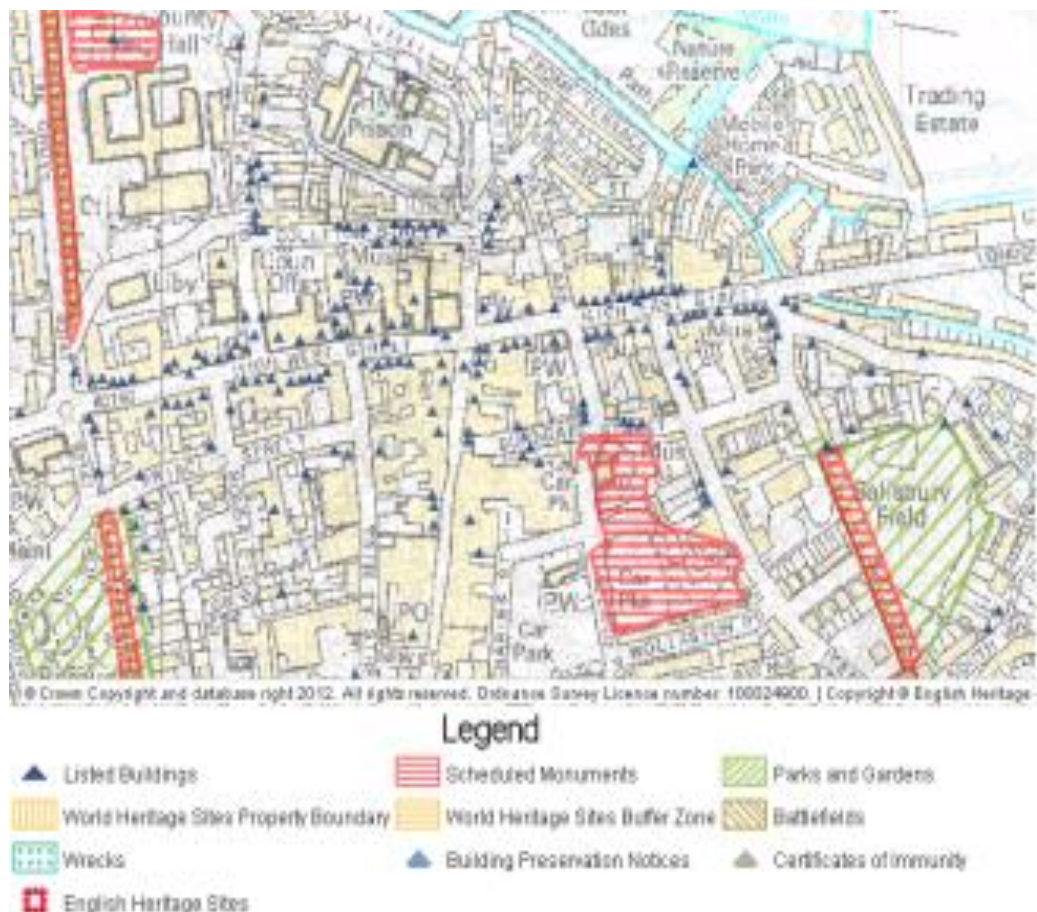
## TOWN CENTRE EXPANSION, AND THE TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT PLAN

- 5.10 The CBRE retail study (2008) identified a number of potential retail development sites around the town centre that could be pursued through regeneration initiatives. Those with the most potential were considered to be land at Charles Street; and land at Trinity Street. Of these two options, Charles Street was considered to offer the prime opportunity to extend Dorchester's retail offer. The allocation of land at Charles Street is a continuation of an existing policy, and outline permission has been granted to deliver a comprehensive redevelopment comprising retail units (Use Class A1), restaurants and cafes (Use Class A3), financial and professional services (Use Class A2), a hotel (Use Class C1), residential apartments (Use Class C3), offices (Use Class B1), library (Use Class D1) and adult learning centre (Use Class D1) with associated undercroft car parking, new streets including new pedestrian links, public square, public art and public toilets.
- 5.11 Land to the West of Trinity Street currently used as shoppers' car parking has the potential to provide a further redevelopment opportunity. The site is reasonably well related to the prime retail pitch of South Street. The amount of land included within any scheme will be dependent on land assembly costs and scheme viability, together with the re-provision of car parking, were any loss to occur through redevelopment. Creating a stronger frontage on to Trinity Street would be a positive redevelopment benefit. Also, if possible, upper floors of any new development could be suited to a mix of residential and service/office uses. The only other options identified in the report related to minor infill opportunities.
- 5.12 The proposal for the delivery of the Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan has been carried forward from the previous plan. Since the last plan was adopted, further work has been undertaken on the assessment of park and ride options (see report to the Executive Committee May 2011 <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/402266>). Twenty potential park & ride sites were initially identified, and these were reduced to six following an appraisal of transport and highway merits. Further examination of landscape and visual impact, ground and surface water conditions, and more detailed highways and transport issues narrowed the potential options down to two sites, one at Monkey's Jump and the other at Stadium



Roundabout. These options were subject to consultation. The landowner has since indicated that he is unwilling to release the site at Monkey’s Jump for such development, however, the land at Weymouth Road East (South of Stadium roundabout) is available and deliverable.

- 5.13 The provision of a park and ride site will also assist in reducing traffic within the town centre. This is particularly important in relation to air quality issues in High East and High West Street. An Air Quality Management Area has been designated for High East and High West Street and the only management option currently available is to reduce traffic using this route. Therefore, the implementation of DTEP and the Park and Ride is key to improving Air Quality within the management area. The NPPF states that planning policies should take into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and that planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas is consistent with the local air quality action plan.
- 5.14 The NPPF at section 126 advises local planning authorities to take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. The guidance also draws attention to the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring. In this respect, the DTEP traffic management proposals would also secure improvements to the historic environment of Dorchester. The county town has locally and nationally significant heritage assets in the form of the Conservation Area and the significant number of Listed Buildings within it. The frontage of High East and High West Street, represents the longest continuous run of listed buildings in the country. Heritage Listing information is available on line via the following link: <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/mapsearch.aspx>. The map below is an extract from the English Heritage website showing the Listed Buildings along High East and High West Street.



- 5.15 Improving the pedestrian environment will also make the town centre a more attractive place to spend time in. A reduction in traffic, particularly along High East and High West Street, should encourage people to explore on foot beyond the main shopping frontage in South Street and appreciate the buildings and attractions in the wider town. Increased footfall will also bring economic benefits in terms of the vitality and viability of the town centre.

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#### TRUNK ROAD FACILITIES

- 5.16 The supporting text to policy DOR 10 also refers to the possibility of the Park and Ride site being used to provide roadside facilities for users of the A35 Trunk Road. The Transport Chapter of the 2006 local plan refers to the route management strategy for the A30/A35/A31 as developed by the Highways Agency in 2002. Policy TRAN 3 identified a new primary route service area as a consideration for Dorchester, although the policy was not accompanied by a site allocation.
- 5.17 More recent guidance in the form of the Department for Transport (DfT) Circular 01/2008- Signed Service Areas on All-Purpose Trunk Roads, states that half an hour's driving time should be regarded as the maximum that any driver should have to travel without the availability of fuel, refreshments, toilets and parking facilities, including parking for HGVs. It is therefore considered that trunk road service areas should be sited at distances of approximately 30 minutes or 14 miles, whichever is the lesser. This guidance is available online via the following link: <http://www.highways.gov.uk/our-road-network/motorway-service-areas-and-roadside-facilities/>.
- 5.18 The more recent Buro Happold Report identifies that currently, there are no dedicated trunk road service areas on the A31/A35 near Dorchester. The only driver facilities are petrol filling stations, some with food and toilet facilities. 11 miles to the east there is a Shell petrol filling station at the A35/A31 junction, Bere Regis; and 15 miles to the west of there is a Texaco/Somerfield on the A35 at Bridport. These two facilities are approx. 26 miles apart via the A35, which is almost double the recommended spacing (14 miles).
- 5.19 The DfT circular at para. 128-129 and 132-134 recognises that service areas may, in certain circumstances, be appropriate locations from which to promote Park & Ride. The benefits are highlighted as a reduction in overall vehicle mileage, leading potentially to reduced congestion and improved road safety.
- 5.20 In addition to the DfT guidance, the NPPF at paragraph 31 advises that: "Local authorities should ...develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure ... including large scale facilities such as ...roadside facilities for motorists."
- 5.21 Notwithstanding the above, the Highways Agency has not actively campaigned to secure a site for a Trunk Road Service Area (TRSA) through the local plan. However, as identified above, the provision of a TRSA at Dorchester would comply with the relevant Department of Transport national guidance. Locally, the possibility of combining the P & R with a TRSA is an opportunity to secure the early delivery of the P&R, by cooperative working between the landowner/developer and the local authority. This in turn, will facilitate the implementation of DTEP. As outlined above, DTEP will bring significant benefits in terms of improving the environment, economy and enjoyment of Dorchester town centre. The NPPF also states at paragraph 30 that encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.
- 5.22 This proactive approach to planning is encouraged by the NPPF which states in the Ministerial foreword that "Planning is a creative exercise of finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives." At paragraph 9, the guidance goes on to say

that sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the environment and people's quality of life. This would include improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure. The framework explains that Plans need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas.

#### CONSULTATION ON THE PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT JUNE/JULY 2012

5.23 A significant number of representations were received in response to the text and policies of Chapters 11 Dorchester and 12 Crossways of the pre-submission draft of the Joint Local Plan. Comments were also made on the relevant background paper.

5.24 The main issues raised are set out in the table below.

Policy	Issue Raised
DOR 3	Concerns about impact on town centre car parking and high street viability. Needs to be considered in the context of development at Brewery square.
DOR5	Concerns about impact on town centre car parking and high street viability. Needs to be considered in the context of development at Brewery square.
DOR6	Weymouth Avenue Development Brief is out of date and no longer relevant.
DOR7	Concerns about proximity to the elevated sections of the Dorchester bypass, adequacy of local road network, and loss of green field.
DOR8	Concerns about proximity to the elevated sections of the Dorchester bypass, adequacy of local road network, loss of green field and wildlife corridor, and impact on Max Gate heritage. Existing drains cannot cope with run-off from the built up area. The land was previously designated as land of local landscape importance and development would be detrimental to the landscape character of the area.
DOR9	Concerns about proximity to the elevated sections of the Dorchester bypass, adequacy of local road network, and loss of green field and wildlife corridor. Existing drains cannot cope with run-off from the built up area. The land was previously designated as land of local landscape importance and development would be detrimental to the landscape character of the area.
DOR10	A larger site would provide greater flexibility in terms of layout of the proposed components; Concerns that the proposal could include other uses, for example hotel, farm shop or petrol filling station; The proposed allocation represents a major development within the Dorset AONB and is of a nature that is likely to result in a deterioration in the quality of the landscape, including views from Maiden Castle. There is no evidence that it is justified or the best option and the "exceptional circumstances" as required by NPPF are met. If the proposed allocation is justified, it should include provision for significant landscape mitigation and enhancement focused particularly on the setting of the AONB, Maiden Castle and other scheduled monuments; The allocation sets an undesirable precedent for expansion outside the town boundaries. It would increase localised flooding, noise and light pollution. It would increase rat running on rural lanes. It was dismissed by the previous Inspector. The background paper does not identify an objectively assessed need for a Trunk Road Service Area.
DOR 11	North Dorchester should be identified as a strategic allocation instead of Crossways. There are no other suitable alternative urban extension locations. There is no justification why a more positive approach cannot be taken, when

	<p>there is a clear strategic case to support significant new development north of the water meadows and no overriding planning or environmental constraints to prevent delivery; The significant proposals identified for Dorchester require ongoing dialogue between the Agency and the council as it is likely that significant development would affect the operation of the SRN. Substantial development to the north of the town would be likely to require a northern distributor road. There are questions around the deliverability of such a proposal. The junctions with the A354 Stadium Roundabout are also likely to need further work should significant proposals go ahead, and at the A362 Max Gate and B3150 Stinsford Roundabouts, with development to the south east of the town likely to have a particularly adverse effect here; The policy is too obscure and lacks clarity. No option may be possible. Some areas should be ruled out at this stage.</p>
CRS 1	<p>Impact upon Strategic Road network – development is likely to affect the network at Max Gate, the junction with the A35/A352, which is currently a sub standard junction with no plans for improvement. Would require mitigation; Impact upon Mineral Reserves – there are existing resources of sand and gravel in this area therefore the issue of mineral safeguarding needs to be addressed;</p> <p>The scale of development is excessive and disproportionate to the size of the existing settlement and the infrastructure available. It would more than double the size of the village and mean development is at a rate more than 3 times that of the past 20 years. Crossways appears to be providing homes for Dorchester and the development is not justified to meet the needs of the village. It is inconsistent with the settlement strategy outlined in Policy SUS2. Concerns about the adverse impact on the village and its residents. It will completely change both the character and appearance of the area and the social cohesion of the village. Road, cycle and public transport links and community facilities will not be adequate. The roads to Crossways are narrow and restricted and the rail is not well used. Existing sewerage system will need to be upgraded. Crossways currently is made up of a significant proportion of social housing. The development will cause disturbance, noise and inconvenience to residents and result in the loss of green open space and informal recreation areas currently enjoyed by the village.</p> <p>The employment allocation is not justified by need – there is unlikely to be a significant level of demand based on the take-up of previous sites.</p> <p>Impact of biodiversity. The additional residential development would be likely to have a significant effect on the European heathland. There needs to be greater certainty that SANGs can be provided, as these are not currently allocated. The Conservation Regulations Assessment is not robust. The 8ha of woodland in the northern housing allocation isn't suitable for a housing development that would not have an adverse impact on nature conservation, but it could provide a possible SANG linking to Moreton railway station. Reference needs to be made mitigating the impact upon the setting of the Scheduled Monument (Earthworks in Bowley's Plantation).</p> <p>The policy should be less prescriptive to ensure alternative uses on specific sites are not ruled out.</p>

5.25 Where the representations made have raised issues of soundness, further work has been carried out to address those issues. In some cases it was possible to make minor amendments to the text or policy wording. More detail on the specific issues is set out below.

FURTHER EVIDENCE

DOR 10 DORCHESTER TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT PLAN

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- 5.26 The main issues raised in relation to Policy DOR 10 of the pre-submission draft were as follows:
- Major development within the AONB: must justify that "exceptional circumstances" as required by NPPF are met.
  - Impact on quality of the landscape, including views from Maiden Castle.
  - Localised flooding, noise and light pollution.
  - Congestion on the A354 and rat running along rural roads
  - Undesirable expansion outside the town boundaries.
- 5.27 With regard to the "exceptional circumstances" as referred to in the NPPF, the framework states that "Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty." In section 116, the guidance explains that planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest.
- 5.28 In determining what is considered to be in the public interest, the NPPF advises that "Consideration ...should include an assessment of: the need for the development, national considerations and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy. Local Planning Authorities must also consider the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere (outside the protected landscape) the cost of, and scope for, meeting the need for it in some other way; and any detrimental effect on the environment and the extent to which that could be moderated."
- 5.29 The original 2010 feasibility study carried out by Buro Happold looked at 20 possible sites for P&R as identified by West Dorset District Council. On the basis of a transport and highways assessment, six sites were shortlisted for more detailed consideration. A more detailed study was then conducted that considered landscape, ground and surface water, transport and highways. The detailed study shortlisted two sites, both of which are located within the Dorset AONB designation.
- 5.30 To address these issues and provide further evidence with regard to the allocation in the Dorset AONB and meeting the tests in the NPPF, consultants were engaged to update the 2010 report of Park & Ride sites (P&R) and also to consider the case for a joint P&R with a Trunk Road Service Area (TRSA). The scope of works aimed to address the key issues identified by consultees by providing a technical rationale for providing a TRSA and a Park and Ride on the same site; assessing the implications of the Weymouth Park and Ride and associated bus service to Dorchester; considering the sites against wider set of environmental parameters; and assessing the feasibility of the sites identified for a TRSA to be developed as a combined facility.
- 5.31 As a result, two discrete pieces of work were produced, the first of which addressed the justification of a combined TRSA and Park and Ride facility; and the second making an assessment of sites given the 2013 proposal and context. In terms of validating the findings of the 2011 report, this study took into account the 2011 census data. In terms of possible alternative sites for the Trunk Road Services, the report considered 8 sites that were directly accessible from the Trunk Road Network and 4 additional sites that had previously been proposed for the TRSA, but for a combined facility. It also included a desktop study of the 12 sites against key environmental parameters.

- 5.32 The validation of the 2010 Report findings indicated a strong correlation between the two sets of data (as extracted from the DTEP Saturn Model), except for trips travelling from the north. This appeared to be the result of a stronger prevalence of non-work trips from the large rural catchment. Non-work trips tend to be short to medium stay and are less attracted to P&R, than long stay work trips. If this interpretation is correct, then the 2010 study may have overestimated potential P&R trips from the north and underestimated trips from the west, south and east. This would suggest that sites to the south of Dorchester, in the vicinity of Stadium Roundabout would be more successful at capturing park and ride trips. Conversely, sites to the east, such as in the vicinity of Monkey's Jump, which would be more reliant on attracting trips from the north, are likely to be less successful.
- 5.33 The report also reiterated the benefits of combining P&R and TRSA facilities. It is explained that a combined site gives rise to functional synergies, including the location, range of site facilities and security measures. The junction access, internal access roads, passenger facilities and security features can be shared for the benefit of both sets of users. A combined facility would also help to promote P&R for tourists who stop at the TRSA. In addition, there are considerable economic, safety, accessibility and integration benefits of a combined facility, including the reduced demand on public expenditure for site construction, operation and maintenance. This is however caveated by the fact that a combined facility would be larger and more intrusive than a stand-alone P&R site, including the need for longer periods of lighting and underground fuel storage. Provided that these and other environmental issues can be mitigated to an acceptable degree, the advantages of a combined site could be realised.
- 5.34 With regard to the possibility of using the Weymouth Park and Ride to serve Dorchester, the report assessed the practical and economic implications of restarting the discontinued x11 service. The analysis indicated that in order to maintain a 15 minute frequency, a P&R site close to Dorchester would require two P&R buses, whereas four would be required from Weymouth. The result is that a service from Weymouth would require on-going public subsidy, with little prospect of reaching a break-even position. A future park & ride site close to Dorchester and adjacent to the A35, therefore offers the best opportunity to provide an attractive service frequency with the lowest operational cost.
- 5.35 Four additional sites were considered for P&R on the A35 east of Dorchester. None of these sites offer the ability to provide a realistic P&R service to Dorchester, due to the excessive distance from the town centre. In order to be successful, P&R sites need to be located on the edge of the urban area to be served.
- 5.36 Each of the four sites was also considered as potential stand-alone TRSAs. All were found to be too distance from the existing Bridport Texaco to meet the Department for Transport's spacing requirements, as set out in Circular 01/2008. However, site J (Stadium Roundabout) closely matches the DfT's distance criteria and is therefore ideally situated to meet the needs of trunk road users.
- 5.37 The updated report concluded that, in terms of environmental impacts, all of the sites considered are subject to environmental constraints to some degree. In all cases, there are likely to be additional constraints which can only be identified through a more detailed site survey. In addition, the importance attributed to each constraint requires the weighing up of potentially conflicting policy and stakeholder aspirations, and an examination of the specific proposals at each site to determine potentially significant environmental impacts.
- 5.38 In terms of weighing up conflicting policy, the NPPF refers to national and local considerations that should be taken into account. With regard to national issues, the DfT guidance on the provision of Trunk Road services is a consideration that needs to be taken

into account. In this respect, the report concludes that of the four sites that were also considered as potential stand-alone TRSAs, all were found to be too distance from the existing Bridport Texaco to meet the Department for Transport's spacing requirements, as set out in Circular 01/2008. However, the Stadium Roundabout site closely matches the DfT's distance criteria and is therefore ideally situated to meet the needs of trunk road users.

- 5.39 With regard to the impact on the local economy, the DTEP proposals are aimed at supporting the viability and vitality of Dorchester Town Centre by improving the environmental quality. As previously explained, the provision of a park and ride facility will assist in the scheme going ahead. The aim to reduce and re-route traffic through the town and relieve the pressure upon High East and High West Street can be achieved more effectively if parking is available outside of the town centre, on the main commuter routes in to Dorchester. The benefits of improving the environment and attractiveness of the town in terms of economic, social and environmental factors have already been explained.
- 5.40 It is also relevant that the NPPF requires planning policies to take into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas. Whilst the guidance focuses more on ensuring that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas is consistent with the local air quality action plan, it remains the case that the provision of a park and ride facility will help achieve the implementation of DTEP, which in turn is a means of managing the air quality issues in the Air Quality Management Area of High East and High West Street.
- 5.41 The NPPF suggests that the economic, social and environmental benefits that would accrue in Dorchester Town Centre, can be weighed against the harm that would result from the development of a Park and Ride facility outside the by-pass and within the Dorset AONB. In this respect, the additional evidence has established that alternative sites outside the AONB would not deliver the same benefits of a P&R located south of the stadium roundabout. The same applies to a combine P&R with a TRSA. Furthermore, the preliminary Buro Happold report concludes that by combining the TRSA with a P&R, the P&R can be delivered sooner and at reduced cost as a result of "functional synergies". As a result, the full DTEP proposals can be delivered sooner, together with the associated air quality, environmental and economic benefits to the town.
- 5.42 It is however acknowledged that a combined facility would be larger and more intrusive than a stand-alone P&R site. Although landscape impacts will be concentrated on one site, environmental issues will have to be mitigated to an acceptable degree. In this respect, the Buro Happold report points out that there are opportunities for off-site and on-site planting to mitigate visual impacts.
- 5.43 In summary, there is evidence to support the principle of P&R in the AONB. There is evidence to support the principle of providing a TRSA in the Dorchester area. There is evidence to support the TRSA being combined with the P&R, and therefore being located in the AONB. The main issue is the weighing of the environmental and economic benefits to Dorchester of delivering DTEP sooner, against the increased environmental impacts of a combined site in the AONB. For this reason the policy wording has been amended to refer to the need for adequate mitigation. The policy makes it clear that an application will have to be supported by adequate detailed evidence on both the environmental and economic impacts of the proposal (see actual wording in the plan).

#### DOR 11 LAND AROUND THE DORCHESTER AREA

- 5.44 Significant issues raised were with regard to meeting the development needs of Dorchester with an allocation at Crossways. Other objections were also made on the grounds that development of this scale would be more sustainable if located at Dorchester. Given these

concerns, the council gave further consideration to an alternative strategic approach. A recommendation to consult on an alternative strategy was considered at the West Dorset District Council Executive Committee on 15 January 2013. The committee report is available on line via the following link:

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=179764&filetype=pdf>

- 5.45 It is acknowledged that the development of an urban extension at Dorchester or in the surrounding area would provide additional housing and employment opportunities to support longer-term growth at the end of the plan period. A number of options around Dorchester had been assessed previously through the Halcrow report on urban extensions and through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Not all of these were promoted actively through the local plan process and so not all were fully discussed during the public consultation to date. In particular, while the land north of the watermeadows at Dorchester has been promoted, the other main area examined in the Halcrow report, to the south-east of Dorchester, has received less consideration.
- 5.46 Further work was carried out to explore the potential for development on the south-eastern edge of the town. As a result of this work, land to the south east of the town, outside the by-pass, was been identified as having the potential to deliver a mix of housing, employment and community uses. The site was part of a larger site to the SE of Dorchester that had been previously assessed in the Halcrow study. A site in this location had some potential advantages over the north Dorchester option (as put forward as an alternative site), in that it was less separate from the rest of the town and was considered to have a lesser impact on surrounding landscape. Account was also taken of the significant public concern about the north Dorchester option were raised during the preliminary consultation on the local plan in autumn 2011, and again in responses to policy DOR11 during the summer consultation.
- 5.47 The new identified site was outside the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to the north and east of Conygar Hill. Initial site assessment work identified that the local topography and existing mature woodland planting, would ensure that the site would be relatively well contained in wider views. It was considered that due to the comparatively low-lying nature of the site, it could be developed without resulting in significant harm to the landscape setting of Dorchester and views out to the countryside from the town. The visual impact of development would, however, be reduced further by additional structural planting both within and around the perimeter of the site, particularly on the eastern flank.
- 5.48 The developable area of the site was limited by surface water flooding, its proximity to the bypass and rising land to the south. The total site area was in the region of 42ha, 6ha of which is liable to surface water flooding. The remaining 36ha is available for development and it was estimated that the site could deliver in the region of 1,000 new homes and about 3 ha for employment and community uses.
- 5.49 Given the location of the site, adjacent to the A35 Dorchester by pass, the impact of development upon the trunk road network would have been a critical factor. It was clear that significant improvements and alterations to the Max Gate junction of the A35 Dorchester Bypass would have been required. A new pedestrian/cycle link across the A35 by-pass would also be needed, to provide a safe and reasonably direct route from the site to existing schools and other community facilities in the Manor Park area of the town. In terms of the distribution of uses, the area in the far south-east of the site was considered more suited to employment uses, with the potential to have direct access onto the existing roundabout at the junction of Alington Avenue and the West Stafford by-pass with the A352.



- 5.50 It was also considered likely that a landscaped buffer would be necessary between the bypass and the new housing, to help attenuate noise from the road. There was also the opportunity to create a linear greenspace through the site to accommodate the natural drainage. This could also have provided an opportunity to link routes through the site to the pre-existing rights-of-way network within and around the town; and into the wider countryside.
- 5.51 This site was subject to public consultation as part of the Alternative Strategy Consultation in Spring 2013. Details of the outcome of this consultation are set out in section 7.

#### CRS 1 LAND AT CROSSWAYS

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- 5.52 Some significant points were raised about the development allocations at Crossways. The Parish Council, while not opposed in principle to development, requested that the area of development be reduced to something more in keeping with past rates of development. As outlined above, other objections were made on the grounds that development of this scale would be more sustainable if located at Dorchester.
- 5.53 Consideration was given to the possibility of reducing the allocation at Crossways in light of the significant local resistance to the size of the proposed development. A recommendation to consult on an alternative strategy was considered at the West Dorset District Council Executive Committee on 15 January 2013. The committee report is available on line via the following link:  
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=179764&filetype=pdf>
- 5.54 Natural England commented specifically on the allocations at Crossways to the effect that: “The additional residential development would be likely to have a significant effect on the European heathland. There needs to be greater certainty that SANGs can be provided, as these are not currently allocated.”
- 5.55 In response, to these concerns, positive steps were taken to work with Natural England and the relevant landowners, to identify the portions of land that would be set aside and managed as Sites of Alternative Natural Green Space. This information would allow the SANGS areas to be identified in association with the allocation, as part of the relevant inset map. The policy text could also be amended to clarify that SANG provision would be essential to any development going ahead. Plans of the proposed SANG areas are attached at Appendix 3.
- 5.56 With regard to possible nutrient enrichment of Poole Harbour, Waste Water Studies were carried out for both the land to the north of the village (Woodsford Farms) the land to the south of Warmwell Road, known as Summer Farm. The findings of the September 2012 report for land to the north of the village, concluded that the allocated development (as in the pre-submission draft) on the Woodsford Farms sites at Crossways would not contribute additional nitrogen (N) loadings to Poole Harbour. Mitigation provided by the reduction in N fertiliser application to agricultural land would offset the additional Nitrogen that would be discharged from treatment of waste water from the development.
- 5.57 The Summer Farm study was prepared in March 2013 and concluded that 490 units can be accommodated on the site without the need for mitigation. The development would in effect be ‘nitrate neutral’ as the housing will be offset by taking the land (including the proposed SANG sites) out of arable production and livestock grazing. The nitrogen loading from the additional 10 units will need to be mitigated, but for such a low number, this should not undermine the deliverability of the proposals. (Further information on the nutrient enrichment issue is included in the Environment background paper).

- 5.58 Comments from Dorset County Council on the pre-submission draft highlighted the potential need for minerals safeguarding. This related to the emerging policies in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Local Plan Core Strategy, which was subject to consultation in October 2012. The council sent a response to the consultation that although the strategy made clear that it is likely that any conflict (in relation to the major sites) could be overcome, it was not clear where this is evidenced.
- 5.59 A meeting was subsequently arranged with the two councils and representatives of the landowner / developers, which highlighted that the landowner / developer should undertake a study to assess the potential for viable prior extraction. It was made clear in a subsequent email dated November 2012 that, if the site is ultimately to be developed, and it contains viable mineral deposits that can feasibly be removed, the Mineral Planning Authority would want to see some mineral extracted, leaving an undisturbed surface above the winter water table that can be built on. It was stressed that the Mineral Planning Authority would take a pragmatic view to this issue, bearing in mind the importance of avoiding unnecessary delay. The Minerals Local Plan Core Strategy was examined in May 2013.
- 5.60 An assessment of the planning constraints to quarrying sand and gravel from the land south of the village at Summer Farm was prepared on behalf of the landowner in January 2013. The assessment concluded that it would be possible to extract sand and gravel from the eastern and southern parts of the site. The report points out that establishing a new quarry, rather than an extension to an existing quarry, may raise commercial viability issues given the significant infrastructure costs that would be involved. However, there is the option to remove all or part of the mineral deposit prior to carrying out the development working from west to east. Alternatively the area could be used solely as a 'borrow pit' with the material being used for construction purposes, possibly as part of the development – depending upon the suitability of the material extracted.
- 5.61 A significant number of comments on the Crossways allocation raised concern over the adequacy of the existing road, cycle and public transport links to the village. The Highways Agency also commented to the effect that the development would be likely to affect the Strategic Road network at Max Gate, the junction with the A35/A352, which is currently a sub standard junction with no plans for improvement. As such, mitigation would be required. To address these concerns, the developers undertook a detailed Transport Accessibility Appraisal which was published in October 2012. The report was prepared on behalf of Woodsford Farms and reviewed the transport, sustainability and access issues relating to the proposed mixed-use development. The report concluded that:
- There is no fundamental land ownership or design constraint to providing appropriate access by all modes to each site.
  - Crossways is an appropriate and sustainable location in transport terms for significant growth. The existing local shops, doctor and primary school allow for a much greater proportion of day-to-day trips to be retained within the settlement itself and thereby lessening the dependency on other nearby settlements such as Dorchester.
  - Further afield Dorchester and indeed Poole and Bournemouth are all accessible by public transport which offers significant opportunities to reduce the need to travel by car.
  - Existing public transport infrastructure is of good quality and includes a main line railway within walking and cycling distance. Significant development at Crossways would therefore build on this facility. This would be augmented by improvements to local public bus links. These improvements will benefit not only the development of the site, but also the wider settlement.

- The whole settlement is within easy walking and cycling distance of the sites and, in general routes are low trafficked and conducive to these modes. Further significant improvements, which again would benefit the development and the wider settlement can be provided by the development.
  - The level of development proposed will have no significant local or strategic highway impacts.

5.62 A transport appraisal for the land south of Warmwell Road was carried out in March 2013. Whilst this report focused on issues relating to the land south of Warmwell Road, it also covered some items that were applicable to the other proposed land allocations in Crossways to the north and west of the village, and referred to the earlier report prepared by David Tucker Associates ( as referenced above). The report also offered a critique of the transport report prepared in connection with the alternative site proposal to the north east of Dorchester.

5.63 In conclusion, the report notes that Crossways benefits from a railway station (at Moreton) in relatively close proximity, and there is an existing bus service that could be enhanced in order to serve the development areas to a higher frequency. It goes on to say that measures could be introduced to the B3390 through Crossways to help reduce speeds to achieve a reduction in speed limit, and it would also be beneficial to introduce a cycle lane to the railway station. The land south of Warmwell Road site is located in a key location within the village, close to shops and other local facilities. Detailed traffic modelling will, however, subsequently need to be provided for locations in the vicinity of the Crossways sites, including junctions on the B3390, and on the western link road on the route to Dorchester.

5.64 Network Rail were consulted in June/July 2012, but had not commented on the proposed allocation at Crossways. As the development had implications in terms of the capacity and suitability of the existing rail network and associated infrastructure – particularly surface level crossings -, Network Rail was contacted in November 2012 to check that they had no comments to make on the pre-submission consultation. The potential to construct a footway/cycle path over the railway line to the north of Crossways to allow safe pedestrian and cycle access to the proposed recreation area also needed to be explored. The Transport Accessibility Appraisal, prepared by David Tucker Associates for Broadway Malyan on behalf of Woodford Farms (one of the major landowners) was also made available. As a result, a number of subsequent meetings were held involving district and county council representatives, the landowners/developers and Network Rail. This highlighted that, for a strategic allocation of 1,200 to 1,500, improvements should be made to Moreton Level Crossing and Woodsford 38 (upgrading them to full barriers at a cost of approximately £1M each). A new foot/ cycle bridge over the railway could be installed as opposed to making changes to Woodsford 37, potentially linking to the existing cycleway and to Moreton Station (at a cost estimate of £1,000,000).

## 6 ALTERNATIVE SITES CONSULTATION – OCTOBER 2012

- 6.1 A small proportion of respondents to the formal consultation on the pre-submission draft of the Local Plan suggested new ‘Alternative’ development sites either in addition to or in place of land identified in the draft Plan. Further consultation on these alternative sites was carried out in order to allow the public the opportunity to express their opinions. The full report on the outcomes of this consultation is available on line.
- 6.2 Of the sites put forward in the Eastern area, none were considered suitable for inclusion as a change to the pre-submission draft. The sites were either not strategic in scale and were better suited to consideration as part of a neighbourhood plan, or were located within a

defined Development Boundary and could, in principle, be developed without the need for a specific allocation.

- 6.3 In the case of the urban extension put forward on land to the north-east of Dorchester, the Halcrow study had already questioned the deliverability of development in this location. However, given the acknowledged need for additional housing and employment located within or close to the county town, the proposal was assessed in more detail.
- 6.4 The comments of the relevant statutory consultees, made in response to the North Dorchester site in the Alternative Sites Consultation, area set out in the table below.

Statutory Consultees	Response
Natural England	Considers that the proposal would have significant consequences for local landscape. Allocation would result in a significant increase in disturbance within the River Frome floodplain.
DCC (Highways)	Have major concerns as to the likely impact on the on the local highway network and the practicality of footway and cycle links. Site not within easy reach of schools and services by sustainable modes.
DCC (Archaeology & Historic Environment)	Are concerned that development in this area would have a significant negative impact on the character of the surrounding landscape and the setting for Dorchester. The existing settlement pattern and relationship with Charminster and Stinsford would be adversely affected. Lots of known archaeology.
DCC (Education)	In terms of education provision, this alternative site would require an additional 1.5 FE to be found in Dorchester, this could be delivered through the extension of the Prince of Wales School and St Mary's Charminster.
DCC (Drainage)	DCC note that the area is susceptible to surface water flooding and significant overland flow north/south.
The Highways Agency	Consider this option to have the most impact on the strategic road network, noting serious constraints from Cuckoo Lane to Stinsford roundabout, as well as Max Gate and Stadium Roundabout junctions. The Agency suggests that this site is marginally preferable to the development proposed at Crossways. Necessary mitigation could include dualling the A35 between Cuckoo Lane and Stinsford.
English Heritage	Notes that the site is adjacent to several heritage assets.
Wessex Water	Note the existence of a number of water mains crossing the site, these would be a constraint on building and tree planting. Wessex Water also notes the need for significant improvements to ensure no increased risk from sewer flooding and no deterioration in water quality to the existing environment.
Environment Agency	Confirms flood zones and surface water drainage either within or adjacent the site.

## 7 ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY CONSULTATION - SPRING 2013

- 7.1 The feedback from the June 2012 consultation identified strong local concerns about proposals in Sherborne, Beaminster and Crossways. In response, the council considered whether there was a viable alternative approach, and agreed to undertake public consultation on a potential alternative strategy that allocated more of the new homes and jobs at Dorchester towards the end of the plan period, rather than at Sherborne,

Crossways and Beaminster. It was acknowledged that this was possibly a more sustainable approach to meeting West Dorset’s development needs.

- 7.2 Dorchester does currently have a good supply of development land on the Poundbury and Brewery sites, but after these have been completed, there are no further significant development allocations to provide for the town’s continued growth. The reasoning behind the alternative strategy was that the identification of an appropriate site in the Local Plan would provide longer-term certainty about the future growth of the county town after the completion of the Poundbury development. This would help set a clear long-term strategy and avoid the threat of additional speculative proposals. However, identifying options for future development around Dorchester is difficult because the town has reached a number of natural and man-made limits, notably the water meadows to the north, the Dorset AONB to the south and west and the bypass on the remaining sides.
- 7.3 One area of land close to the edge of the town was identified by the council as having development potential. The site was outside the Dorset AONB, and although beyond the bypass, had the potential to provide direct pedestrian/cycle links to nearby community facilities and the town centre beyond. This land south-east of Dorchester would enable long-term future growth needs of the county town (post-Poundbury) to be met.
- 7.4 To reflect the considerations as outlined above, the alternative strategy proposed the following:
- The new urban extension on land to the south-east of Dorchester. The site could include around 1,000 new homes post 2021, with at least 35 per cent affordable housing, plus new community facilities, offices and industrial units as well as improved traffic management.
  - The site at Barton Farm, Sherborne would be reduced to leave just the site with planning permission.
  - Hollymoor Lane, Beaminster would be reduced or removed; and
  - The allocation at Crossways would be reduced to about 700 homes.
- 7.5 Details of the consultation and the summary of responses are available on-line at: <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=183936&filetype=pdf> .

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#### COMMENTS RECEIVED

- 7.6 There were approximately 2,100 responses to the consultation. The main issues raised were as follows:
- Dorchester - Concerns were raised largely regarding the heritage and cultural significance of the land to the south east of Dorchester, particularly in reference to literary connections. Other issues included concerns around local infrastructure, flooding, landscape and visual impact and the rural setting of the town. The north Dorchester consortium also objected on the grounds that given the limited opportunities around the town, land at North Dorchester is considered to be able to provide the more sustainable option, than land at South East Dorchester, to accommodate the district’s development needs.
  - Beaminster - The majority of comments supported the removal of the allocation at Hollymoor Lane citing the traffic and access concerns as the main reason for this.
  - Sherborne - The majority of comments supported the removal of the extended allocation at Barton Farm because of the impact on historic character and local infrastructure.
  - Crossways - The majority of comments objected to the amount of dwellings at Crossways rather than commenting on the principle of reducing the allocation. The

main reasons for these objections were concerns about the unsuitability of the village location and the inability of the local infrastructure to cope with this level of development.

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#### FURTHER EVIDENCE

- 7.7 In light of the strong concern expressed over the landscape impacts of the proposed allocation at South East Dorchester, and the effect that it would have upon the heritage and cultural significance of the land around the town; further work was commissioned by the council to provide a more detailed site assessment. Given the assertions made by the North Dorchester consortium, a similarly detailed appraisal was made of that site too to allow a direct comparison of the two sites.
- 7.8 The resulting Historic Environment Assessment of Land North and South-East of Dorchester concluded that, with regard to south east Dorchester, the northern and eastern parts of the site had a low to moderate-low historic environment capacity, which means that this land has very limited capacity for development due to need to protect the settings of the adjacent Max Gate and Old Came Rectory Listed Buildings. However, the remainder of the site has a moderate historic environment capacity, which means that this land has some capacity for development assuming the following key development principles are applied:
- Potential development should avoid the northern and eastern parts of the Site in order to protect the settings of adjacent designated heritage assets.
  - The design and layout of any development should respect the wider settings of the Max Gate and Old Came Rectory Listed Buildings, key views from Max Gate and the contextual relationship between the two buildings.
  - Provision of a strategic landscape buffer to soften the northern and eastern edge of any potential development area.
  - Potential development should avoid the flanks of the prominent ridge of higher land along the southern edge of the Site, as this forms the backdrop to views southwards from Max Gate and may also be visible from designated heritage assets to the south of the ridge (Winterbourne Herrington Scheduled Monument and Came House Grade II Listed Building, Came Park, the water meadows of South Winterbourne, and the former historic settlements of Winterbourne Came, Farringdon and Herrington).
  - An appropriate programme of archaeological investigations should be undertaken to assess the archaeological potential of any development areas within the Site.
- 7.9 This additional evidence suggests that more of the eastern portion of the site would need to be set aside for strategic structural planting, which would reduce the developable area. As a result, the estimated number of housing units that the site could provide was reduced from 1000 to 800.
- 7.10 In terms of the historic environment capacity for development of land at North Dorchester, The eastern and southern parts of the Site are assessed as having moderate-low historic environment capacity, which means that this land has limited capacity for development due to need to protect the settings of adjacent designated heritage assets.
- 7.11 The remainder of the site is assessed as having moderate-high historic environment capacity, which means that this land has good capacity for development assuming the following key development principles are applied:
- Potential development should avoid the eastern and southern parts of the Site in order to protect the settings of adjacent designated heritage assets.

- The design and layout of any development should respect the wider settings of the Kingston Maurward Historic Park and Garden, Stinsford Conservation Area and Dorchester Conservation Area and key views across, into and between them.
  - Provision of a strategic landscape buffer to soften the southern and eastern edge of any potential development area.
  - An appropriate programme of archaeological investigations should be undertaken to assess the archaeological potential of any development areas within the Site.

7.12 Taking into account the findings of the historic environment assessments summarised above, the report concluded that parts (but not all) of both Sites have the potential to accommodate some level of urban development without unacceptable harm on designated heritage assets or their settings. However, any proposals would need to take into account the site-specific opportunities and constraints. Where there is potential for direct or indirect impacts on the historic environment, mitigation measures will be required. Archaeological investigations would also need to be undertaken to inform site development.

7.13 The council also commissioned a landscape visual impact assessment (LVIA) for both of the sites. With regard to the north of Dorchester proposals, the LVIA concluded that there would be a high potential for significant and adverse impacts upon the local landscape character from this development. Within the area proposed, development would appear to be fundamentally at odds with the rural landscape character of the Cerne and Piddle Valleys and Chalk Downland character area. There was concern that the open expanses of the medium-large fields would not be able to sensitively accommodate development, demonstrated by the open views towards the site from a number of local, middle distance, and wider visual receptors. Although mitigation planting of discrete site areas could be effective in some localised views, extensive areas of planting would appear incongruous in the elevated and open areas of the site. Localised impacts upon the character of the site and rural lanes would also be significant.

7.14 The assessment highlighted that a number of highly sensitive visual receptors would experience views of the site; from public rights of way and national trails both within and outside the AONB designation. Development of this scale could not be completely screened without adversely affecting the landscape character, and consequently, would form a dominant new development feature in a number of these local to middle distance views.

7.15 The role the site plays in forming the setting of the town would also be adversely affected, with development interrupting views into open countryside from within and on the northern edge of the town.

7.16 When seen in wider views to the south and south west, the development would form a modest extension to Dorchester; being visible currently as undeveloped fields, but viewed in context with existing development. However, in views further to the east or west, and on the elevated Osmington Ridge to the south, the site becomes increasingly detached from the urban form of Dorchester, and the site's isolation becomes more apparent.

7.17 Overall, the LVIA concluded that without substantially reducing the area of built form in this area, the landscape and visual impacts of development could not be mitigated, and there would be significant residual impacts on the character of the landscape.

7.18 With regard to the site to the south east of Dorchester, the LVIA highlighted the high potential of development in this location to give rise to locally experienced negative impacts. These would affect the landscape character and local views of the site, which would be typical of the development of a greenfield site.

- 7.19 In terms of the wider character impacts, it was concluded that these would be minimal given the low-lying nature of the parcel of land. It was determined that the site is not discernible as a landscape feature beyond a small radius. Provided development is kept away from the southern ridgeline (as currently proposed), the development of the site would not be considered to have a negative impact upon the wider character of the landscape or the AONB. Appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures could significantly reduce the localised impacts.
- 7.20 With regard to the impact upon the AONB, the designation lies closest to the eastern corner of the site. There is no public access in this area, the closest receptors therefore being the A352 approach from the south east, and the public footpath entering the site from the south at North Plantation. From within the designation on the A352, the site is screened from view by the plantation woodland. It is anticipated that new planting strengthening the eastern boundary beyond this point would form an integral part of the mitigation plan at the site, although complete screening of the site could likely not be achieved from the A352 once outside the AONB designation. A view from North Plantation is included in the assessment, and there would be an adverse impact on this view for a short stretch of public footpath.
- 7.21 In conclusion, the wider visual impacts upon the AONB and the wider undesignated landscape would be limited to glimpses of rooftops set within or immediately adjacent to the existing built form of Dorchester, and are not considered to result in a significant change to the visual quality of the area.

#### CRS1 - CROSSWAYS

- 7.22 The responses to the alternative strategy consultation failed to identify a preferred option for the development at Crossways – except that there was majority support for no allocations in the village. However, the Parish Council continued to support a level of growth that reflected previous development trends at Crossways, which would deliver in the region of 400 units over the plan period.
- 7.23 During the consultation period on the alternative strategy proposals, representatives for the two major landowners involved in development proposals for Crossways were invited to make a presentation to the local community at a parish council meeting. The event was an opportunity for the two prospective developers to expand upon the various merits of the different sites, with the aim that the community could make an informed decision as to which of the sites they would wish to support. Following consideration of the material provided, the Parish Council supported development on land to the south and east of the existing village, rather than development of land to the north. This position was taken after an additional public meeting in Crossways that sought feedback on the options from members of the local community. Notes from the extraordinary Parish Council meeting are attached as Appendix 4

## 8 FURTHER MODIFICATIONS PROPOSED

### DORCHESTER

- 8.1 The principal issue raised during consultation on the south-east Dorchester option was the impact on the historic and cultural interests of this part of Dorchester. While further work on this issue has been recently carried out, the implications of this have not been fully assessed. The council therefore concluded that it would be preferable to exclude the potential allocation from the plan at this stage, and reconsider all the options for development through the next review of the plan.



- 8.2 As outlined in revisions to Policy SUS 1 - The Level of Economic and Housing Growth, it is proposed to adopt the plan with approximately 18 years' housing land supply for West Dorset, and to undertake an early review of the plan to identify appropriate allocations for development post 2021.

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#### CROSSWAYS

- 8.3 The council has recommended that the plan be modified to reduce the scale of development proposed at Crossways.
- 8.4 The local plan (as proposed to be modified) allocates land to the south-east of the village, on the southern side of the Warmwell Road, to deliver in the region of 500 new homes and a minimum of 3.5 ha for employment. The plan recognises that further work is needed to properly plan the development, including the necessary phasing of infrastructure. Cross-boundary cooperation with Purbeck District Council is needed to ensure that the road and rail connections and impact on nearby heathlands is reflected in both local plans.
- 8.5 The plan states in Policy CRS1 that the site should be developed in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan for the village prepared in conjunction with Crossways Parish Council, adjoining parish councils, Dorset County Council, Purbeck District Council, Network Rail and the local community, and agreed by West Dorset District Council. The masterplan will need to be subject to a BREEAM for Communities Assessment.





## APPENDIX 2: DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS APPRAISAL 2011- CROSSWAYS

## BACKGROUND

Crossways is a large village has a comparatively short history, developing from a World War 2 fighter base which operated until 1946, and then becoming an important area for sand and gravel extraction. The village lies around 8km east of Dorchester and is one of a number of large villages surrounding Dorchester from which a large proportion of residents commute to work in the town. It has a range of local services, though it lacks a defined centre and the provision of services and facilities has not always kept pace with the rapid pace of development in the past. Moreton Station on the Weymouth to Waterloo rail line provides an opportunity for public transport accessibility to jobs, shops and services, though it is not ideally located for Crossways village. Recent development has provided opportunities to improve the local facilities: a new first school has now been provided, replacing the former first school at Warmwell.

Crossways was identified as a potential location for a greater scale of development to meet some of the wider needs of the Dorchester area. It takes advantage of relatively unconstrained land, outside the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, though there internationally protected heathlands in the wider surrounding area and it is essential that any adverse impacts from additional recreational pressure on these sites are mitigated through the provision of attractive informal recreational land in easy walking distance of the development.

Development in this location can take advantage of the village's proximity to the railway line, and should provide safer pedestrian access to it. As a significant proportion of existing residents work in Dorchester there is an opportunity to provide better public transport access for some of these journeys. The provision of additional employment and community facilities in conjunction with any housing development is important to increase the village's relative self-containment and reduce the need to travel. There is some support in the local community for additional development if it enables the provision of additional facilities, and the scale of development envisaged would be sufficient to enable this. It also provides an opportunity to enhance the character of the settlement, provide more of a community focus, and provide a strategic network of green infrastructure.

## LOCAL NEEDS INFORMATION

Work on the parish plan and audit of existing facilities has shown that there is a need or desire for:

- a new community hall (which should include indoor sports use) and improved library
- expanded Medical Centre/Surgery
- outdoor tennis courts, cycle and running (trim trail) tracks
- improvements to existing facilities / open spaces and new open spaces (particularly natural greenspaces)
- improved pedestrian and cycleway links to station / Dorchester
- greater capacity within and improvements to the middle school (at Puddletown)

## DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Land to the north [B], north-west [A] and the former airfield to the south-west [E] of Crossways are all part of a major landholding. Land to the south-east [D], is in different ownership. All these sites were put forward for development through this council's call for potential sites. Land to the north-east [C] has also been identified by the council as a possible option (part of which lies within Purbeck District).

By allocating some land for development, the higher land values obtained for open market housing can help bring forward the same amount of local affordable housing, and potentially help deliver local employment workplaces and other community benefits.



A smaller scale of development at Crossways would be more in keeping with the level of demand for housing at the village at present, and would require less mitigation against impacts on the heathlands. It would have a lower potential to generate car commuting. But it would have less potential to make a real difference to the settlement in terms of the provision of facilities and settlement design and character.

A more detailed assessment of the development options at Crossways follows.

[A] Frome Valley Road + [B] Woodsford Fields + [C] Land NORTH of Deer Leap House

This area has the potential to deliver up to 700 homes (280 affordable) and around 3.3ha of employment land. This scale of development is more than is needed for the local area, but could help meet the wider Dorchester area's needs. It would need to be released in phases, with the next logical phase being Woodsford Fields, to the north of the existing school.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ The site is close to the school and existing recreation ground and MUGA</li> <li>✦ The development could enable the provision of a reasonably direct and attractive link to the station for those living north of Dick O' Th' Banks Road</li> <li>✦ There is potential to create an additional access point just south-east of the school.</li> <li>✦ The wooded edges help screen the development in longer distance views to some degree</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— The site is visible in long distance views from the north, with land just north-east of the school more elevated than previous development</li> <li>— The community centre would be 'off-centre' for the rest of the village, and not immediately obvious to visitors to the area.</li> <li>— The land to the north-east is in a different ownership but key to providing the link to the station and suitable open spaces as an alternative to more sensitive heathland sites. Recreational space and a possible link to the station on land north of the railway line are unlikely to be sufficiently attractive to, and safe for, users.</li> <li>— There was a landfill site within the sports field, but records indicate that it has been filled with inert material and is unlikely to pose a significant risk</li> <li>— There may be noise from the MUGA and railway</li> <li>— There is an underground pipeline that runs across Woodsford Fields from School Drive</li> <li>— Localised flooding on the sports field</li> <li>— Land north of Deer Leap House is within Purbeck and appears to have been previously quarried, levels / stability require further investigation</li> </ul>

[D] South of Warmwell Road

This area has the potential to deliver up to 700 homes (280 affordable) and around 8.8ha of employment land. As with the alternative option, this scale of development is more than is needed for the local area, but could help meet the wider Dorchester area's needs. It would need to be released in phases, with the areas closest to the Warmwell Road being the logical first step.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ The site is close to existing shops, the library and community hall</li> <li>✦ The development could provide a more logical heart to the village, and improve the existing pedestrian links to the station</li> <li>✦ The land to the south-east could provide a suitable public recreational area to relieve the pressure on the more sensitive heathland sites.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— The site lies close to former minerals workings, although this may not pose a problem</li> <li>— Although the speed of traffic along Warmwell Road can be managed, and the Weymouth Relief Road should provide an attractive alternative route to the south coast, it will still have a reasonable level of traffic</li> <li>— There is an industrial estate which includes unneighbourly uses, but this is within a former quarry</li> </ul>

- + There is a mature sycamore and some hedgerows and tree clumps within the site
- + The community hall has historic associations with the WWII airfield

- and therefore below adjoining ground level
- There is an underground pipeline that runs across the northern corner of the site
- Land west of the track to Moigne Combe is at a lower level than the Warmwell Road, and it would be difficult to develop this area with an active frontage

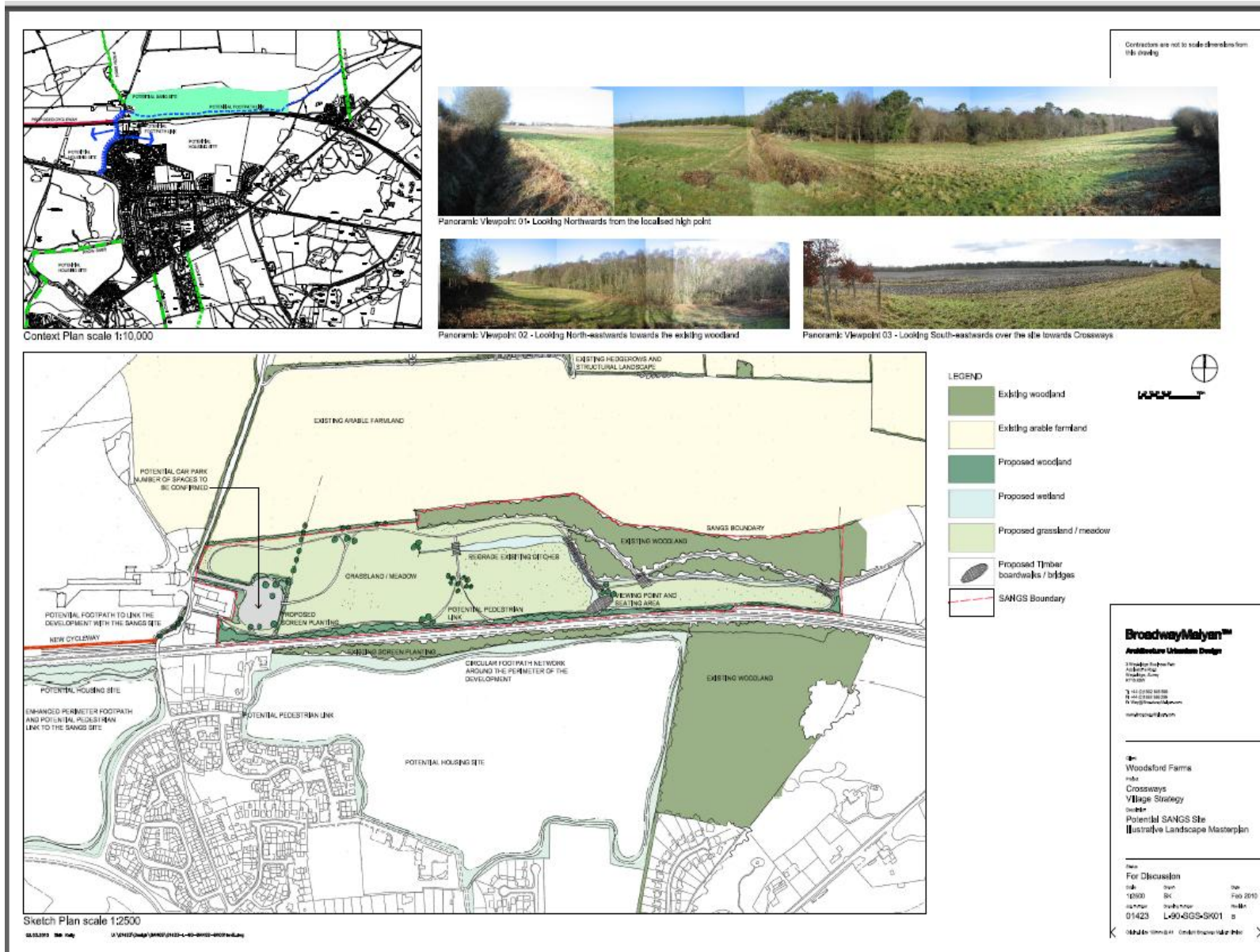
**[E] North of Warmwell Road**

This area is not suitable for housing as it relates poorly to the village and would be segregated by the outer ring road. However it does have the potential to deliver up to 14.7ha of employment land (including those parts which currently have permission). Part of this site was allocated for employment uses by the 2006 Local Plan.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of the site currently has outline planning permission for office/light industrial units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Impact of possible unneighbourly uses on Oaklands Park residents</li> <li>– The site is close to a quarry which has been infilled with industrial and commercial waste it may be contaminated</li> <li>– Poor pedestrian connections with the village.</li> </ul>

APPENDIX 3: CROSSWAYS SANG PROPOSALS

Woodsford Farms







2023

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING OF CROSSWAYS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2013 AT 7PM**

Present: Cllr Nigel Bundy (Vice Chairman), Cllr Elaine Stenning (Vice Chairman (Finance), Cllr Terrie Connor and Cllr Kathy Foster

Also Present: District Councillor Teresa Seall and District Councillor Peter Stein and 16 members of the public. All present were given a copy of the proposed submission.

Cllr Nigel Bundy opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Cllr Bundy explained that he will chair this meeting as Cllr Brewer has declared a potentially pecuniary interest in that he lives on property abutting one of the proposed sites (Site B).

Cllr Bundy opened the public participation period of the meeting enabling members of the public present to ask questions based on the proposed submission.

**The Meeting**

**Item 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Apologies were received from Cllr Brewer, Cllr Thomas and Cllr Harris. The apologies were accepted:

Proposed: Cllr Connor, seconded Cllr Stenning      **AGREED**

**Item 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** Cllr Elaine Stenning declared a non pecuniary interest in Item 4 as she lives in Oaklands Park which abuts Site C.

**Item 3 DECLARATIONS OF PREDETERMINATION** There were no Declarations of Predetermination.

**Item 4 TO DISCUSS THE PARISH COUNCIL'S SUBMISSION TO WDDC IN RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION IN THE MATTER OF THE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN** Cllr Bundy summarised the events and consultations leading up to the Parish Council's response as presented at this Extra Ordinary Meeting of the Council. Each Councillor had received a copy of the proposed response – which also has been published on the website and also e-mailed to those that normally receive notifications of meetings etc from the Clerk.

The issues that the Crossways Parish Council Working Group had to take into consideration were

- a. The consultation document proposing up to 700 new homes in Crossways and employment land.
- b. The public meeting that had taken place to hear the presentations from Broadway Malyan and Pro Vision.
- c. The Questions and Answers session after the presentations – disappointment that Broadway Malyan appeared to be somewhat 'economical with the truth' about proposed accesses to Site A considering a letter subsequently received by the Parish Council mentioning a further vehicular access via Dick O Th' Banks Road and additional pedestrian accesses.
- d. The Comment Sheets completed by attendees to the presentations – there was a wide variation in comments and opinions ranging from those who agreed with the consultation proposal for up to 700 new homes to those who did not want any further new homes or employment land.
- e. From those people agreeable to have development, but not up to 700 new homes, in Crossways the numbers ranged from 50 to 500 new homes
- f. From the proposed areas under consultation only Site B ( Warmwell Road ) was voted in favour of.
- g. The Working Group had to take into account who voted for where – generally those who lived nearest to a particular site voted against development on that site and for it to be on another site in Crossways.

2024

h. There was very mixed opinion regarding employment development on Site C – several people stated that they felt that low density residential development would be better on this site.

i. There was a very clear endorsement of the use of local facilities – shops, Health Centre and Village Hall / Youth Centre.

j. The need for improved infrastructure and facilities and for this to be done before any new development starts.

k. The need to retain and expand green spaces in Crossways.

l. The Working Group also took into account the comments and discussions at the West Dorset District Council drop-in event on the 6<sup>th</sup> March – again the comments and opinions were wide and varied and many echoed those on the Comment Sheets.

Crossways Parish Council has been very pleased with the level of attendance at both the presentations and drop-in event and delighted with the number of completed Comment Sheets after the presentations. They are very encouraged by the number of people who either completed Response Sheets at the drop-in event or took away sheets to be completed and returned to West Dorset District Council. Many thanks to all those who have spent time and energy encouraging people to respond – “the sleeping giant has awoken” The Working Group also gave consideration to the latest proposals for Sherborne, Dorchester and Beaminster and this is clearly set out in the proposed response.

As many will have seen or heard there has been much made of the latest proposals for Dorchester and you will have your own opinions on this – but one has to say that not all of the reporting has been impartial nor accurate.

The Working Group did consider

- a. The other three areas are towns – Crossways is a village and wants to remain as such.
- b. The other three areas have infrastructure in place in line with already being towns.
- c. The reasons given for revising the housing allocations in Sherborne and Beaminster equally apply to Crossways.
- d. Could the Working Group see grounds for reducing the housing allocations for Sherborne and Beaminster – NO
- e. Could the Working Group see grounds for a new housing allocation in Dorchester – YES
- f. The Working Group discussed the Alternative Sites for Dorchester that had been put out for consultation in November 2012 and would be extremely surprised if the North of Dorchester consortium do not try and take their site further in this process.
- g. The Working Group discussed that if housing allocations were considered for all towns and parishes outside of those in the consultation document it would not be inconceivable that 1000 new homes could easily be accounted for in the next 20 years.

Cllr Bundy concluded by asking if any Councillor had any questions. The Parish Council’s response to the West Dorset District Council’s Draft Local Plan was agreed.

Proposed Cllr Connor, seconded Councillor Foster

AGREED

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8pm

Signed ..... (Vice Chairman) ..... March 2013

ANNEX A TO CROSSWAYS PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES DATED 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2013

**West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Draft Local Plan  
Public Meeting – Crossways Village Hall – 20<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**Crossways Parish Council – Resident’s Comments Sheets**

**Results**

There were a total of 84 completed feedback comment sheets received back on the evening of the meeting or in the days following – not everyone answered all the questions. There were also 2 e-mail responses received – see end for details.

These results also include 2 completed feedback comments sheets which were received back immediately prior to the Crossways Parish Council meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

Do you support the revised amount of residential development proposed at Crossways ( up to 700 homes ) ?

Yes	7	No	79
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If you have answered No what number of homes would you consider reasonable?

0	19 responses	201 - 300	11 responses
1-100	15 responses	301 – 400	14 responses
101-200	9 responses	401 – 500	4 responses

Do you support the proposal to build on Woodsford Fields ( Site A ) ?

Yes	18	No	68
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Do you support the proposal to build on Frome Valley Road ( Site D ) ?

Yes	17	No	67
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Do you support the proposal to build on Warmwell Road ( Site B ) ?

Yes	46	No	39
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Do you support the proposal to have employment development on the Airfield site ( Site C ) ?

Yes	40	No	44
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Do you use the local shops in Crossways (ie Tree Stores and Premier) more than once a week?

Yes	79	No	6
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Do you use the Atrium Health Centre in Crossways ?

Yes	69	No	16
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Do you attend events in the Village Hall / Youth Centre ?

Yes	61	No	24
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Any new developments in Crossways may provide new funding for use within the community – what new / additional facilities would you like to see in Crossways ?

Village green south of Warmwell Road  
Old Peoples residential home in centre of village / Day centre  
Café – food takeaway  
New Village Hall in centre of village  
Shops at Woodsford end  
Circular walks for families free of charge  
Space to walk dogs off the lead  
A proper church ( not just a room )  
A bigger school  
Bigger doctors surgery – uprated medical facilities ( dentist etc )  
Better shops – bigger PO – butcher  
Better footpaths and cycle ways  
Community Hall / meeting place  
More facilities for children – bigger better playareas  
Accessible green areas – not having to cross busy roads

Noise reduction fencing along the road for residents of Airfield / Hurricane / Moynton  
Close ( should be done as a matter of urgency – not as a sweetener for any proposed developments )  
Family friendly pub / restaurant  
Full time library staff  
Fitness centre – swimming pool  
Tennis courts and netball pitch  
Better parks for older children  
Street lighting on more roads  
Petrol station  
A Tesco or Lidl /Aldi  
Hairdresser  
Need for secondary school  
Public toilets  
An improved bus service with a larger car park and a bus ‘turnaround’ at Moreton Station.  
What was proposed as a car park was laughable. I am assuming that the proposal for Moreton Station includes the area behind the bus shelter but that would not provide anywhere near the parking places required. Could part of the wood to the South West of the station be used as a car park with the developer planting trees elsewhere to compensate?  
A green space/country park is a great idea.

A - 2

Do you have any further comments ? A number of comments were very much the same.

Need for improved road facilities and accessibility  
Better school access if there is to be an increase in traffic  
No more housing without more infrastructure including roads  
Leave Crossways alone, build elsewhere  
Do a traffic survey on School Drive  
Frome Valley Road cannot absorb the impact of being an access road with all the articulated lorries etc and cars that extra development will bring – this is supposed to be a village!  
Building indiscriminately will almost make Crossways a small town – we will lose the village feel  
Every secondary school child has to be driven out of Crossways to school – more people = more children = more buses.  
No 3 storey houses  
Just one access to site A is too much traffic for Frome Valley Road to cope with  
Site B preferable – will keep the village centre where it is with a new Village Hall and green space  
Site D should be used as a recreation area for all villagers – it should be secured forever as an open space  
Development needs to be at the Meadows in Dorchester  
Reduce speed limits and weight limits – traffic calming  
What will the impact be on flood plains ?  
More parking spaces required at Moreton Station  
Broadband needs to be improved  
Upgrade classification of road from Crossways to Dorchester  
Encourage more use of public transport  
Better access to Moreton station  
Affordable housing for local young people essential  
Better bus service

A - 3

Comments continued

New houses should have bigger gardens for families

We have to accept that the local authority is going to build more homes and that we will have to “take a share of the pain”. The Parish Council has already persuaded WDDC to reduce the proposed build from 1,500 to 700. Realistically we cannot hope for much more of a reduction particularly when other parishes are fighting proposals in their area. We could push for a further reduction to 500.

Some development would be welcome. There are many elderly, young and poor people in the village and they need additional facilities – including improved bus service and more social and affordable housing. More local jobs are also required.

A promising presentation by Broadway Malyan was ruined by the car park proposal and the suggested single access to site A; the latter horrified me. This must be addressed whatever to cost to Woodsford Farms might be. A new road through site D and then parallel to the railway line would seem to be the only solution. However, there would need to be compensation for the residents in Park Lane. The community hub around the Primary School is a nice touch but I would prefer the Village Hall and Village Green proposed by Pro Vision.

A - 4

## E-mail responses

### E-mail 1

The additional housing isn't going where there is a need, which means that particularly with social housing tenants do not get the choice they are purported to get, they have to go where a suitably sized house has been built.

The employment opportunities are limited. We have been waiting five years for the hippy field to be commercially developed, indicating there is no need.

The public transport is poor - one bus an hour, one train an hour - would this change?

Far smaller developments pepper-potted throughout the towns and villages would spread the load; the employment opportunities; and impact on infrastructure and services such as the Police and NHS

In view of my earlier comments my preference is for either B or D to be developed, not both. Interestingly the land owner for B seems to want to build on far more of his land than the local authority do.

The owner of A & D has had plans for developing his land for some years.

Site C for employment, lets get the hippy field developed first, before we start planning for another unused site - a magnet for ASB.

Definitely not. The amount of development being considered for A with only one access road is silly. The development now suggested for Dorchester has two access points and a bus route for a slightly larger site. 'A' should also therefore have two access points if it continues to be considered.

Spread the load; there are insufficient employment opportunities around Dorchester to sustain this level of development. Sherborne is closer to the M5 than Dorchester or Beaminster so therefore commercially more viable. Dorchester and Crossways are in danger of increasing the level of retired and non-working households substantially; both groups bring greater pressure on the NHS and Police services than working households. Have the Police or NHS been asked their views on the proposals?

The roads between Crossways and Dorchester would need to be substantially improved, including the West Stafford by-pass that has not done its job as it was built on a spring; natural water sources will out.

The Train service would need to improve from one stop per hour to at least 2 stops per hour, but will S.W. Trains consider this?

### E-mail 2

I can see the need for new housing and from my point of view I have no objection to new housing being built in Crossways, the problems lie in the location of these houses and the infrastructure upgrades needed to support this expansion. I will go through each location and try and give an objective and outsider view of the pros and cons of each of them.

#### Site A

At first glance this site would seem the most recommended site for the expansion of the extra housing in Crossways, however it has some major drawbacks, some of which were voiced at the meeting.

Number one is access to the site. There is fundamentally only one access road into and out of the site which means both construction and local traffic must use this road both for access and delivery of building plant and materials. This is not a very constructive mix of traffic for either the builder or the local inhabitants of the housing bordering the access road. Children are children and building sites are fascinating places to play and view, couple this with heavy and sometimes frustrated traffic owners and you have a recipe for disaster.

It was stated during the presentation that the completed site would increase traffic by some 6 vehicles a minute during peak time. However what was not stated was the current traffic density and how this increase would relate to the already well used route. A graph here would have helped showing the expected before and after picture of traffic density, after all a 6 vehicle increase on say 6 already would double it, however a 6 increase on 12 would only increase it by one third.



Next is the site layout, it is going to be built on a North sloping vista ending in a trapped area alongside the railway line. This will need very careful drainage to take care of runoff from the roads, pavements, roofs etc to take into account the possibility of flooding in the North East corner of the site. I did note the planted 'buffer zone' between the proposed housing and the railway line which could also be used as the drainage area and provide some noise reduction of passing trains, some thought had gone into this facet of the proposal.

A small scale increase in the housing could be dealt with by everyone but a long term multi-year major build I think would cause increasing friction among everyone concerned, and could result in conflict between the developers and indigenous population during the extended workings.

For this site my thoughts are for a small scale increase in the housing built quickly, say around one to two hundred homes and forget all the fancy Greenfield sites etc.

#### Site B

At first I laughed at the possible allocation of this area for housing but after studying Google maps it does not seem so ludicrous as first impressions give.

For a start the site is fairly level, it has reasonable drainage, access would be better than site A and in the long term it would cause much reduced traffic, noise and construction disruption than any of the other sites. Access could be made from multiple locations along the B3390 and if, as suggested during the presentation, the speed limit was lowered to 30MPH with a crossing then it may well work.

In effect the B3390 would become a village through road instead of a village bypass; it would also provide increased footfall and traffic for both the Post Office and Tree Stores so helping them maintain a better presence in the village.

Increasing the housing density along this side of the village might inconvenience some of the long term residents and I would assume mean the end of the current farm, but a sort of precedence has already been set by the building of Heathfield Park.

All in all although not the direction the village might wish to expand, this site would, if expanded beyond the boundary to the West up to Skippet Lane as suggested, give the best option of the required housing with the minimum disruption during the long build time required in the housing plan.

It would surround the current business park but as this is in a hollow and surrounded with trees and shrubs I do not think this would have a major impact on the lives of anyone living near the business units built there. Maybe not the best location for the park but as the other site would have to deal with passing train noise either location has its downside.

#### Site D

This site should be abandoned and should never be built on or considered again only as a last resort. It is expanding the village in completely the wrong direction and encroaching on one of the few open spaces left to the West of the village. If anything could be done with this site it should be allocated as a green space, park, come public area and this would then tie in to the allotment and garden centre along the same side of the road possibly giving cycle and safe access to the above. It would also preserve the last remaining building of the old wartime airfield in an appropriate setting.

#### Site C

I believe this area has been allocated for employment. Well I've looked out on the so called 'Hippy Field' for the last 37 years, this was allocated for employment way, way back in the 'Draft Amendment Plan' of the late 70's early 80's and so far not one brick has been laid to construct anything. Based on the speed with which building

has taken place there, one would assume that expanding the area to cover the adjacent field would push the time frame back at least another 30 years until around 2040 and beyond (said in jest but you get my idea).

The problem with employment in Crossways are twofold, first as one young lady intimated at the meeting, Crossways is a 'Retirement Location', the main population of Crossways are in mature or advancing years so are not needed or do not need employment.

Second and the more intrusive problem is Crossways itself, I don't mean the village but the location. Every road into and out of Crossways is either B class, C class or a tarmacked cart track. Every road has major access problems, from the farce of the West Stafford bypass (flooding and low bridge), to either end of the B3390 with sharp bends, narrow streets and wooded slippery areas to negotiate.

Asking any 'High Tec' company to re-locate to this site would need major investment in things like broadband, which at the moment could only be described as 'two cans and a piece of wet string'. Telephone connections, mobile phone access (we do have one access point in the wood beyond the village hall), better road and rail access and even a possible better bus route (ah well we can but hope).

So finally, and thanks if you have read this far, my suggestions are;

Site A.

A small quickly built expansion of say up to 200 houses to complete the existing area under construction.

Site B.

Expand this to include land to the West of the site and allocate the largest proportion of the housing to this site. This would provide the least disruption for residents during the building stages.

Site C.

Well, you can leave this a employment land if you wish but a better use for the 'Hippy Field' would be low density housing starting with 2 story near Empool Close and reducing to single story and bungalows next to Oaklands. At least then something might get built there instead of the bomb site we still have now.

Site D.

Re-allocate this space as Greenfield space and open it up as community land with a park area. The initial cost could be divided between the two developments in an amicable split I'm sure.

There was some talk at the meeting about expanding the parking at Moreton Station and providing a bus turn around point there, would this be likely to go ahead if Woodsford Farms only received the smaller allocation of the housing stock?

I note quite some emphasis was placed by the presenter that Woodsford Farms now owned the land adjacent to the station.

Also I have heard on the 'Grapevine' a large water sports and public recreational development 'might' be taking place in the old quarry workings between Crossways and West Knighton, is there any provision for cycle and walking access being suggested to this possible location?

And as a final, final, please ask developers to leave their 'Rose Tinted Glasses' at home in future. The 'Draft Amendment Plan' showed a park area between Airfield Close (before it was built), and the old 'Combe Way', with a serpentine lake, walks around the edges, seats to sit and feed the ducks, shady trees and a grassed area for the children to play on. You can see for yourself what we ended up with!