

Joint Local Plan Review for West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland

BRIDPORT BACKGROUND PAPER
PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION VERSION

AUGUST 2018

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1. Introduction

PURPOSE OF BACKGROUND PAPER

- 1.1 This document is one of a number of background papers produced to support the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review.
- 1.2 This paper provides information about:
 - the approach to the future development of Bridport,
 - details of current and previous development, and
 - rates of growth and how this might change in the future.
- 1.3 The paper also gives details of the site selection process including detailed considerations of environmental constraints in the area.

LOCAL PLAN AND THE REVIEW

- 1.4 In October 2015, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council adopted their Joint Local Plan¹. The Local Plan sets out a long term planning strategy for the area and includes detailed policies and site proposals for housing, employment, leisure and infrastructure. The adopted Local Plan is the main basis for making decisions on planning applications.
- 1.5 In his report on the examination of the Joint Local Plan², the Inspector indicated that he considered it to be *"imperative that an early review is undertaken"* and that the review should be in place by 2021. The objective of the review is to identify additional housing land capable of meeting housing need to 2036, identify a long-term strategy for development in the Dorchester area; and reappraise housing provision in Sherborne.
- 1.6 Although one of the key objectives is to identify a long-term strategy for development in the Dorchester area and reappraise housing provision in Sherborne, the Local Plan review will be considering available land to meet housing needs to 2036. There is therefore a need to ensure growth at other settlements including Lyme Regis, is sufficient to meet needs over this longer-term period.

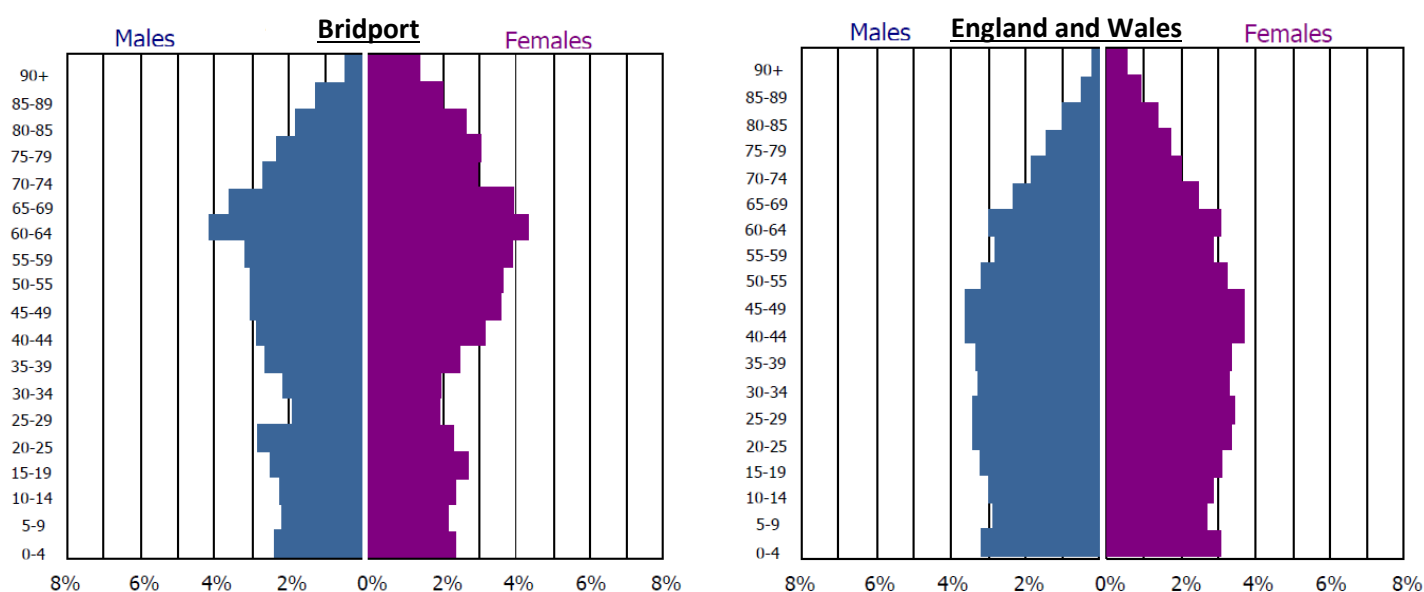
¹ <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/jointlocalplan/west/weymouth>

² <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/421782/West-Dorset-Weymouth--Portland-Adopted-Local-Plan-Inspectors-Report>

2. Bridport in Context

- 2.1 Bridport is located within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and is the second largest town in West Dorset with a population of 13,661³ people within the built-up area (including parts of the adjoining parishes of Allington, Bradpole, Bothenhampton and Symondsburry).
- 2.2 The busy market town is located on the A35 south coast trunk road about 20km west of Dorchester, and extends south to the harbour at West Bay.

Figure 2.1 Population structure - Bridport



- 2.3 Bridport has a popular weekly market and a range of local amenities and services including a good range of local and national shops, healthcare centre, schools and community buildings. These factors make it the most suitable and sustainable location for further development in this part of the district.
- 2.4 Bridport is defined by English Heritage as an industrial market town, with Bridport having a strong heritage of rope and net making going back to Roman times, with some rope and net making still carried out in the town on a smaller scale. The industrial nature of the town still remains with several large industrial estates active in the town.
- 2.5 In addition to the main urban area, Bridport also serves a wide rural area for higher level services such as shopping, education, healthcare, leisure, entertainment and library services. Bridport is relatively self contained and unlike other towns in West Dorset such as Dorchester and Sherborne, does have a relatively balanced level of

³ 2014 mid-year population estimates
(<https://apps.geowessex.com/stats/AreaProfiles/Town/bridport>)

jobs and housing with the number of people working in the town only slightly higher than the total number of economically active residents, by about 900 people.

- 2.6 The closest railway stations to Bridport are at Dorchester, on the London (Waterloo) line and on the Weymouth to Bristol line. Other stations including Axminster, on the Exeter to London (Waterloo) line is also in fairly close proximity to Bridport. In terms of other modes of public transport, there are reasonably regular bus services to and from the town.

3. Background to the growth of Bridport

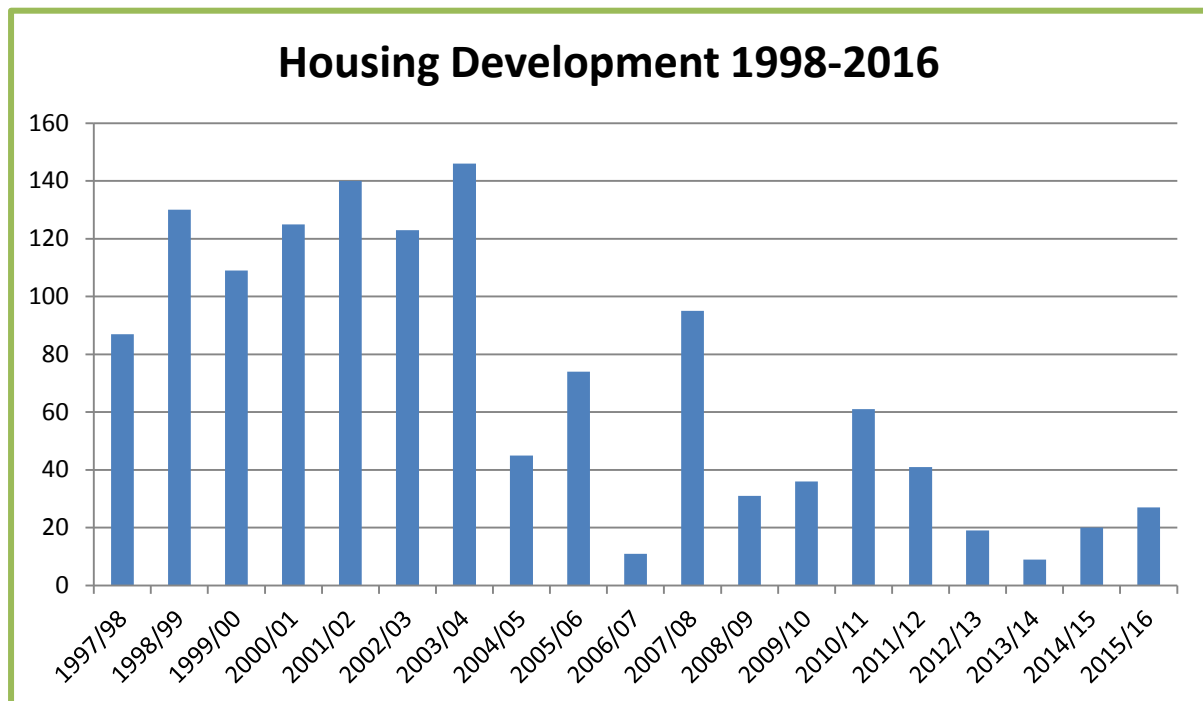
- 3.1 Since 2001, the population of Bridport has grown by 7.7% from 12,682 to 13,661. However housing growth in the town of Bridport has slowed in recent years, with average housing delivery from 1997-2006 equating to 109 units per annum in comparison to delivery between 2007-2016 averaging only 35 units per annum.
- 3.2 This is clearly visible in table 2 below which shows housing completions in Bridport since 1997. During this period there have been a total of 1,329 completions, with the number of dwellings completed ranging from 9 units in 2013/14 up to 146 units in 2001/04.

Figure 3.1: Housing Completions: Bridport

97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	06/07
87	130	109	125	140	123	146	45	74	11	11
07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	TOTAL
95	31	36	61	41	19 (6)	9 (2)	20 (0)	27 (0)	48	1,388 (8)

Source: WDDC and WPPC

Figure 3.2: Development at Bridport



- 3.3 With the local plan allocations listed in Figure 4.1 and the additional sites which have been granted planning permission, it is anticipated that around 554 new dwellings will be built in Bridport over the coming 5-year period to 2021.

4. Current Local Plan for Bridport

- 4.1 The current development strategy focuses the majority of new development on the larger settlements, which have a higher number of existing jobs and services. Policy SUS2 of the adopted Local Plan regards Bridport alongside the main towns of Dorchester, Weymouth, Sherborne etc. as an area for sustainable development.
- 4.2 All the existing housing allocations in Bridport are expected to be completed by 2031. This leaves a shortfall in delivery between the years 2031 and 2036. These main allocations will enable infrastructure and additional community facilities to be brought forward.
- 4.3 Figure 4.1 below provides information about the existing development site allocations in Bridport.

Figure 4.1: Current allocated sites in Bridport

ALLOCATION	USE/UNITS	STATUS	DELIVERY
Vearse Farm (BRID1)	Up to 760 Residential Units	Awaiting final masterplan	Complete by 2031.
Land off Skilling Hill Road (BRID2)	Up to 40 Residential Units	Awaiting planning application	Complete by 2031.
Land east of Bredy Vet's Centre (BRID3)	Up to 40 Residential Units	Awaiting planning application	tbc
St Michael's Trading Estate (BRID5)	Up to 105 Residential Units	Awaiting planning application/awaiting final decision	tbc

5. Constraints

- 5.1 The area contains a rich and wide variety of built heritage features and landscapes. The surrounding hills, flood plains and coastline dictate Bridport's boundaries, contributing to its character and wider setting.
- 5.2 There is also the coastline to the southern part of Bridport with a larger area prone to coastal erosion to the south western side of the town.
- 5.3 Bridport also has other major constraints including the flood plains from the three rivers running through the town, as well as several SNClS and a SSSI in or adjacent to the main urban area.

LANDSCAPE

- 5.4 National policy puts an emphasis on the protection and enhancement of designated landscapes. In particular, the 2018 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that "*Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing 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 these issues.*"
- 5.5 The land surrounding Bridport includes wooded hills, undulating river valley, and clay valley as defined in the 2009 Landscape Character Assessment (CD/ENV3). The town of Bridport itself is segregated by three rivers running through the town and therefore is not a continuous built-up area.
- 5.6 The topography of the landscape around Bridport has significantly impacted on the shape of the main urban area of Bridport including Allington Hill, Watton Hill, Coneygar Hill and the wooded hills between Bridport and Shipton. The flood plains and water meadows as a result of the three rivers running through the town (River Symene, River Brit and River Asker) prevent development in many areas inside the defined development boundary and adjacent to the main urban area of Bridport. These constraints also form important buffers between the older town and newer development to the east and act as open spaces within the town.
- 5.7 In addition to these, a large area of parkland at Walditch is important to the character and setting of both Bridport and Walditch, and a disused quarry at Bothenhampton is a valuable wildlife site.

HERITAGE ASSETTS

- 5.8 In relation to the historic environment, the 2018 NPPF recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

- 5.9 Bridport has been very been shaped by the coastline, topography, and three rivers running through the town. The town is defined by English Heritage and Historic England as an 'industrial market town'⁴. The early heritage of the town was dominated by rope and net making including rope making for the navy, resulting in the town being legally protected in the 16th century from external competition.
- 5.10 The town later moved into the textile industry in the 17th century. The most prosperous time for what was known as the flax and hemp trade was throughout the 18th and 19th century, with this industrial period increasing the amount of building and construction in Bridport. This period of time with prosperous industries in the town brought about many improvements to infrastructure and community buildings such as the Town Hall.
- 5.11 The growth of the flax and hemp industry continued with the increase in international trade resulting in the harbour being re-built in the mid-18th century. The netting industry also continued in Bridport and by the mid 19th century was specialising in the production of net making. Although the workforce has massively reduced, net making is still carried out in Bridport, with many of the old factory sites remaining in use in some form, allowing the industrial heritage of Bridport to continue.
- 5.12 The strong industrial heritage of Bridport has not only greatly impacted on the built heritage of Bridport but also the surrounding villages and harbour at West Bay. The industrial heritage of Bridport is still very much present today with warehouses, workshops, factory buildings and the distinctive buildings constructed for the outworkers, factory workers etc.
- 5.13 There are over 500 listed buildings and structures in the main urban area of Bridport with a large part of the town being designated as a conservation area, showing the wealth of heritage in the built environment in Bridport. Much of this heritage has stemmed from the industrial nature of the town from the previous rope, textile and netting industries.

BIODIVERSITY

- 5.14 National policy highlights the importance of safeguarding local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity. It also indicates that plans should identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains in biodiversity.
- 5.15 Inside or adjacent to the main urban area of Bridport there are several SNICs (Sites of Nature Conservation Interest) including the following; Walditch Meadow,

⁴ <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/bridport-and-west-bay/>

Wanderwell Quarry, West Bay, West Bay Cliffs, Cowleaze Farm and Broomhills Meadow. There is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the southern part of the town, West Dorset Coast SSSI which is part of the main SSSI running from Burton Bradstock to Lyme Regis.

- 5.16 The marine environment adjacent to Bridport is of excellent quality and is included in the Lyme Bay and Torbay Special Area of Conservation. The site comprises of two main areas containing 'reef' and 'sea cave' habitat.

FLOOD RISK

- 5.17 National policy states that "...inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk..." through the application of the Sequential Test.
- 5.18 Bridport has three rivers running through the main urban area including the River Symene, River Brit and River Asker. The three rivers and associated flood plains have shaped the town significantly by the size of the flood plains and the previous industries which used the rivers as a resource.
- 5.19 The flood plain to the western side of the southern part of Bridport has acted like a boundary line to the western side of the town. Equally the main town is segregated into three main parts separated by the three rivers.
- 5.20 There has been some serious flooding in Bridport in the past and therefore any additional development will be required to carefully consider the wider impacts on the town.

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

- 5.21 Agricultural land is an important resource that needs to be managed in an appropriate way to underpin sustainable development. The agricultural land is important for the production of food, biomass, water storage and biodiversity.
- 5.22 National policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Policy Guidance indicates that agricultural land classification is a material consideration when making planning decisions and that development should be steered away from the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3).
- 5.23 The Planning Policy Guidance expands on the text within the NPPF stating that national policy "...expects local planning authorities to take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. This is particularly important in plan making when decisions are made on which land should be allocated for development. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality."

- 5.24 Agricultural land is classified as grades 1 to 5. Best and most versatile agricultural land is considered to be land classified as grade 1, grade 2 and grade 3. Bridport is surrounded by a variety of agricultural land classifications. There is some high quality grade 1 agricultural land to the north of Bridport, with some areas of very good quality grade 2 agricultural land to the eastern and western sides. There is also some poor quality grade 4 agricultural land to the south western side of Bridport. The remaining area around Bridport is good-moderate quality grade 3 agricultural land.

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5.25 The access to everyday facilities by sustainable modes of transport is an important factor in considering the location of new development.
- 5.26 Bridport is a fairly self contained town. The data from the 2011-census concludes that overall net in-commuting to Bridport totals only 244 people. In comparison to other coastal towns such as Weymouth, showing a net out-commute of nearly 5,000 people, Bridport is far more self contained.
- 5.27 Although Bridport is the second largest town in West Dorset it does not have a railway station, with the closest train station in Dorchester. The main route of access to Bridport is the A35 which connects Bridport to Dorchester to the east and Honiton to the west.
- 5.28 There are smaller A and B roads which then connect Bridport to Beaminster and the northern villages of Melplash and Broadwindsor.

6. Opportunities

- 6.1 The 2018 NPPF states that there are three overarching sustainable development objectives: economic, social and environmental. Future growth at Bridport will help:
- 6.2 Economic
- Provide opportunities for more skilled work in Bridport and continue to promote the entrepreneurial nature of the town;
 - Continue to provide a balance of housing and jobs to ensure Bridport stays a more self contained town;
 - Maintain the variety of shops in the town centre;
 - Boost the tourism economy, to support all year round tourism in the area;
 - Improve transport and infrastructure within the town;
- 6.3 Social
- Meet local housing needs, including increasing the supply of affordable homes in the area and meeting demands for all tenures of housing;
 - Create a more balanced population profile for the town;
 - Retain and expand local facilities and public services including schools, doctors' surgeries, sports centres and utilities;
- 6.4 Environmental
- Support and enhance the environmentally designated sites adjacent to the town;
 - Prevent any additional development in flood plain or in areas prone to coastal erosion;
 - Maintain and enhance the character of the town recognising its previous industrial heritage;
 - Improve air quality in town by reducing traffic.
- 6.5 In West Dorset, the proportion of the population that are of working age is projected to decline significantly over coming years with the proportion for West Dorset expected to be around 49% by 2036.
- 6.6 The main implication of this change is the decline in the available workforce reducing the sustainability of the local economy overall. In addition the per-capita productivity is less than Dorset as a whole and less than nationally resulting in relatively low wages and low levels of investment in innovation.

7. Issues and Options Consultation

- 7.1 This section explains how the initial options at Lyme Regis were developed for the issues and options consultation in February 2017. The local plan review needed to consider development opportunities around the eight main settlements in the plan area as identified in the adopted policy SUS2. This includes Bridport.

INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT BRIDPORT

- 7.2 The inspector noted that *"as the largest settlement in this part of West Dorset, Bridport was the most suitable location to meet future development needs in both the immediate and wider area"*.
- 7.3 While national policy protects AONBs from major development unless there are exceptional circumstances and development is in the public interest, the inspector acknowledged that the *"Councils are well aware of the importance of protecting designated landscape but face the difficult problem of balancing such concerns with the need to provide homes and jobs to meet future needs"*. The inspector recognised that *"In order to achieve this and adhere to sustainable development principles it is inevitable that some areas in the AONB will be affected"*.
- 7.4 The inspector concluded that there were *"exceptional circumstances to justify the identification of Vearse Farm"* as an allocation within the local plan. He stated that his overall view was that Vearse Farm was a *"relatively well-contained site bounded to the west and south by the A35 bypass, by the B3162 to the north and the current western limits to the town on the east"*. The scale of the development (760 dwellings) was considered by the inspector to offer opportunities to address some traffic issues and introduce new facilities into the town.

APPROACH TO INITIAL OPTIONS

- 7.5 Considering the future growth options at Bridport, an initial 360 degree search of all possible development site options around the settlement Bridport was carried out by the council. The area of search is constrained by virtue of the coastal setting, nevertheless, 11 areas of search were identified. These areas (A-K) are shown on Map 2.
- 7.6 Unsuitable options were discounted at an early stage through an initial site sieving exercise, and details of this exercise are provided in Figure 7.1.

MAP 2: BROAD AREAS OF SEARCH – BRIDPORT

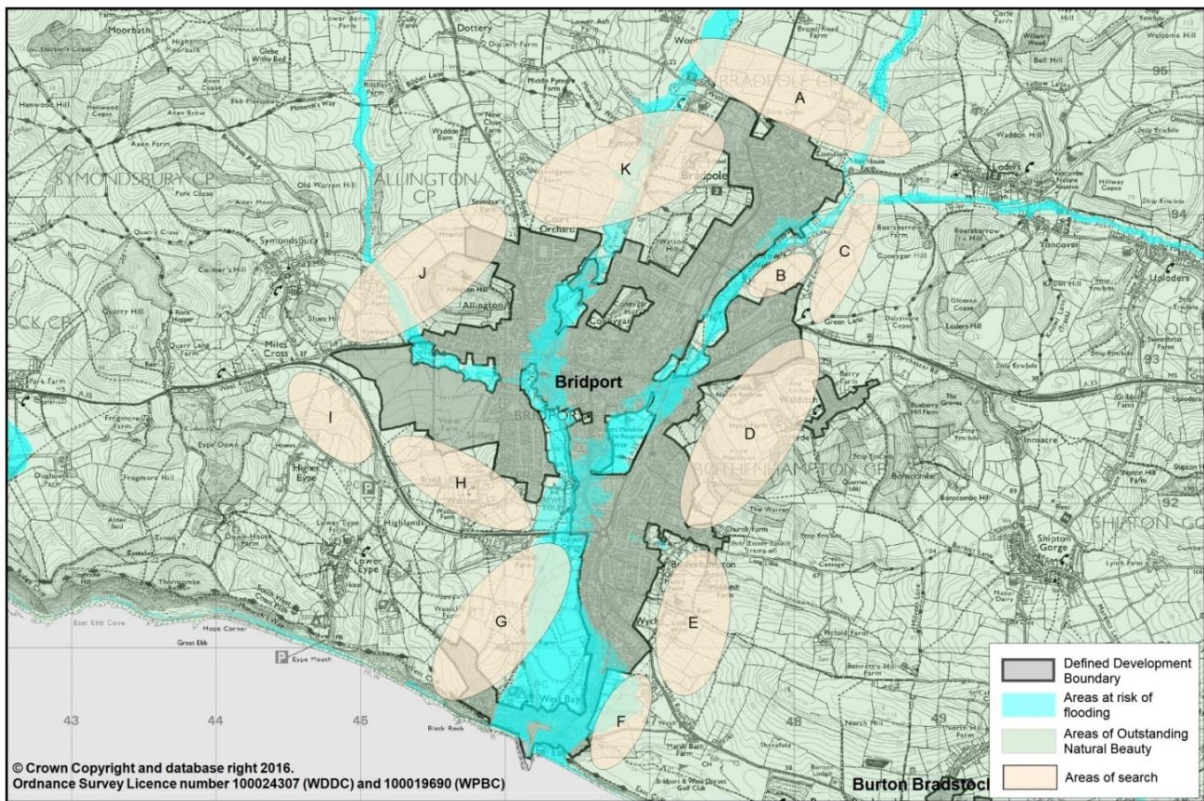


Figure 7.1: Details of each broad search area

AREA A - NORTH OF BRADPOLE	
Landscape	The majority of the site is located inside the undulating river valley, characterised by the Dorset AONB Landscape Character Assessment (2008). The site itself is a patch work of small open fields surrounded by partly wooded undulating hills.
Heritage	There is a small Scheduled Ancient Monument in Area A including a bowl barrow (tumulus), any new development would need to limit impacts upon the Scheduled Ancient Monument and the wider setting.
Biodiversity	
Flooding	The east and western sides of the site have a river running along the edge with associated flood plains. Any development in this area would need to be away from the flood planes of the two rivers.
Agricultural Land	The site is located on excellent quality and very good quality agricultural land.
Transport	The site is accessible from the A3066 from the north and south. The A3066 also connects to the A35 from Dorchester. The site can also be accessed from the villages to the eastern side of Bridport including

	Loders via Higher Street.	
Infrastructure	The site is on the edge of the town, and is close to an industrial estate and a residential area. There are some amenities associated with Bridport North, including a supermarket, however other more specialist facilities would be required from the town centre of Bridport.	
Other		
Conclusion	Potential for some development in this area avoiding impacts on Dorset AONB landscape, the scheduled ancient monument and the parts of area at risk of flooding.	Some potential in this area (BR ₄)

AREA B - HAPPY ISLAND WAY

Landscape	This site is located inside the undulating river valley. The site itself includes some undulating hills with fields lined with hedgerows and trees.	
Heritage		
Biodiversity		
Flooding	The site is adjacent to the river Asker with the associated flood plain. Therefore any development on the site would need to ensure it is not inside any part of the flood plain and mitigates impacts on potential flooding.	
Agricultural Land	The vast majority of the site is inside the designated urban area, and it therefore not impacting on designated agricultural land.	
Transport	Access to the site could be from the existing residential area off Jessopp Avenue, or it could be directly off Jessopp Avenue.	
Infrastructure	The site is close to amenities associated with Bridport North parish, including a small supermarket. The area is also fairly close to the main amenities in the centre of the town.	
Other	The site is well used by local people for dog walking etc. so some recreational area would need to be put in place with any proposal.	
Conclusion	Potential for development within this area avoiding impacts on the Dorset AONB and areas at risk of flooding.	Some potential in this area (BR ₂)

AREA C - EAST OF LEE LANE	
Landscape	This area is located inside the undulating river valley as with area a and b. The site itself includes some undulating hills with fields lined with hedgerows and trees. It lies in the changeable area from the undulating river valley into wooded hills.
Heritage	
Biodiversity	
Flooding	The site is adjacent to flood plain to the north and to the west of the site, therefore any development would need to be built outside the flood plain and mitigate impacts from potential flooding.
Agricultural Land	The site is partly in very good quality agricultural land and partly in good to moderate quality agricultural land.
Transport	The site could be accessed by Lee Lane, which links directly to A35 to the south of the site and to several smaller residential streets to the northern side of the site.
Infrastructure	The site is close to amenities associated with Bradpole parish, including a small supermarket. The area is also fairly close to the main amenities in the centre of the town.
Other	
Conclusion	Potential for development within this area avoiding impacts on the Dorset AONB
	Some potential in this area (BR3)

AREA D - LAND BETWEEN BRIDPORT AND WALDITCH	
Landscape	The area is located mostly in the wooded hills Landscape Character Area. Area D has small regular woodlands on the top of the hills with some woods on steep inclines. Part of the area has some parkland qualities with large broadleaved trees dotted throughout open countryside.
Heritage	The area of search includes several conservation areas; Walditch, Bridport and Bothenhampton with a number of listed buildings. Any development would need to ensure the conservation areas are not negatively impacted.
Biodiversity	There is an SNCI in the area, Walditch Meadow including neutral grassland and wetland.

Flooding	The area is not inside or adjacent to flood zone 2 or 3.	
Agricultural Land	The search area includes some very good quality and very poor quality agricultural land.	
Transport	There is limited access to the search area with only smaller rural roads linking Bridport to the existing villages on the eastern side of Bridport.	
Infrastructure	Limited infrastructure available close to the site. There are some amenities fairly close to Area D including a supermarket, however residents would be reliant on the town centre of Bridport for more specialist facilities.	
Other		
Conclusion	The site is within the Dorset AONB, any development may potentially impact on the SNCI, landscape and/or conservation areas. There may also be some issues with accessibility.	Little or no potential in this area – not taken forward

AREA E - EAST OF WYCH

Landscape	This area is located in the Clay Valley landscape character area. Area E is mainly a patch work of open sloping fields with trees and dense hedgerows.	
Heritage		
Biodiversity	There is an SNCI running through part of the site, Wanderwell Quarry. The SNCI includes a disused quarry with scrub and grassland.	
Flooding	The area is not inside or adjacent to flood zone 2 or 3.	
Agricultural Land	The area is within good to moderate quality agricultural land.	
Transport	The area is accessible from Burton Road and from long lane to the north.	
Infrastructure	The area of search is on the edge of an existing built up area, with some existing facilities.	
Other		
Conclusion	Potential for development within this area avoiding impacts on Dorset AONB, SNCI and landscape.	Some potential in this area (BR1)

AREA F - EAST OF WEST BAY	
Landscape	This area is located in the Clay Valley landscape character area. Area F is mainly made up to open sloping fields with dense hedgerows and some coastal views.
Heritage	
Biodiversity	Area F is adjacent to the West Dorset Coast SSSI. The SSSI runs from Burton Bradstock to Lyme Regis.
Flooding	Part of the site is in flood zone 2 and 3, with part of the site also prone to surface water flooding.
Agricultural Land	The area is within good to moderate quality agricultural land.
Transport	The area is accessible from Burton Road and Station Road.
Infrastructure	The site is on the edge of the existing urban area and therefore could use existing facilities associated with the urban area.
Other	Area F is adjacent to an area susceptible to coastal erosion and part of the area is inside the heritage coast.
Conclusion	<p>Potential for development within this area avoiding impacts on Dorset AONB, the Heritage Coast and areas at risk from flooding.</p> <p>Small area of potential in this area (BR1)</p>

AREA G - NORTH-WEST OF WEST BAY	
Landscape	Area G is located partly in the landscape character area defined as wooded hills. The area includes undulating hills, small grass covered fields lined with dense hedgerows often with wider views down the adjacent river valley.
Heritage	
Biodiversity	There are several SNCI's in this area, including West Bay, Cowleaze Farm, Broomhills Meadow, West Bay Cliffs.
Flooding	The area is also partly inside flood zone 2 and 3. The flood zone runs adjacent to the existing urban area and would prevent development adjacent to the existing town.
Agricultural	There area is partly inside some good quality and some very poor quality

Land	agricultural land.	
Transport	Area G is not accessible from the eastern side of Bridport, however may be accessible from the north via the A35.	
Infrastructure	The area of search is largely segregated from the main town of Bridport and therefore could not easily tap into existing infrastructure and services.	
Other	The site is outside the main boundary line of the A35 and therefore would not relate well to the existing town of Bridport.	
Conclusion	Within Dorset AONB, part of area is at risk of flooding and vulnerable to coastal erosion. The site would also not relate well to the existing built environment.	Little or no potential in this area – not taken forward

AREA H - WATTON		
Landscape	Area H is partly within the Wooded Hills and Undulating River Valley Landscape Character Area. The majority of the area has more similar characteristics with the river valley, including small fields lined with hedgerows, undulating hills.	
Heritage		
Biodiversity		
Flooding	Part of the area inside the A35 is inside flood zone 2 and 3.	
Agricultural Land	Area H is inside some very good quality and some good to moderate quality agricultural land.	
Transport	The area is accessible from the A35 and also from Broad Lane which accesses other residential properties in the area.	
Infrastructure	The site is adjacent to existing properties and also is in close proximity to the proposed Vearse Farm development.	
Other		
Conclusion	Potential for some development within the bypass avoiding impacts on the Dorset AONB, and avoiding areas at risk of flooding.	Some potential in this area (BR5 and 6)

AREA I - LAND SOUTH OF MILES CROSS			
Landscape	Area I is partly within the Wooded Hills and Undulating River Valley Landscape Character Area. The majority of the search area is within the Wooded Hills area. The search area is mostly composed of small fields with dense hedgerows, deep winding lanes and small coppices of trees scattered amongst the landscape.		
Heritage			
Biodiversity			
Flooding	The search area is not located within flood zone 2 and 3.		
Agricultural Land	Area I is within a mixture of agricultural land, including some very good quality, some good to moderate quality and some poor quality agricultural land.		
Transport	The area could be accessible via the A35 however there are lots of narrow lanes in this area which would result in issues with access.		
Infrastructure	As this area is outside the main urban area of Bridport there is a lack of amenities and facilities in the area.		
Other	Issues with physical separation from the main urban area of Bridport.		
Conclusion	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Within Dorset AONB, impact on landscape due to topography, physically separated from built up area.</td> <td>Little or no potential in this area – not taken forward</td> </tr> </table>	Within Dorset AONB, impact on landscape due to topography, physically separated from built up area.	Little or no potential in this area – not taken forward
Within Dorset AONB, impact on landscape due to topography, physically separated from built up area.	Little or no potential in this area – not taken forward		

AREA J - WEST OF ALLINGTON	
Landscape	Area J is within the Wooded Hills Landscape Character Area. The area of search has several hills which would make part of the search area difficult to develop, these include; Allington Hill, Ryeberry Hill, Sloes Hill and Old Warren Hill.
Heritage	The site sits between two conservation areas Symondsburry and Bridport conservation areas. Any development would need to ensure any impacts on the conservation areas are mitigated.
Biodiversity	Part of the search area includes a local woodland designation; Allington Hill protected by the Woodland Trust.
Flooding	There is a river channel running north to south through the search area with a flood zone associated with the river.

Agricultural Land	Area I is within a mixture of agricultural land, including some excellent quality, very good quality and some good to moderate quality agricultural land.	
Transport	The area of search can be accessed via the B3162 and Dottery Road to the north, however there several small winding roads in the area which could make accessibility difficult to parts of the search area.	
Infrastructure	Parts of the search area are adjacent to the existing residential area which would allow parts of the site to use existing facilities and services.	
Other		
Conclusion	Potential for some development in north east avoiding impacts on Dorset AONB, on the landscape and elevated areas around Allington Hill. As well as avoiding part of the area at risk of flooding.	Small area of potential (BR7)

AREA K - WEST OF BRADPOLE / PYMORE

Landscape	Area K is within the undulating river valley landscape character area. The area of search includes smaller fields lined with dense hedgerows, undulating hills and wider views along the river valley. The river runs directly through the area of search with steep valley sides up to Watton Hill to the eastern side.	
Heritage		
Biodiversity	The area of search includes a small SNCI, Pymore Mill which includes an area of reed bed and wet woodland. Any development in the search area would need to limit impacts on the SNCI.	
Flooding	There is a river channel running north to south through the search area with a flood zone associated with the river.	
Agricultural Land	Area I is within a mixture of agricultural land, including some, very good quality and some good to moderate quality agricultural land.	
Transport	The search area can be accessed by Pymore Road and Dottery Road, however the topography of parts of the site would make some areas difficult to access.	
Infrastructure	Parts of the site are adjacent to the existing residential area which would allow any new development to use the existing services and facilities.	

Other		
Conclusion	Potential for some development adjacent to existing urban edge in south west of the area avoiding impact on Dorset AONB, landscape and areas at risk of flooding.	Some potential in this area (BR7)

REFINED OPTIONS

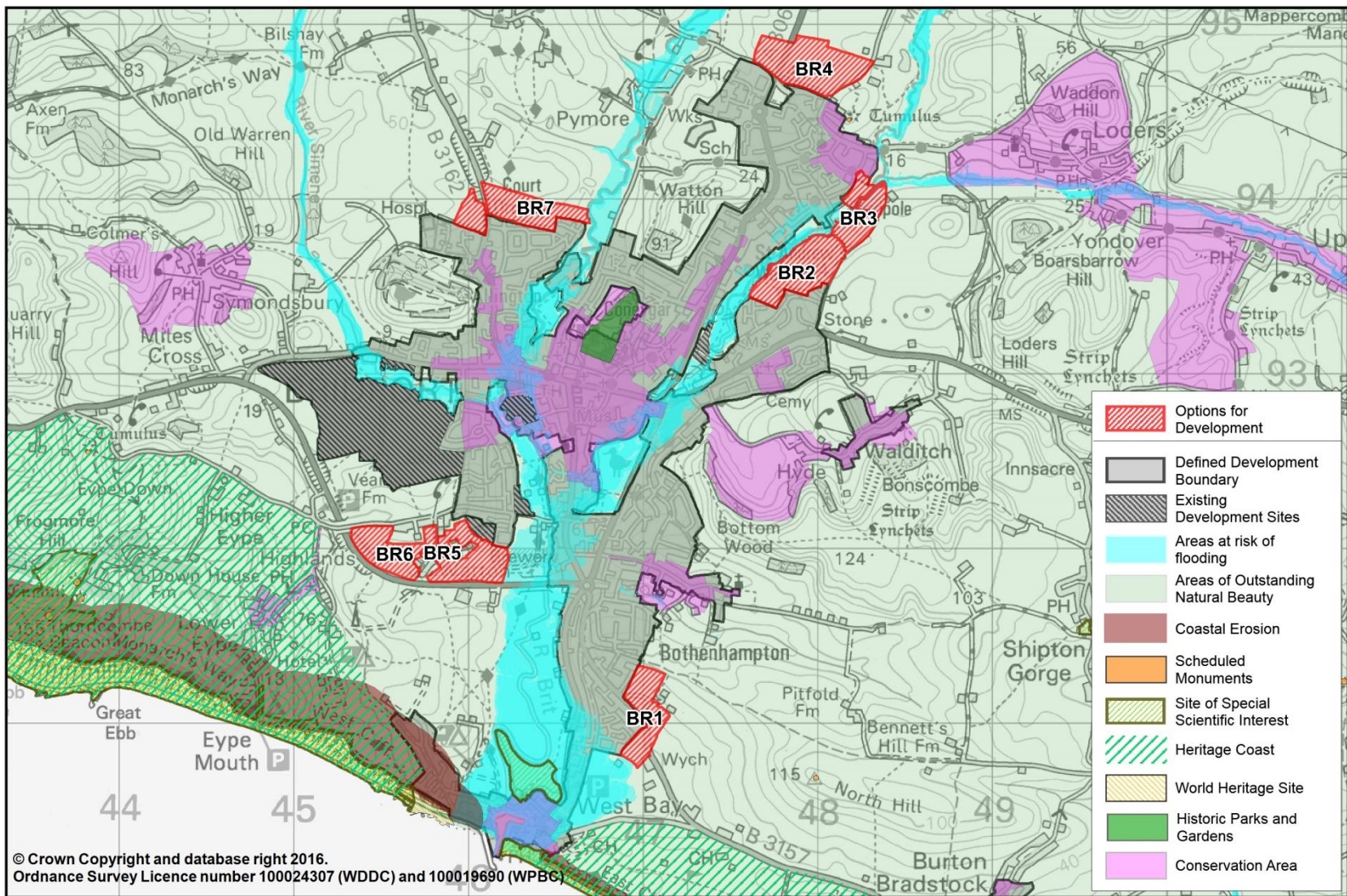
- 7.7 As a result of the initial sieve of potential development areas and the consideration of all of the above constraints, seven refined site options were identified at Bridport.
- 7.8 Figure 7.2 below sets out an indicative level of development and the potential development issues for each of the refined options which are identified on Map 3.
- 7.9 Further information about the potential development options was sought through the Issues and Options consultation, which started in February 2017. At that time it was recognised that additional work would need to be undertaken to examine site suitability and fully establish infrastructure requirements as well as constraints to development such as landscape or heritage impacts.

Figure 7.2: Details of refined options

REFINED OPTION	INDICATIVE CAPACITY (DWELLINGS)	DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
Br1: East of Wychside Close	160	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Impact on listed Wych Farmhouse - Adjacent to SNCI - Impact Heritage Coast
Br2: Happy Island Way	230	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Impact on listed Whitehouse Farmhouse - Steep slope to River Asker - Opportunity to secure significant recreation space
Br3: Home Farm, Bradpole	140	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Impact on listed Whitehouse Farmhouse, Steps Farmhouse and Home Farmhouse - Steep slope to River Asker - Opportunity to secure significant recreation space
Br4: Land north of	290	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape -

Watford Lane / Gore Lane		Distance from town centre - Relatively high ground
Br5: East of Watton	190	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Impact on listed Providence Cottage and associated Coach House - Access issues
Br6: West of Watton	170	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Access issues
Br7: Dottery Road	220	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Impact on listed building on Dottery Road

MAP 3: POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT REFINED OPTIONS - BRIDPORT



8. Issues and Options Consultation responses

- 8.1 The Issues and Options consultation provided an opportunity for stakeholders and the public to give their views on the initial development options.
- 8.2 Ten public consultation events were held between 20th February and 9th March 2017. It is estimated that 1,172 people attended these events.

LOCATION	DATE	ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE
Sherborne	20 February 2017	92
Weymouth	21 February 2017	72
Portland	23 February 2017	48
Charminster	24 February 2017	244
Dorchester	27 February 2017	86
Beaminster	28 February 2017	105
Lyme Regis	1 March 2017	54
Bridport	2 March 2017	127
Crossways	7 March 2017	230
Chickerell	9 March 2017	114
Total		1,172

- 8.3 As part of the consultation, 357 responses were received that related to Bridport. A summary of the responses received for each site and for the questions asked are set out below. It should be noted that these are a summary of the responses received and do not necessarily reflect the Council's position.

- 12-i. Bridport town (which extends into the neighbouring parishes of Allington, Bradpole, Bothenhampton and Walditch and Symondsburry) has grown at an average rate of 20 dwellings per year over the last 5 years. This development rate is likely to be increased to approximately 100 per year until 2030. Should we plan for a level of growth lower than 100 per year, maintain that level of growth, or plan for a higher level of growth for the town?**

COMMENTS RECEIVED RELEVANT TO QUESTION 12-i

- 8.4 The consensus was that the proposed growth was proportionately high and that targets are unobtainable. There was concern that there is insufficient employment to support growth and that it would have a detrimental impact on the environment. There were calls to develop brownfield, not greenfield sites.
- 8.5 Comments highlighted that the Inspector recommended development to be focused in Dorchester / Sherborne and that large levels of growth had already been identified for Bridport. It was not considered necessary to identify further growth through the Local Plan Review. Bridport Town Council and Symondsbury Parish Council both commented that future growth should come through the neighbourhood plan as major development was already planned for Bridport. Bradpole Parish Council were of the opinion that we should continue to plan for 100 homes a year but only if there is strong evidence of need.
- 8.6 Natural England were resistant to significant development and felt that none of the options should be carried forward unless the local need could not be met through existing allocations or development options outside the AONB.
- 8.7 The comments from the general public and statutory consultees raised similar issues in that there is already a large amount of development planned in Bridport and further growth should be minimised or allowed through the various neighbourhood plans. The proposed housing growth needs to respond to local need not targets and it was considered that local health and education facilities are already under pressure.

HOW THESE ISSUES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED

- 8.8 The consultation responses identified similar concerns from the general public and statutory consultees. These concerns related to the levels of growth already planned for Bridport and the possibility of further growth. In response to the concerns raised as high levels of growth have already been identified for Bridport it is not considered necessary to identify further growth for Bridport through the Local Plan Review.

12-ii. Are there any additional issues related to the development of any of the site options?

COMMENTS RECEIVED RELEVANT TO QUESTION 12-ii

- 8.9 Whilst it is recognised that more housing is needed flood plains should be avoided and wildlife and wildlife corridors should be protected. Bridport is in a sensitive AONB location which is of high landscape importance. The Dorset AONB team commented

that “*the allocation of Vearse Farm should be taken into account in considering further growth*”. Both Bridport Town Council and Symondsburry Parish Council commented that no new sites should be progressed until the neighbourhood plan was in place.

- 8.10 Issues were raised in relation to social care, health care and education provision all of which are considered to be insufficient. Bradpole Parish Council raised concerns regarding the current roads, transport and drainage systems. There were also considered to be emerging themes drawn from early community consultation on the neighbourhood plan regarding the retention of town centre car parks; protection of bus station to become transport hub; cycle / footpath connectivity.
- 8.11 There was a general feeling that Bridport is in danger of losing its unique character and appeal.

HOW THESE ISSUES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED

- 8.12 The issues raised in relation to the consultation relate mainly to the high levels of growth already planned in Bridport. Other issues identified include the potential impact on the AONB and wildlife and the inadequacy of the existing infrastructure including public transport road systems, local services and health provision. In response to these concerns and others detailed above no additional sites have been taken forward to the preferred options stage in the Bridport area.

SITE BR1: EAST OF WYCHSIDE CLOSE

- 8.13 Issues relating to landscape were frequently raised including concerns over the impact on the setting of the AONB and the elevated position of the land. Natural England was generally supportive of the site, subject to ecological assessment. The Dorset AONB team were less supportive and identified that BR1 represents a significant urban encroachment within the AONB and would have significant impact on views from West Bay and East Cliff. As such the option should not be taken further without detailed landscape assessment. A risk of flooding and the potential impact on the listed Wych Farmhouse were also identified as concerns. Comments from the general public were not supportive of this option. Concerns were raised over the suitability of the local highway infrastructure, particularly on the grounds of highway safety, the lack of public transport and the need to provide pedestrian / cycle links.

HOW THESE ISSUES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED

- 8.14 The spatial strategy of the plan identifies Weymouth and Dorchester as the highest priority location for new development and market and coastal towns as a focus for growth. The Local Plan Review continues this strategy and directs the highest level of

growth towards Dorchester and Sherborne both of which are outside of AONB designation. Much of West Dorset is covered by the Dorset AONB including Bridport.

- 8.15 Great weight should be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The Councils are mindful that planning permission should be refused for major development in designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest.
- 8.16 Due to landscape concerns and the impact on the AONB the site has not been proposed as a preferred option for development. Similarly due to highways safety and access issues, this option is not proposed as a preferred option for development.

SITE BR2: HAPPY ISLAND WAY AND SITE BR3: HOME FARM, BRADPOLE

- 8.17 These sites were particularly contentious. The sites area a long established recreational area in an AONB and play an important role in the local economy. The sites area in an area of outstanding environmental importance with many ecological features. There was concern that development would impact on the natural environment, wildlife and protected species. As such any growth would need to be balanced with conservation and further work would be required in relation to the ecological assessment of wildlife interest. Landscape concerns were raised by Dorset AONB and Natural England. The Dorset AONB team noted that the sites were very elevated and that development would be likely result in significant effects on views into relatively undeveloped areas of the AONB from within town and would also be prominent in views towards the town from elevated ground to the northwest. The southern portion of Br3 suffers very similar issues to Br2, but with the added disadvantage of public footpaths across the site. The portion of Br3 west of the River Aske is less sensitive, notwithstanding that it is an attractive area with a strong rural character.
- 8.18 Issues relating to flood risk and the potential impact on the fluvial flow of the river were raised. Bradpole Parish Council felt there would be a need to consider drainage issues. There were also concerns that development (and associated run off / flooding) could impact on the recent work by the Environment Agency to encourage fish spawning.
- 8.19 The sites are close to the town centre, however both lie outside of the Defined Development Boundary. There are a number of access concerns and the current public transport provision is considered to be inadequate.

- 8.20 The current social care, school and medical provision is thought to be inadequate and concerns have been raised that there are not currently enough jobs or sufficient infrastructure to support the growing population.

HOW THESE ISSUES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED

- 8.21 Although Br2 and Br3 are relatively close to the Bridport town centre due to landscape concerns, and in addition highways concerns at Br3, the sites have not been proposed as preferred options for development.

SITE BR4: LAND NORTH OF WATFORD LANE/GORE CROSS

- 8.22 Bradpole Parish Council raised concerns that the site would be remote from Bridport centre with a lack of sustainable routes. All site options are within the AONB and outside of the Defined Development Boundary. There is overall a preference for brownfield sites rather than greenfield sites.
- 8.23 There are issues relating to the potential impact on the Conservation Area, Scheduled Monument and the setting of a listed building.
- 8.24 There appears to be some history of highway flooding. As such there is concern that development would increase flash flooding and the risk from run-off.
- 8.25 The Dorset AONB and Natural England both recognise that this site would represent significant urban encroachment and would be visually prominent. Development would extend the settlement of Bradpole further up on to rising land increasing the likely prominence in views from the wider countryside. Further detailed landscape assessment work would be required alongside an ecological assessment of wildlife interest.
- 8.26 Concern has been raised that the current infrastructure, schools or medical provision would be insufficient to support a growing population. Furthermore there is currently a lack of pedestrian / cycle links and additional infrastructure would be required especially from the A3066.

HOW THESE ISSUES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED

- 8.27 The site is considered to be remote from the town centres with inadequate pedestrian and cycle links. This coupled with landscape concerns relating to the visual prominence of development in this area means that the site has not been proposed as a preferred option for development.

SITE BR5: EAST OF WATTON AND SITE BR6: WEST OF WATTON

- 8.28 The site has good connection links from the A35 and would appear to be the most deliverable site after Vearse Farm. However, the Dorset AONB Team identified that Br5 has varying levels of sensitivity with increased sensitivity towards Skilling Head and Watton and due to the outlying and elevated nature of the site, Br6 is likely to have the most significant impact on the AONB. Natural England considers Br5 to be less sensitive than other options in Bridport but further detailed landscape and ecological assessment is required.
- 8.29 Dorset County Council has raised concern in relation to both Br5 and Br6 as both sites are considered to have highly detrimental impacts on Skilling Hill Road. Access onto that road is considered to be unacceptable. Further discussions with Highways England to explore alternatives would be necessary.

HOW THESE ISSUES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED

- 8.30 Although these sites are considered to have good links from the A35 and are likely to be the most deliverable, there are landscape concerns. Whilst Br5 is considered to have a less significant landscape impact due to the elevated nature of Br6 the potential impact on the AONB would be unacceptable and the sites have not been proposed as preferred options for development
- 8.31 The Highway Authority has raised concerns in relation to highway access. Due to highly detrimental traffic impacts on Skilling Hill Road, this has not been proposed as a preferred option as development proposals could be considered under the policies in the adopted local plan.

SITE BR7: DOTTERY ROAD

- 8.32 The Western part of the land would be available for development and the landowners are supportive of development. Existing residents however, are concerned about the potential overlooking, loss of privacy and impact on residential amenity.
- 8.33 Development would need to address the loss of vital ecosystem, flora and fauna and provide wildlife corridors and hedgerows. As such Natural England has recommended that prior to allocation of the site it is subject to ecological assessment. The Dorset AONB Team have raised some concerns as the site has varying sensitivity with the land to the West of Dottery Road having some potential but early consideration of the effect on the historic environment especially around the North Allington Brickyard would be necessary. Concerns over further urban encroachment have been raised particularly on more elevated ground. Further detailed landscape and ecological assessment would be required.

- 8.34 With regards to transport concerns that have been raised the existing access is inadequate and there would be a need for investment in infrastructure to cope with the scale of development. While vehicular access may be possible, Dorset County Council considers the required pedestrian and cycle links to town will be difficult to deliver. Highway consultants have considered two alternative accesses and a new access is preferred but this may result in significant earth works and sculpting to reach the required standards.

HOW THESE ISSUES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED

- 8.35 Due to landscape concerns and the impact upon the Dorset AONB the site has not been proposed as a preferred option for development.

12-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site options, individually or in combination with others?

COMMENTS RECEIVED RELEVANT TO QUESTION 12-III

- 8.36 Bridport Town Council raised concerns in relation to public transport / road capacity for all sites along with increased pressure on local services including health provision. Other themes drawn from the consultation were for renewable energy to be included in new developments and new development to aim for high energy-efficiency standards.
- 8.37 Highways England were more concerned with the overall level of planned growth at Bridport as opposed to annual build out rates and considered a strategic long term view to enable better planning of infrastructure was needed.
- 8.38 Local residents felt that additional waste provision would be necessary as well as employment opportunities to sustain new residents. More affordable housing was necessary.

GENERAL COMMENTS RECEIVED

- 8.39 Bridport already had a huge amount of planned growth and additional growth should be provided through the neighbourhood plans. The plan should give more consideration of the proposed brown field sites before developing greenfield sites.

HOW THESE ISSUES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED

- 8.40 The issues raised in relation to the consultation relate mainly to the high levels of growth already planned in Bridport and the inadequacy of the existing infrastructure

including public transport, road systems, local services and health provision. In response to these concerns and others detailed above no additional sites have been taken forward to the preferred options stage. The only additional sites that have been identified are the residual sites at Vearse Farm.

9. Evidence Gathering

- 9.1 To support the Local Plan Review the Councils have commissioned a series of studies and consulted statutory infrastructure providers to gather evidence to help underpin policy formation. The following sections draw out these studies main findings and infrastructure provider expectations in respect of future development at Bridport by topic.

THE JOINT RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL LEISURE STUDY

- 9.2 This study provides a robust evidence base to inform plan-making and decision taking. It provides an assessment of the need for new retail floorspace at the strategic level to help inform the likely scale, type, location and phasing of new retail development over the next 15 years.

RETAIL HIERARCHY

- 9.3 The *West Dorset and Weymouth Local Plan (2015)* designates Bridport as a 'Town Centre' which performs an important role as the service centre for a large surrounding rural area in the west of the district. It sets out that by 2031, Bridport will still be seen as a 'working town' with a balance between housing and jobs, and a vibrant town centre providing shopping, cultural and other facilities to the rural hinterland.

HEALTH CHECK

- 9.4 The study also includes a health check for each of the main towns in the plan area. The health check is used to assess and monitor the overall health and performance of centres. This health check identifies Bridport as the second largest town in West Dorset.
- 9.5 The centre's key strengths and weaknesses include the following:
- The centre is a traditional market town with a twice weekly market which is considered to contribute to the towns success. The historic architecture contributes to the street scene and creates an attractive shopping environment.
 - Bridport's total convenience offer is below the national average. However the town does appear to have a good choice of multiple and independent food and convenience outlets that cater for the needs of its local population.
 - The proportion of food stores is also in line with national average and is considered good for a town of this size. The centre's food and convenience offer is anchored by Waitrose, although Morrisons and Lidl are situated outside of the centre. In-centre

provision is also supplemented by a range of local stores as well as the twice weekly street market.

- Bridport has a low vacancy rate of 4.1% indicating that the town centre is performing well and is a viable shopping location.
- There is a strong representation of financial services including most of the major high street banks.
- There is considered to be a good mix of independent and multiple retailers and the high numbers of locally owned stores is recognised as a key strength of the town centre and should be maintained
- There is an overprovision of charity shops which should be carefully monitored.
- Although leisure service provision is just below average, there appears to be a relatively strong evening economy for a town of this size.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 9.6 The main town centre uses are concentrated along West Street, East Street and South Street. The town centre, as shown on the policies map, forms a “T” shape running from just south of the Church Street junction on South Street to West / East Street. To the west, the town centre boundary runs from the St Michael’s Lane / West Street Junction to the East Street / Barack Street / King Street junction.
- 9.7 The primary shopping area reflects the same “T” shape as the town centre though it covers a slightly smaller area, defining where retail uses are concentrated. The primary shopping frontage runs along the main length of the southern side of West Street / East Street, to the centre and east of the northern side of East Street and to the north of South Street. The secondary shopping frontage includes the units to the south of South Street, west of the northern side of West Street and the units to the far east of East Street.
- 9.8 The retail offer is complemented by a popular street market which is held along the three main streets. The town is well represented in terms of financial services, has a strong offer of arts and cultural facilities and benefits from its historic environment and buildings.

MEETING NEEDS IN FULL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- 9.9 Bridport has a relatively good range and choice of food and convenience stores. Only a limited need for new floorspace for food retail has been identified over the local plan period. The retail assessment suggests that 175 sqm might be needed by 2036. This need could be met through the extension of existing stores or a new small convenience store.

- 9.10 Bridport also has relatively good non-food retail provision. As well as high profile national multiple retailers there are a range of quality independent retailers trading in the town centre. The retail assessment suggests that there is capacity for more comparison retail space during the plan period. Up to 2,731 sqm could be needed by 2036. Although it may be possible to achieve this development through infill and / or change of use applications it might be necessary to identify a site or sites to help meet the need in full.
- 9.11 If needed, two possible sites have been identified as being appropriate for the expansion of town centre uses subject to impact and sequential tests. These are the public car parks at Rope Walks and the area surrounding the Tannery Road Bus Station. These sites have the potential to accommodate the forecast need for 175sqm of new convenience floorspace along with 2,731 sqm of new comparison goods floorspace and other leisure uses.
- 9.12 The provision of public car parking close to the town centre is, however, also important to its continuing success, and therefore any development on these sites will need to take this into account. Some of these areas do not currently have active frontages onto the street (particularly where buildings have been demolished and replaced by surface car parks), and it is important that the opportunity is taken to redress this loss. Development should ensure integration into the existing town centre offer as best as possible. This may be achieved through the provision, strengthening and enhancement of suitable accesses.
- 9.13 The design and development of the sites will be influenced by the location within the conservation area and the nearby listed buildings. Any redevelopment of the Tannery Road area should not compromise the opportunity to create a community-based transport hub for Bridport. A scheme here could be dependant on the relocation of the bus station and depot. While each site could be considered in isolation there may be benefit to a holistic approach.

LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

- 9.14 A joint landscape and heritage assessment has been prepared which appraises the sensitivity of the land at the main centres of growth to the effects of development. The assessment is formed of two stages, stage one is an independent review of the landscape / heritage constraints considered at Issues and Options stage. This stage also recommends which broad areas of search should be scoped in or out of a further detailed level two assessment, the findings of which are summarised below.

- 9.15 Stage one recommended the following areas of search be scoped out on landscape and heritage grounds:
- D: Land between Bridport and Walditch – The whole of this area is excluded on both landscape and heritage grounds.
 - F: East of West Bay - The southern part of this area is scoped out on landscape grounds.
 - J: West of Allington – Areas of high ground including Allington and Ryeberry Hill are excluded from Stage 2 on both landscape and heritage grounds. The less steep land in the north and west of the area is to be taken through to Stage 2 assessment.
 - I: Land south of Miles Cross
- 9.16 The broad areas taken forward to stage two included:
- **A: North of Bradpole** – The stage two report notes that the landscape sensitivity and the heritage impact are moderate to high. The unsettled, rural character of this farmed landscape, its role as containment to northern Bridport, its visual and character connections with the surrounding open countryside (all AONB-designated), function as a backdrop to Bradpole Conservation Area. Proximity to a Scheduled bowl barrow on the slopes above Bradpole, and the open, undeveloped character of its skylines all present significant sensitivities to development. The overall lack of important natural or historic features within the landscape itself, the flat topography of the ridge top, presence of the busy A3066 and proximity of existing modern housing and industrial development slightly reduce landscape sensitivity. The central area between the A3066 and Mangerton Lane has lower levels of sensitivity, due to the flat landform and limited views out of the area.
 - **B: Happy Island Way** (merged with part of C: East of Wych Lane) -The stage two report notes that the landscape impact and heritage impact is likely to be moderate to high. The landscape’s prominent undeveloped slopes and elevated nature of the area significantly reduces the options available to mitigate impacts.
 - **E: East of Wych** (merged with part of F: East of West Bay) - The stage two report notes that the landscape impact is likely to be moderate to high with the heritage impact being moderate. There are a number of issues which result in heightened sensitivity including the steep slopes, absence of modern development and visual connections with the Heritage Coast and World Heritage Site and wider AONB.
 - **G: North-West of West Bay** - The stage two report notes that the landscape impact is likely to be moderate to high with the heritage impact being moderate. The landscape’s open, undeveloped slopes, strong rural and tranquil qualities and visual connections with the Heritage Coast, World Heritage Site and wider AONB heighten sensitivity.

- **H: Watton** - The stage two report concludes that the landscape impact is likely to be moderate with heritage impacts being low. Amongst other issues the landscape's open, undeveloped slopes and strong rural qualities present sensitivities to development. However, its lack of natural and heritage features and loss of tranquillity due to the A35 reduces landscape sensitivity.
- **J: West of Allington** - The stage two report concludes that the landscape impact is likely to be moderate to high with the heritage impact being moderate. There is an overall landscape sensitivity due to the unsettled, strongly agricultural character, and its role as a backdrop and containment to the northern edges of Bridport. Its position adjacent to the Symondsburry Conservation Area with landmark Grade I listed church and intervisibility with the distinctive hills to the south are of concern. Open views across the Brit Valley and beyond to the east (all within the wider AONB and featuring Downe Hall Grade II Registered Park and Garden), separation from the main area of Bridport by Allington Hill and locally valued bands of woodland also present sensitivities to development. The proximity of the existing urban edge and B3162, along with areas of low visual prominence (owing to landform and tree cover) reduce the overall landscape sensitivity.
- **K&L: West of Bradpole / Pymore** - The stage two report notes that the landscape impact is likely to be moderate to high with the heritage impact being low to moderate. The landscape's unsettled, strongly agricultural character, role as a backdrop and containment to the northern edges of Bridport at Court Orchard (surrounded by open AONB-designated countryside), all present sensitivities to development. Sensitivity is also increased by views from higher slopes across the River Brit and beyond to the distinctive hilly setting of Bridport, and the natural character provided by hedgerows, trees and scrub/ rough pasture / woodland along the tributary valley.

STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.17 A Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared which replaces the previous Level 1 assessments for West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland. The updated SFRA provides up to date guidance on flood risk taking into account the latest flood risk information. It identifies the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments and the application of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS). It provides a basis for applying the flood risk Sequential and Exception Tests. A comprehensive set of maps accompanies the Level 1 assessment.
- 9.18 There are a number of documented flood events in Bridport. The town is at risk of fluvial flooding from the River Brit, River Asker and several other smaller watercourses

that are tributaries of these. There are properties that have greater than 1% AEP risk of flooding in the vicinity of these watercourses. Flooding has also been documented from surface water sources.

- 9.19 The flood zones indicate that there is a tidal flood risk to the southern parts of Bridport from the tidal River Brit. Risk is greatest in the West Bay area, with parts located in Flood Zone 3 (indicating greater than a 0.5% AEP chance of sea flooding) and there is also some risk to properties in around Wych. Bridport harbour is within the maximum extent of flooding from reservoirs but the maximum extent is confined to this area.
- 9.20 Areas at risk of surface water flooding are mostly located along existing watercourses, although this does extend onto the road network and there is isolated ponding in places. Most of the area surrounding Bridport is not considered to be prone to groundwater flooding. In the north, the data indicates that there is limited potential for groundwater flood emergence. Further south, towards West Bay, there is potential for groundwater flooding to occur at surface.

SPORT AND LEISURE FACILITIES NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 9.21 This study provides a detailed assessment of the current provision of indoor and built sports facilities for West Dorset identifying needs and gaps in provision. It also provides detail as to what exists in the district, its condition, location, availability and overall quality and considers demand for facilities based on population distribution, planned growth etc.
- 9.22 The evidence underpinning the assessment will be used to both identify and justify the provision of developer contributions.
- 9.23 Key strategic recommendations from the assessment include:
- For Town Councils to actively work with key partners, including leisure providers, to ensure the sports offer addresses the needs of the whole community, particularly around an aging population.
 - To encourage all state schools in the District to develop a joint use agreement which will ensure additional funding to individual schools from the Department of Education. This funding will assist with the upgrade of sports facilities.
 - To identify ongoing investment, maintenance and refurbishment requirements to protect and improve existing sports facilities.
 - Work with key partners to support workforce development and volunteer recruitment across the club network within the District.

- Work with management on education sites and local Sports Trust to encourage more community use for local clubs, which could increase local participation rates across certain sports.
- The long term future of Bridport Leisure centre is at risk due to potential reduction in subsidies from Local Authority.

9.24 Where appropriate, this evidence has and will be used to help identify possible planning obligations or on-site provision on development options.

10. Preferred Options Consultation

- 10.1 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation along with the evidence gathered have established that no new development options for the Local Plan Review will be subject to consultation at Preferred Options stage, although it is recognised that there is some additional capacity within the site already allocated in the current Local Plan at Vearse Farm.

SITE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 10.2 This section sets out both the Preferred Options and excluded options. Alongside each option is an explanation why the option has or has not been taken forward.
- 10.3 The Issues and Options consultation considered seven options for future development in Bridport. Further sites were put forward through the public consultation and through other methods prior to the preparation of the Preferred Options.
- 10.4 An analysis of the sustainability impacts associated with each development option helped to inform the decision regarding which sites should be taken forward for Preferred Options consultation and which sites should be discounted from further consideration. This section sets out both the Preferred Options and excluded options. Alongside each option is an explanation why the option has or has not been taken forward

Table 10.1: Options not taken forward

REFINED OPTIONS	REASONS
Br1: East of Wychside close	This development option has been excluded on the basis of the impact on the AONB and Heritage Coast.
Br2: Happy Island Way	This development option has been excluded on the basis of the impact on the AONB.
Br3: Home Farm Bradpole	This development option has been excluded on the basis of the impact on the AONB. Site has no acceptable access and would have to come forward in conjunction with Br2.
Br4: Land north of Watford Lane/GoreCross	This development option has been excluded on the basis of the impact on the AONB. Consideration has also been given to the remoteness of the site in relation to the town centre and services and the lack of

REFINED OPTIONS	REASONS
	pedestrian/cycle links.
Br5: Land east of Watton	This development option has been excluded on the basis of the impact on the AONB, highways and access Consideration has also been made in relation to the limited capacity of the site.
Br6: West of Watton	This development option has been excluded on the basis of the impact on the AONB, highways and access.
Br7: Dottery Road	This development option has been excluded on the basis of the impact on highways and access. Although parts of the site are considered to be less sensitive, in general the impact on the AONB would be unacceptable.

PREFERRED OPTIONS

- 10.5 The Preferred Options consultation document takes forward the existing allocations from the current plan. No site options in the Bridport area have been taken forward into the Preferred Options consultation in part due to the potential landscape impact. Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and the scenic beauty of the AONB which has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The Councils are mindful that planning permission should be refused for major development in designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it demonstrated that it is in the public interest.
- 10.6 Notwithstanding that, due to the scale of the allocated Vearse Farm site along with the associated residual sites, existing allocations and the capacity of the sites within the town, the total number of new homes would exceed 1,500. This is considered to be an appropriate number of new homes given the size of Bridport. The table below outlines the various sources of housing supply.

Table 10.2: Details of Housing Numbers in Bridport

LOCATION	HOUSING SUPPLY	ALLOCATIONS	LARGE SITES	WINDFALL SITES
			225	216
Vearse Farm	930	930		
Land East of Bredy Veterinary centre	40	40		
St Michaels Trading Estate	92	91		

KEY CHANGES SINCE THE ADOPTED PLAN

- 10.7 The existing site-specific policies and supporting text have been updated where necessary as part of the Preferred Options consultation. Key updates include:
- The supporting text to Policy BRID1 (now BRID2) has been amended to reflect the additional capacity at Vearse Farm that would be provided by the residual sites;
 - Policy BRID2: Land off of Skilling Hill has been removed altogether; and
 - Former Policy BRID4 has been amended to BRID1 and covers a wide range of issues relating to the expansion of the town centre area.
- 10.8 The remainder of this background paper will look more closely at the allocated Vearse Farm site and the associated residual sites setting out in detail the proposed approach to development.

SITE ANALYSIS – LAND AT VEARSE FARM

- 10.9 Vearse Farm is located to the western side of Bridport and comprises a number of open fields. The farmland forms part of Vearse Farm, which includes a grade II listed farmhouse and curtilage listed boundary walls. There are a number of buildings within the farmstead some of which are also curtilage listed. The site falls within the AONB.

SITE STRATEGY – LAND AT VEARSE FARM

- 10.10 The whole Vearse Farm site could deliver up to 930 new homes. This includes about 760 on the main site (which has outline planning permission, subject to the completion of a section 106 planning agreement) with a further 170 homes on three residual sites,

namely: land at Vearse Farmhouse; land west of Coronation Road; and land to the west of Pine View. The site will also deliver approximately 4 hectares of employment land. The proposed changes to the supporting text are minor and relate to the inclusion of the residual sites only. The revised policy from the Preferred Options Consultation Document is set out below.

BRID2. LAND AT VEARSE FARM

- i) Land at Vearse Farm (as shown on the policies map) will provide for the strategic growth of Bridport through a comprehensive mixed-use development, to include new homes, local community facilities (including land for a two-form entry primary school) and at least 4 hectares of employment land.
- ii) Delivery will be phased with the intention of providing in the region of 100 homes a year with an equivalent proportion of employment workspace and community facilities.
- iii) The main employment area will be designated as a key employment site and should be accessed directly from the B3162 West Road.
- iv) The development will deliver highway improvements necessary for the development to go ahead, including improvements to the Miles Cross junction of the A35 with the B3162 West Road.
- v) The development will provide footway/cycleway links from the site into Bridport town centre and to the surrounding areas, including the countryside and coast.
- vi) The floodplain of the River Symene where it flows through the site and other areas prone to surface water flooding, will be kept free of buildings.
- vii) Adequate noise mitigation measures will be provided to protect the amenity of future occupiers from vehicle and road noise generated by the A35 Bridport Bypass.
- viii) The site should be developed in accordance with a masterplan prepared by the developer / landowner in conjunction with Symondsburry Parish Council, Dorset County Council, Bridport Town Council and the local community, and agreed by West Dorset District Council. The masterplan should ensure that:
 - the design and layout relates positively to the surrounding area and

does not have an adverse impact on the surrounding landscape and the setting of the town;

- **an area of the site is reserved for a two-form entry primary school;**
- **there is adequate on-site provision of community infrastructure;**
- **the layout secures opportunities to provide improved access and recreational use and promote biodiversity within a network of spaces. The floodplain of the River Symene and the rising land to the south of the site will remain undeveloped and be managed appropriately for the long-term benefit of the local community and wildlife;**
- **good links to the wider footpath and cycle network are provided through the site;**
- **the layout allows for at least two points of vehicular access into the development from the public highway, and for a bus route through the site. Primary vehicular access should only be from the B3162, West Road (with the exception of emergency vehicles / public transport);**
- **strategic planting around the south and west perimeters of the site is carried out in advance of the site being developed. Existing hedgerows should be retained where possible and provision for their future retention and management put in place;**
- **an area of the site is reserved for employment uses that are less suited to being mixed with residential, and the location and layout of all uses has regard to safeguarding the residential amenity of nearby properties;**
- **the development is appropriately phased to ensure necessary infrastructure and mitigation measures are delivered in advance of occupation.**

CONSULTATION

- 10.11 The Preferred Options consultation provides an opportunity for stakeholders and the public to give their views on the preferred development options. The questions relating to Bridport are set out below. After the consultation process has ended, this background paper will be updated with a summary of the responses.
- 10.12 Policy BRID₄ has been updated in light of the findings of the retail study. The question asks for comments on issues in relation to the future expansion of Bridport Town Centre.

13-i Former Policy BRID4 (now BRID1) has been amended to cover a wider range of issues in relation to sites for the possible future expansion of Bridport town centre. Do you have any comments on new Policy BRID1?

- 10.13 As further capacity has been identified within the Vearse Farm allocation, Policy BRID1 of the adopted Local Plan (now Policy BRID2) has been updated. Comments are being sought on the amended policy.

13-ii The supporting text to former Policy BRID1 (now BRID2) has been amended to clarify that the Verse Farm site has the capacity to deliver about 930 new homes (rather than 760 as originally envisaged). Do you have any comments on the changes to new Policy BRID2?