

NORTH DORSET
DISTRICT-WIDE LOCAL PLAN
(1st Revision)

ADOPTED PLAN to 2011

**WRITTEN
STATEMENT**

January 2003



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DISTRICT WIDE LOCAL PLAN
(1ST Revision)
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STATEMENT**

PARTS 1 & 2

**PART 1; District – Wide Policies
PART 2; Local Area Policies**

Adopted: 31st January 2003

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Price: **£20.00 + £2.50** Postage and packing

The Proposals Maps containing town and village insets are available separately: Price: **£35.00 + £5.00** Postage and packing

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INTRODUCTION

1. Need and Function

1.1 District-Wide Local Plans are a statutory requirement of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. This Local Plan covers the whole of the administrative area of North Dorset District Council.

1.2 The North Dorset District Wide Local Plan forms part of the development plan for the District. The development plan comprises the Structure Plan, District Wide Local Plan and Minerals and Waste Local Plan. This Local Plan provides the detailed framework for the control of development and the other use of land. To this end the Plan should be in conformity with the overall strategy of the Structure Plan, produced by the County Council. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires the authority to "have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations". In addition, Section 54A of the Act states, "where, in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise".

1.3 Local Plans should;

- set out the Authority's policies for the control of development
- make proposals for the use and development of land specifically allocated for these purposes.

1.4 The original and first District-Wide Local Plan, to an end date of 2001, was prepared in the period between 1990 and 1996 and reached official deposit state (April/May 1996). However the Government Office for the South West requested that the Plan should have an end-date of 2011 which would be compatible with the Government's Regional Planning Guidance and the emerging County-Wide Structure Plan.

1.5 North Dorset District Council therefore decided to revise the Local Plan with a new end date of 2011 and republish the Written Statement and the Proposal Maps. A Deposit Draft Plan was published in May 1998. Objections to this were considered at a public inquiry in 1999. The Inspector's Report was published in August 2000 and two sets of modifications were subsequently published. This Plan incorporates all those changes that were agreed through the consultation process.

2. Plan Period

2.1 The Plan makes provision for development to be commenced by the year 2011, that is to coincide with the period of the adopted Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan.

3. Previous Local Plans

Non-Statutory

BLANDFORD FORUM AND ST MARY	District Plan 1977 Review "Land for Future Development" 1988
CHILD OKEFORD	Village Policy 1984
DURWESTON	Village Plan 1988
MILBORNE ST. ANDREW	Village Plan 1988
STALBRIDGE	Development Appraisal 1989
WINTERBORNE KINGSTON	/ Village Plan 1988
ZELSTON	

STURMINSTER NEWTON

Town (Local) Plan (Informally adopted 1990)

Statutory**GILLINGHAM**

Local Plan 1986

SHAFTESBURY

Town (Local) Plan 1990

3.1 All the above Plans have been reviewed during the preparation of this district wide Local Plan and are now superseded by this Plan.

4. Preparation Process

4.1 The following diagram explains the preparation programme for the original Local Plan which had a plan period to 2001.

STAGE	DATE
Project Brief Published	February 1990
Consultation on Proposals for the Villages and Rural Areas	Winter 1991/92
Revisions to Village Plans including further consultation on alternative proposals	Spring/Summer 1992
Consultation on Proposals for the Five Towns	Winter/Spring 1994/5
Submission of Plan for Statement of Conformity to the Structure Plan	April 1995
Official Deposit Consultation	April/May 1996

4.2 The following diagram explains the preparation process for this Local Plan which has a plan period to 2011.

STAGE	DATE
Revision of 1996 Deposit Plan	Winter 1996/97
Consultation : Draft Plan	Summer 1997
Revision following Draft	Autumn 1997
Publication of Deposit Draft	May 1998
Amendments Pre-Inquiry	Winter 1998
Public Inquiry into Objections	Summer 1999
Inspector's Report	Summer 2000
Modifications Proposed Plan Adoption	2001/2002 Winter 2002

5. Context of the Plan.

National Guidance

5.1 The Plan has been formulated in accordance with national guidance set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and subsequent Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), Circulars and Statutory Instruments. Modifications have been introduced to ensure the Plan is as up to date as possible. In particular the provisions of PPG 3 (Housing) of March 2000 have been addressed in this Plan.

Regional Guidance

5.2 The Plan was prepared in line with the Regional Planning Guidance for the South West published by the Government Office for the South West in July 1994. This guidance looked forward to 2011 but was subsequently superseded by new guidance issued in September 2001.

5.3 The new RPG looks forward to 2016 – beyond the time frame of this Local Plan. Whilst the new guidance is acknowledged in this Plan, its provisions will not be fully integrated until the Plan is reviewed and rolled forward to 2016.

The Structure Plan

5.4 This Local Plan has been prepared to be in general conformity with the strategy of **Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Structure Plan** which was approved in July 2000 and has an end-date of 2011.

6. Review

6.1 It is intended that this Local Plan will undergo a yearly monitoring exercise to ensure that policies and proposals remain relevant and also to ensure that implementation is co-ordinated. Any future review of the Plan may follow the new procedures outlined in the Planning Statements issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in July 2001, subject to the necessary guidance being issued by the O.D.P.M. This will involve the preparation of a "Local Development Framework", rather than a review of the Local Plan.

7. Format of the Plan

Written Statement

Part 1 - District - Wide Policies

7.1 The complete statutory Local Plan consists of a Written Statement and a Proposals Map. In the event of any discrepancy between the Written Statement and the Proposals Map, the Written Statement shall prevail.

7.2 Those policies which cover the whole District are divided into the following five topics.

1. **Strategy and Environment**
2. **Housing**
3. **The Economy (Employment/Shopping/Tourism)**
4. **Community Facilities and Recreation**
5. **Transportation**

Part 2 - Local Area Policies

7.3 These are policies which are specific to an individual settlement or an area of the District.

Policies and Proposals

7.4 Statements which relate to a statutory policy or proposal are highlighted in bold italic text.

Summary Maps and Figures

7.5 These maps have been produced for information only and do not form part of the Statutory Local Plan. They are based on the Ordnance Survey and have been reproduced with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office.

Proposals Maps

7.6 Each policy and proposal is identified on these maps. They comprise A3 plans covering the countryside, towns and larger villages. The smaller villages are covered by A4 plans.

Informal Statements for Inset Plans

7.7 Separate informal statements are available for each town or village with an Inset Plan. These are non-statutory documents produced for information purposes only.

CD Rom and the Internet

7.8 The Plan is also available on a CD Rom, and will be made available on the Council's website.

STRATEGY AND ENVIRONMENT

(a) The Overall Strategy and Settlement Policies

1.1 This Local Plan should be in conformity with the general strategy of the Dorset Structure Plan. This Local Plan has therefore, been drawn up within the framework of this overall strategy.

1.2 Following publication of the original Consultation Draft, the former Department of the Environment produced revised guidance for the preparation of Local Plans. This guidance made it clear that Local Planning Authorities should produce clear strategies for their Local Plans which pay greater regard to the need to conserve the environment, and to achieve "Sustainable Development." The Government Office for the South West also produced "Regional Planning Guidance for the South-West" in July 1994 which set out a new context for Development Plans.



1.3 This Local Plan therefore incorporates a new and more comprehensive Strategy which is not only based on the Structure Plan but also takes into consideration the above issues.

Problems and Issues

1.4 The following problems and issues have been particularly critical in drawing up the overall Strategy and the environmental policies for this Local Plan.

Sustainable Development

1.5 The Local Plan must ensure that development and growth are "sustainable" or in other words: "that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Sustainable development is concerned with reconciling the protection and enhancement of the environment with achieving economic development and higher standards of living, today and in the future. Furthermore "Sustainability" also goes beyond the traditional concern with the protection and enhancement of the environment. It takes account of the newer environmental agenda relating to energy and resource conservation and global pollution leading to global warming. Since the advent of the Town & Country Planning system, the spread of development has been fairly well controlled (in the open countryside), but there has not been enough attention paid to the need to relate development to an integrated transport network and thus reduce the reliance on motorised transport, nor has there been adequate consideration paid to the effect that development can have on scarce environmental resources.

Protection of the Countryside

1.6 Since the 1960's a significant amount of new development has changed the character of the countryside, particularly on the fringes of the towns and villages in the District. There is a clear need for restraint policies to protect important landscapes, the local ecology and also the best quality and the most versatile agricultural land.

Protection of the District's Heritage

1.7 Similarly, development pressures have been felt within the District's towns and villages. The constraint of growth in the countryside must be balanced with careful control over the integral open spaces and the built character of the District's settlements.

The Quality of New Development

1.8 Unfortunately, much of the new development over the last thirty years has tended to be mundane and "suburban" in appearance. Little attention has been paid to the traditional local forms of architecture. Policies need to be adopted which promote higher standards of design and the use of materials which will help blend new development with the old.

Regional Planning Guidance

1.9 Regional Planning Guidance for the South West highlights the fact that sustainable development should be the cornerstone of the Region's Development Plans. Other key issues raised by the Regional Plan which have influenced this Local Plan Strategy are;

- the need to integrate the transport system
- that the bulk of new development should be in the cities and larger towns
- that scattered development in the countryside should be discouraged
- that there is a lack of potential to accommodate significant new development in the Bournemouth/Poole Conurbation
- that in recognition of the South-West's environment being of outstanding quality and diversity, there is a need for Development Plans to ensure that the environment is sustained, protected and where possible enhanced.

1.10 More specific in relation to strategic Local Plan issues are the following statements from the document "Regional Planning Guidance for the South West" (RPG10) 1994.

"Much of the increased housing need arises from people living in rural areas and small towns. Provision will continue to be needed in such towns and in villages and should be provided for in ways which respect the existing environment of settlements. Development plans need to identify those settlements which are most suitable for accommodating growth, particularly those which act as service centres for a wider surrounding area, which are well connected to larger towns and cities by public transport routes or which have potential for a substantial degree of local self-containment." (para. 3.22)

"... there is a need to maintain an effective pattern of service provision and access to facilities and coordinated action will be necessary in the more sparsely populated areas. Development in rural areas should not be at the expense of the Region's important environmental assets. New development in the open countryside should be strictly controlled. Development which reinforces a scattered pattern of small rural settlements is unlikely to be consistent with the aim of achieving sustainable development." (para. 3.23)

"Parts of the Region have a dispersed settlement pattern of small towns and villages and here there may be less scope to serve development by public transport. As a result it may be necessary to consider the extent to which development pressures can be accommodated or to examine the potential for encouraging improved public transport provision." (para. 6.9)

The Structure Plan Strategy

1.11 Key Structure Plan objectives with regard to the settlement pattern and the environment which have helped to shape this Local Plan Strategy are as follows;

- to secure the conscientious stewardship of all resources
- to improve the accessibility of Dorset to other areas
- to create opportunities to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car
- to provide opportunities to meet travel needs in ways which minimise environmental damage and costs, provide maximum choice and improve safety
- to conserve and improve Dorset's environmental inheritance · to contain the outward spread of the South East Dorset conurbation
- to provide for a reduced rate of migration-led population growth · to concentrate new built development in existing built-up areas, particularly the conurbation and other towns.

1.12 The following towns in North Dorset are defined in the Structure Plan as Local Service Centres where housing, employment, and community facilities will be concentrated;

- **BLANDFORD**

- GILLINGHAM
- SHAFTESBURY
- STURMINSTER NEWTON

Environmental Appraisal of Policies

1.13 The Government is now encouraging local authorities to carry out an "Environmental Appraisal" of their Local Plan Policies whilst the preparation process is under way. Environmental Appraisal is basically a process of identifying, quantifying, weighing up and reporting on the environmental and other costs and benefits of the measures which are proposed in a Plan. A detailed appraisal method is outlined in a recent DoE report, "The Environmental Appraisal of Development Plans".

1.14 An "**Environmental and Sustainability Appraisal**" of this Local Plan has been carried out as part of preparation work and is published as a separate technical appendix¹. The Appraisal has led to a reformulation of the overall Local Plan Strategy.

Local Agenda 21 & the Plan's Aims and Objectives

1.15 Development which is said to be wholly sustainable may be difficult to achieve in a rural area like North Dorset. The existing dispersed settlement pattern and the lack of a regular comprehensive public transport network means that the use of motor vehicles for commuting, business and leisure use is essential for those who live in the more remote areas and is likely to continue to be the case in the future.

1.16 Nevertheless there is much that this Local Plan Strategy can achieve on the theme of sustainable development.

The following Strategy will also be an important component of the Authority's "Local Agenda 21 Strategy", which will show how local initiatives will be co-ordinated to achieve the Worldwide Aims of the 1992 Earth Summit Conference at Rio de Janeiro.

The Overall Local Plan Strategy

Aims of the Sustainable Development Strategy

Using the Environmental and Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan, the following aims have been identified as being essential in the drive towards sustainable development.

- 1. Improve the quality of life through sound economic and social developments for all sections of the community.**
- 2. Meet the development targets identified in Regional Planning Guidance and the Structure Plan.**
- 3. Meet local needs locally by providing sufficient housing, employment and services for the District to become more self-contained, therefore reducing the need to travel.**
- 4. Contain the spread of development through the promotion of the re-use of previously developed land, and through realistic restraint on greenfield development.**
- 5. Promote transport efficiency and reduce the number of trips by integrating the transport network and through the concentration of development around that network and by restraining the provision of car parking.**
- 6. Promote energy efficiency, conserve resources and avoid pollution by encouraging the generation of renewable energy and promoting good conservation practice in disposing of wastes which cannot be recycled.**

7. **Conserve the built and the natural heritage** character by identifying those areas where restraint and sensitive control of development are required.

8. **Conserve wildlife and improve biodiversity** by protecting important habitats and by the creation of new and varied vegetations and tree planting.

Each policy and proposal has been evaluated against the aims of the sustainable development strategy. The results of this assessment can be found in the "Environmental and Sustainability Appraisal".

"SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS FOR ANNUAL MONITORING"

Under the Government's "Best Value" regime for the auditing of Local Government performance, Planning authorities are advised to incorporate a comprehensive set of indicators for their development plans which can be used to monitor the performance of the plan, (BV112.2). In response to this requirement, the following indicators have been developed to monitor performance in relation to the aims of the Sustainable Development Strategy of this Plan. It is proposed to use these indicators for the purposes of a monitoring report, which it is intended to publish on an annual basis. (See **Introduction to the Local Plan Written Statement, Section 6** on reviewing the Plan).

ENVIRONMENT

1 Annual amount and type of **greenfield/agricultural land which is redeveloped** or diversified to other **uses**.

2 Annual net gain to area of **woodland planting**.

3 **Annual investment** in **environmental enhancement** schemes.

HOUSING

See also **Housing Chapter; paras 2.35-2.38** and **Policy 2.7**.

4 **Overall dwelling numbers** compared with the Local Plan target of 5900 by 2011 and an annual rate of **347**.

5 **Dwellings on previously developed (brownfield) sites** compared with the Local Plan target of 2000 (34%) by 2011 and an annual rate of **118**.

6 **Affordable dwellings** compared with the Local Plan target of 1170 (between 1998 and 2011) and an annual rate of 90. (26%).

7 **Density of development** compared with the minimum of 30 dwellings/hectare, subject to good design/layout.

8 **Car Parking** spaces provided compared with the maximum of 2 spaces per dwelling.

ECONOMY

9 Net **gain of employment land** provided, compared with the Local Plan target of 40 ha by 2011, an annual rate of 2.35ha and any **loss of employment land** to another use.

10 **Employment land** provided and housing constructed in the main towns, compared with a predicted ratio of 73 dwellings to one hectare of employment land. (See Table 9 in 1999 Economy Topic Paper).

11 Amount of **vacant industrial floorspace, land and number of units**.

12 **Vacant shop premises** in the main towns compared with the 1998 average vacancy rate of 6.17%. (See Table 12 in 1999 Economy Topic Paper).

13 Amount of **food supermarket floorspace** per 1000 catchment population in the main towns.

14 **Net gain/loss of business, industrial, retail and tourism** uses, measured against existing stock numbers and where relevant, the existing amount of floorspace.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND RECREATION

15 Monitor provision of **community/village halls** compared with Local Plan standard of 220m² per 2000 population.

16 Monitor provision of **outdoor sport facilities** compared with Local Plan standard of 1.6-1.8 ha per 1000 population.

17 Monitor provision of **children's play space/amenity area** facilities compared with Local Plan standard of 0.6-0.8ha per 1000 population.

18 Monitor number of **essential village facilities/services**, in relation to population. Essential village facilities/services defined as:

- Permanent Shop/General Store
- Post Office
- Village Hall
- Place of Worship
- Public House
- School
- Public Recreation Ground
- Play Area
- Daily Bus service to nearest market town

TRANSPORTATION

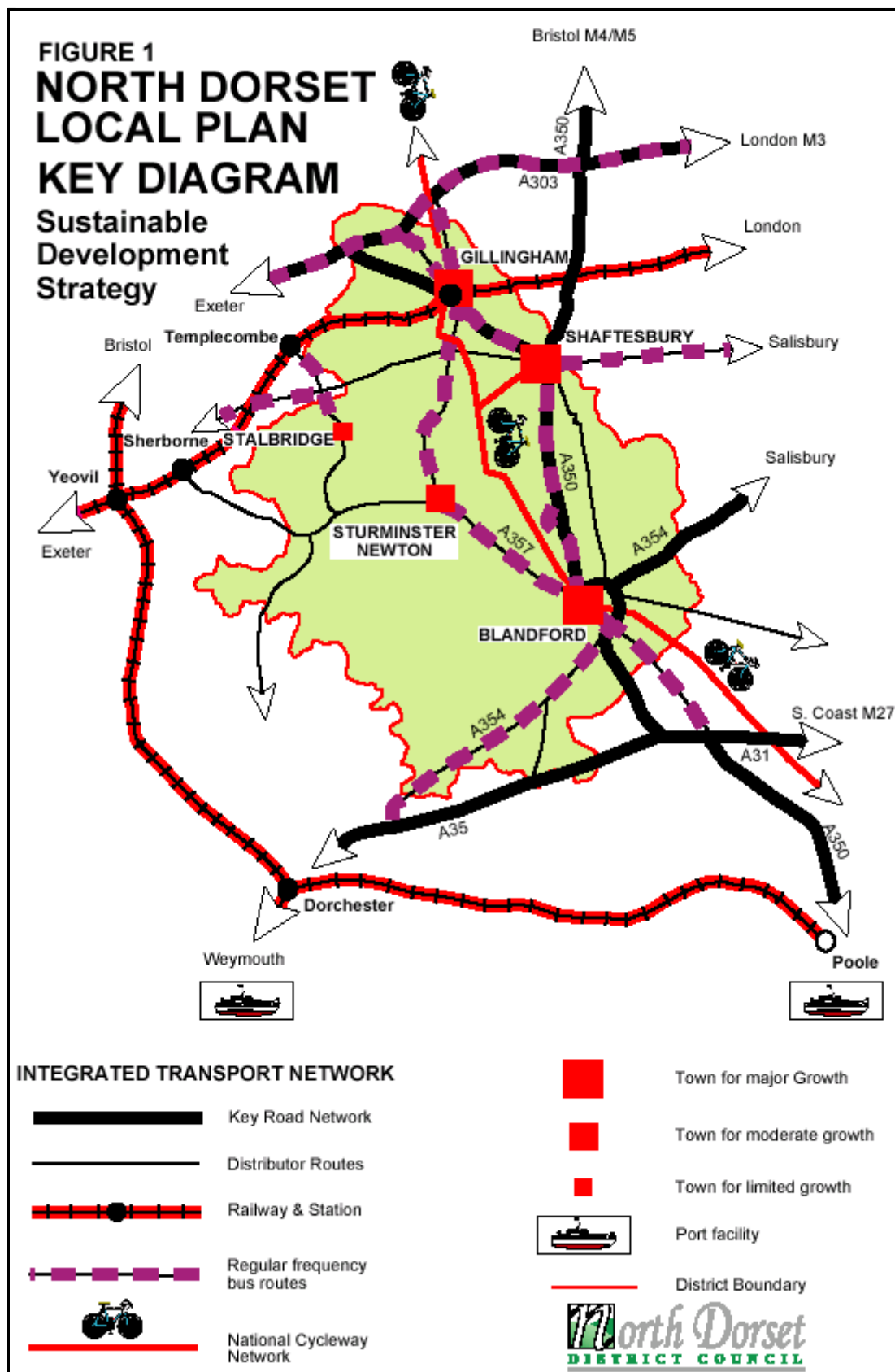
19 **Monitor annual** investment in Local Plan transportation schemes **and relate to problem areas and new development.**

20 Monitor changes to **bus and train services** within the Local Plan Integrated Transport Network.

A Sustainable Development Pattern

1.17 The key component of the overall Strategy will be to concentrate developments in the towns in the District, (Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury and to a lesser extent Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton) so that development will be well related to the main highway and public transport corridors and to planned improvements. Concentrating development in the towns will also make the best economic use of existing and future employment and community uses. The need to travel will therefore be reduced, particularly for employment and shopping journeys. Coupled with this will be a general restraint in the requirement to provide off-road car parking.

1.18 In the Local Plan Key Diagram (**see figure 1**), the emerging Strategy shows how the towns are linked to the existing and planned strategic transport network and corridors, both within and immediately outside the District boundary.



1.19 The three largest towns in the District; Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury are particularly well placed to receive development. They are all situated close to, or adjacent to the "A350 corridor". This Primary Route between Poole and the M4 at Chippenham has had increased status over the last few years with incremental improvements in the way of by-passes at Blandford and East Knoyle, Warminster and Chippenham in Wiltshire.

1.20 Within the District boundary, the A350 is subject to proposals throughout most of its length, with a by-pass planned for Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall and traffic management between Blandford and

Shaftesbury, also utilising the existing C13 "Top Road". A Spetisbury/Charlton Marshall bypass and also a possible outer Shaftesbury bypass are only safeguarded routes for potential long-term schemes and will be subject shortly to a strategic study and further Structure Plan review, which may determine their future depiction in the next review of this Plan.

1.21 As part of this Strategy, the District Council will encourage the provision of improved highway links to the town of Gillingham along the B3081, which connects Gillingham with the A303 to the west. The principal way this can be achieved is through the construction of a road link between the western end of the existing Shaftesbury by-pass and the B3081. Again, this link, features as a proposal of the Plan.

1.22 The upgrading of the B3081 will also act as an alternative route for the A357 between Blandford and Wincanton.

1.23 The development of Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury will be linked as part of the Strategy, to the "Key Road Network" shown on the Local Plan Key Diagram. The co-ordination of highway improvements with the increased role of the towns as service centres will make for sound economic and sustainable planning and should reduce the need to travel. A further aim of this strategy will be to reduce reliance on the use of the private car by applying restraint to car parking provision and requirements, particularly in town centres and in other areas which are close to the public transport network.

1.24 Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury have been designated in this Strategy as "Towns for Major Growth". Under this designation, larger developments which have been defined as "major" (see definition below) may be permitted. It will be the aim of the Local Planning Authority to confine developments defined as major to these towns and to generally restrict planning permission for major development elsewhere, (apart from the town of Sturminster Newton). "The definition of major development" has been drawn up as a guideline for development control purposes. Individual applications will continue to be judged on their merits, with the impact of the development on local character and the likely traffic growth considerations being paramount. The main aim of providing the definition is to promote the sustainable development pattern which has already been described in **para 1.17** and aims to;

- Promote larger-scale developments around highway and public transport nodes;
- Promote the best economic use of existing and future employment and community uses;
- Reduce the need to travel particularly for employment and shopping journeys.

Definition of "Major" Development

"Major" development will, for the purposes of this Plan, be defined as;

Housing;

- sites of more than 50 dwellings or larger than 2 hectares (5 acres)

Commercial;

- sites of more than 1 hectare (2.5 acres)
- buildings of more than 1,000m² (10,800ft²) or with 50 or more employees

Shopping;

- buildings of more than 500m² (5,400ft²) net retail floorspace

Community Facilities;

- buildings of more than 1000m² or for accommodating more than 500 persons.

1.25 The following policy is designed to be compatible with the Government's Strategy for Sustainable Development (1999), which aims to reconcile environmental protection with economic priorities and higher living standards now and for the future generations, and

- Maintains high and stable levels of economic growth and employment;
- Enables social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- Effectively protects the environment; and
- Makes prudent use of natural resources.

1.26 Any "major" development will have to comply with the assessment criteria of this Plan and there is no automatic assumption that permission for major development will be granted purely on the basis that a site is located within one of the four main towns.

1.27 Moderate sized developments which are below the threshold size of "major", may also be approved, subject to normal assessment criteria, in the smaller towns of Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton (see below). In the latter case, Sturminster Newton may receive a limited amount of "major" development.

1.28 In the villages however, the general thrust of the Strategy will be to contain growth and to permit only limited small-scale developments, for the economic and social wellbeing of the community. This policy, together with general restraint on development in the countryside, will help to reduce the need to travel.

1.29 A comprehensive sustainable development strategy needs to take a wider brief than purely an assessment of the relationship between development location and transportation requirements. The need to conserve both the natural heritage and the built heritage has been a fundamental concern of Town & Country Planning since the 1947 Act and is of high profile in the public's mind. This strategy therefore will, as a priority, require developers to make the best possible use of land; e.g. by re-using derelict or disused sites in preference to using "greenfield" areas and will also restrict development where there is an adverse effect on areas with high amenity, ecological or historic value.

1.30 There is concern at national and local levels that the 1995 Household projection figure of 4.4 million new households by 2016 will lead to excessive levels of greenfield development. Certainly, if current and recent greenfield development rates experienced since the 1960s, are not to continue in the District, there must be stronger controls to restrain the release of greenfield land. Also there is a need for major housing development to make better use of greenfield sites through careful design and use of higher densities. The "**Urban Village**" concept will be relevant here through the use of housing design which always fronts onto public areas, creates "natural" visual and transport links with existing developed areas, creates a sense of enclosure and is planned and integrated with open space, employment and community facilities. The Council has recently introduced an "Ecological Housing Code" which sets out standards (on matters such as energy and water conservation and use of sustainable materials), by which all future developments by Registered Social Landlords will be judged. It is also hoped to promote this with private sector developers.

Policy 1.1

Sustainable Development Strategy

Development will be permitted in cases where the proposal is compatible not only with the aims of the Sustainable Development Strategy, but also with the following criteria.

- (i) The larger forms of development, particularly those above the threshold of "major" should be located in the four larger towns and should be well related to existing forms of development and the planned "Integrated Transport Network" and in particular should be close to the public transport network.**
- (ii) Major development should incorporate initiatives for reducing the need to travel by motor car through the co-ordinated development of cycleways and footpaths and/or by the development of existing or new bus services which serve the site. Off-road parking should be provided only up to maximum accepted levels. (See Policy 5.17)**
- (iii) Development should make the best possible use of resources to avoid excessive environmental impact.**
- (iv) The development should not cause demonstrable harm to areas of high amenity, ecological or historic interest.**

(See also **Housing Policies 2.2** and **2.5** for guidance on the sequential approach to the release land, and urban design).

An Integrated Transport Network

1.31 A key element of the overall Local Plan Strategy will be the development of an integrated transport network. It will be essential to co-ordinate development with the transport network, i.e. a transport network which is not only integrated between the provision of facilities for the private motorist and for the use of public transport but also integrated for the transportation of freight. Furthermore, the public transport network needs further integration by improving the interchange between different modes of travel. Liaison between the development plan proposals and implementation is now a key feature of the County Council's Local Transport Plan.

1.32 The Local Plan Key Diagram (**Figure 1**) shows how the Strategy of concentrating development in the towns in the District can be linked to the existing and planned transport network and corridors. The main elements of this integrated transport network are;

- **Key Road Network** - this links the three towns for "Major Growth" (Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury) with the National Trunk Road system, providing for an efficient network. (A31, A303, A350, A354 & B3081)
- **Distributor Routes** - provide subsequent links to the Key Road Network, notably to the two towns for "Limited" and "Moderate" Growth (Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton). (A30, A357, B3082, B3091, B3092 and C6)
- **Railtrack** - the only station in North Dorset at Gillingham, provides the major interchange with road transport. The Local Authorities support the retention and improvement of the Salisbury / Exeter rail link and the proposed connection at Yeovil Junction with the Bristol / Weymouth line.
- **Regular Frequency Bus Routes** - encouragement will be given to operators to establish a bus network which provides;
 - Regular frequency services linking the towns in the District with Railtrack stations at Gillingham, Templecombe and Poole.
 - A service which will be attractive to both business and shopping commuters.
- **Cycleway Network** - part of the national network between Bournemouth and Bath passes through the District. There are also proposals to develop local links to this network as well as initiatives under the safe routes to school umbrella.

1.33 The above network will be implemented through the development policies and proposals of not only the Structure Plan and the Local Plan but also the County Council's Local Transport Plan. On the public transport side there will need to be detailed co-ordination between the Local Authorities (notably the County Council as Public Transport Authority) and the train and bus operators. There will also be the opportunity for developers to contribute towards facilities and improved services in partnership with the public sector through the implementation of major development schemes.

Development in the Towns

Blandford, Gillingham & Shaftesbury

1.34 All three towns are in locations which will attract economic development and have potential development land for the plan period where there are comparatively few constraints. There may be however in the long term, environmental constraints to their eventual spread of development.

1.35 These constraints are closely linked to the aim of promoting sustainable development and are sometimes described as being the "**environmental capacity**" of the development of a settlement. Each settlement may have a defined physical limit beyond which major environmental harm may be caused. This is not to say that these constraints should be seen as absolute for long term planning. However they should be seen as a monitoring device, so that if there is a requirement to expand a settlement significantly in the future, it may be done in a way which will minimise environmental impact, reduce the reliance on the motor car and bring social and economic benefits, particularly to town centre, community and retail facilities.

1.36 The latter issue is an important consideration to be assessed when defining the limits of the spread of development of the District's three main towns. At present the layout of town centre retailing and

community facilities is often constrained by a development pattern based on an historic medieval structure. This is usually a substantial barrier to finding sufficient space for expansion of town centre facilities which are commensurate with the needs of a large increase in population. Looking forward to the end of the Plan period, it is felt that Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury should be analysed carefully to consider what scope there may be for continued major expansion. The indications are at present that continued major expansion may not be a realistic option beyond 2011, particularly in Blandford and Shaftesbury.

1.37 The proposals for the expansion of the three main towns and their spread of development have been assessed using the following factors;

- The availability of sufficient land in or close to town centres which will allow for expansion of retailing and community facilities to serve an increase in population.
- A distance beyond which people are not likely to walk or cycle into the town centre (assessed to be approximately 1.6km (1 mile), equivalent to a 20/30 minute walk). Thus the use of the motor car is likely to be increased when housing developments are situated beyond this distance. Similarly new employment areas need to be situated within a 20/30 minute walk of the major housing areas in the town.
- The ability of the local road network to prove attractive for the operation of a regular frequency bus link to the town centre.
- The topographical constraints which exist (e.g. areas of outstanding natural beauty, small gaps between the town and outlying settlements, hill slopes, bypasses etc.) which tend to signify a natural limit to development.

Policy 1.2

Towns for Major Growth

(i) **BLANDFORD (FORUM & ST. MARY)**

(ii) **GILLINGHAM**

(iii) **SHAFTESBURY**

These towns will act as the main centres in the District for Population, Housing and Employment growth and for the development of Major Community Services. "Major" development may be permitted on suitable sites within the settlement boundaries of these towns providing that the tests of sustainability contained in Policy 1.1 are met.

1.38 The growth levels, development rates, land allocations and eventual environmental capacity are defined in the Settlement Policies for the individual towns.

Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton

1.39 The towns of Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton are less well placed for major development and have the major constraint of being on the A357, which is a highway of inadequate standard to receive much in the way of traffic increase. Nevertheless, the towns have a role to play as service centres for their catchment area and limited growth should take place to promote this role.

1.40 Although Sturminster Newton is of relative modest size, there has been a committed history of permitting larger developments in the town as part of previous planning strategies aimed at promoting the role of the town as a service centre. This Plan continues with that strategy and some "major" developments will be permitted there during this Plan period. However, in the the longer term, the strategy for the town is to limit further large scale development.

1.41 In the case of Stalbridge, growth is to be limited to existing committed sites within the built up area and to key local community facilities. The development of major additional community facilities for the

area will in the main take place at Sturminster Newton, which already acts as the predominant centre in this respect.

1.42 Although both towns are limited by the above locational factor for major expansion, the spread of development has been assessed using the factors contained in para. 1.38.

Policy 1.3

Town for Moderate Growth

- **STURMINSTER NEWTON**

Sturminster Newton will act as the main centre for the Stalbridge/ Sturminster Newton area and will receive the majority of population, housing and employment growth and the development of major community services. "Moderate" levels of development will be permitted within the settlement boundaries of the town which will include the development of a limited number of "major" sites.

Town for Limited Growth

- **STALBRIDGE**

Stalbridge will act as a local centre and will receive limited housing and employment growth together with the development of local community services.

1.43 The growth levels, development rates and land allocations will be defined in the Settlement Policies for the individual towns. **"Moderate and Limited Growth"** will generally mean the development of sites and buildings which are below the threshold of "Major Development."

Development in the Villages

Villages with Settlement Boundaries

1.44 As already stated a key feature of this strategy will be to divert pressures for development away from the more remote countryside areas towards the towns. Village development therefore will, in the main, be contained within those larger villages with defined settlement boundaries and will also be directed towards those villages with services and facilities. In contrast however is the essential consideration that villages must not be allowed to "die on their feet" or become predominantly dormitories. As far as possible they should be self-contained and provide local employment as well as maintaining local facilities such as schools, shops and public houses. There are opportunities in most of the following villages for modest developments which support the rural economy and for small housing schemes, particularly where they involve genuine affordable housing to meet local needs.

Policy 1.4

Village Development

- **Villages with Settlement Boundaries**

Viable village communities will be sustained by accommodating new economic activity and modest housing development within their settlement boundaries. The scale and form of development will be related to their size and character and to the availability of services.

To be included in the following list a settlement must either have a cohesive built-up nature or have a reasonable range of community facilities and the available service infrastructure to support further growth.

<i>Ashmore</i>	<i>Melcombe Bingham</i>
<i>Bourton</i>	<i>Upper and Lower Ansty</i>
<i>Bryanston</i>	<i>Milborne St. Andrew</i>
<i>Buckhorn Weston</i>	<i>Milton Abbas</i>
<i>Cann Common</i>	<i>Milton on Stour</i>
<i>Charlton Marshall</i>	<i>Motcombe</i>
<i>Child Okeford</i>	<i>Okeford Fitzpaine</i>
<i>Compton Abbas</i>	<i>Pimperne</i>
<i>Durweston</i>	<i>Pulham</i>
<i>East Stour</i>	<i>Shillingstone</i>
<i>Farnham</i>	<i>Spetisbury</i>
<i>Fifehead Magdalen</i>	<i>Stour Provost</i>
<i>Fontmell Magna</i>	<i>Stour Row</i>
<i>Glanvilles Wootton</i>	<i>Stourpaine</i>
<i>Hazelbury Bryan</i>	<i>Stourton Caundle</i>
<i>Hilton</i>	<i>Sutton Waldron</i>
<i>Hinton St. Mary</i>	<i>Tarrant Gunville</i>
<i>Ibberton</i>	<i>Tarrant Hinton</i>
<i>Iwerne Courtney (Shroton)</i>	<i>Tarrant Keyneston</i>
<i>Iwerne Minster</i>	<i>Tarrant Monkton</i>
<i>Kings Stag</i>	<i>West Stour</i>
<i>Kington Magna</i>	<i>Winterborne Houghton</i>
<i>Lydlinch</i>	<i>Winterborne Kingston</i>
<i>Manston</i>	<i>Winterborne Stickland</i>
<i>Mappowder</i>	<i>Winterborne Whitechurch</i>
<i>Marnhull</i>	<i>Winterborne Zelston</i>

Small Villages and Hamlets

1.45 There are approximately 50 small villages and hamlets which do not have designated settlement limits. Many of these have a very loose-knit and fragmented settlement pattern which contain numerous potential development sites. The essential character of many of these villages would be destroyed if infilling were to continue. To allow uncontrolled development within these settlements would be contrary to the overall aims of sustainable development in that a dispersed form of development would result, away from the transport network and other services. There are also few services within or close to these villages and hamlets and it would be difficult to support much in the way of new development.

1.46 Under this strategy therefore, all small villages and hamlets will be treated as being within the countryside and subject to a general policy of restraint. There may however be possibilities granted under the Development in the Countryside Policy (**Policy 1.6**) particularly in respect of sensitive re-use and adaptation of existing buildings within the confines of the village. Affordable housing for local needs and small employment initiatives may also be approved as exceptions to normal policy. These are dealt with in the respective chapters.

Policy 1.5

Small Villages and Hamlets in the Countryside

Development will only be approved in a small village or hamlet if one of the circumstances in the "Development in the Countryside" Policy (**Policy 1.6**) apply.

Protecting the Countryside

1.47 The character of the North Dorset countryside is a key resource which attracts tourists and those enjoying quiet countryside pursuits throughout the seasons. It is an important part of the local economy, particularly for tourism and the countryside leisure industry.

1.48 One of the most important key components of the Local Plan Strategy is the protection of the countryside. The countryside of North Dorset, in particular the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Sites of Special Scientific Interest must be protected for their own sake and for the sake of restricting further sporadic development which goes against the aspirations of sustainable development.

1.49 Development activity will generally be directed away from those areas and only those developments which can be accommodated without detriment to the environment will be allowed.

Policy 1.6

Development in the Countryside

In the countryside areas beyond the defined settlement boundaries, most forms of residential and commercial development for general needs will not be permitted. The following uses however, may be granted permission, subject to the relevant policy and assessment criteria;

- (i) Development required for Agriculture and Forestry
- (ii) Rural Buildings; Re-use & Adaptation
- (iii) Rural "Exception" Sites for Affordable Housing for Local Needs
- (iv) Housing for Agricultural & Forestry Needs
- (v) Housing; Dwelling extensions & replacements
- (vi) Employment; Development for Local Needs
- (vii) Countryside Tourism
- (viii) Countryside Recreation
- (ix) Infrastructure (e.g. roads, sewers, energy, telecoms etc.)

Settlement Boundaries

1.50 The Settlement Boundaries shown on the proposals Map define the predominant "edge" between built development and the countryside. Greenfield sites which are allocated for development, in the period up to 2011 are included within the settlement boundaries. Settlement Boundaries will be reviewed at each Plan revision and may be enlarged or reduced to allow for new allocations for development in the "roll forward" period of the Plan.

Policy 1.7

Development within Settlement Boundaries

Development will only be approved within Settlement Boundaries if the proposal satisfies the Standard Assessment Criteria Policy.

(b) Protecting the Environment

Standard Assessment Criteria

1.51 The following policy will act as a comprehensive checklist for development control purposes so that all applications can be assessed within an overall framework. The use of this standard assessment criteria also avoids needless repetition of criteria in other individual policies.

1.52 All the following criteria are of acknowledged importance for the environment of North Dorset and all proposals for development should comply with them as far as possible. In cases where an Environmental Statement is required under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, these policies will be used as a preliminary basis for assessment purposes.

Policy 1.8

Standard Assessment Criteria

The following assessment criteria are of acknowledged importance for the environment of North Dorset District and will be used in the determination of planning applications.

All applications for development will be assessed against the following criteria;

(i) Strategy and other policies

Development and the pattern of growth should not only meet with the overall Local Plan Strategy of Sustainable Development but should be compatible with any other relevant policy of this Plan.

(ii) Character

The form, scale and density of new development should be in character or enhance the immediate surroundings and the settlement or area as a whole.

(iii) Amenity

The amenity of neighbouring land users should be safeguarded.

(iv) Design & external appearance of buildings

The adaptation of local vernacular styles and use of local materials will be expected in conservation areas which have a strong local historic character where pre-20th century properties predominate. Buildings in a modern idiom may be approved where they are in sympathetic relationship to their surroundings. The main elevation of new buildings will be expected to face either the major road leading to, or the major road running through the development, so as to create a sense of enclosure, public security and to help integrate new development with existing patterns of development.

(v) Views of the countryside and the built environment heritage

Development should not adversely affect public views of the countryside, the built environment or Important Open/Wooded Areas.

(vi) Vehicular access & car parking

The provision of access roads, turning areas and car parking which generate traffic movements likely to cause or increase unnecessary danger to highway users, will not be permitted. (For car parking strategy see **Policies 1.1 (ii) and 5.17**). Road networks leading into new development shall be designed so as to achieve a high level of 'permeability' i.e. to have the maximum number of links and access points between all areas for pedestrians, cyclists and for motor vehicles so as to integrate new development with existing patterns of

development, to create a greater sense of public security and to reduce journey length.²

(vii) The transport network Development should be well related to the highway and the public transport network. Proposed developments which would generate excessive traffic volumes onto inadequate highways, will not be permitted.

(viii) Pedestrian & cycle rights of way

Existing rights of way for pedestrians and cyclists should be safeguarded and improved where necessary.

(ix) Provision of infrastructure

Adequate community infrastructure should be available to serve the development (e.g. education, recreation, transportation etc.). In order for development to be acceptable in land use planning terms, appropriate provision may be sought for community infrastructure facilities when they are directly related to and necessary for the development to proceed, having regard to type, location, scale and impact of the development proposed.

(x) Crime prevention

The design and layout of development should be planned so as to minimise opportunity for crime.

(xi) Noise

Noise levels and hours of operation from either existing adjoining uses or proposed new use should not be detrimental to the amenity of the neighbourhood.

(xii) Access for disabled people

All development should, where possible, be designed and laid out to allow for adequate access for disabled people.

Important Open/Wooded Areas (I.O.W.A's) within Settlements

1.53 The character of many settlements is derived from the relationship between built form and open spaces. It is important that open and wooded areas within settlement boundaries are protected from development, especially as there is generally a stronger presumption in favour of granting planning permission for development within a settlement boundary.

1.54 All settlements have been surveyed and where it is considered that an open or wooded area contributes significantly to the amenity and character of a settlement, it has been designated as an "Important Open or Wooded Area" (IOWA) on the Proposals Map. Both public and privately owned areas of land have been included. The most important criterion used for selection is the overall contribution that the IOWA gives in visual or amenity terms to public areas within the town or village.

1.55 The Inspector at the Public Inquiry recommended a review of these areas and deletion of those areas which do not need to be completely protected from development, or alternatively, could be placed into the countryside area beyond the Settlement Boundaries. Furthermore, he recommended that the policy be strengthened to completely rule out development on any part of IOWA.

1.56 A review of all the IOWAs, (and there are over 350 of them) prior to modification, will take time and delay the process of plan adoption. To delete sites, which were not subject to original objection, may then give rise to the need to reopen the Inquiry, to hear individual objections from landowners and Parish Councils. In view of this, there will be a review of IOWAs as soon as possible after adoption. However in the intervening period, the new IOWA policy as recommended by the inspector has been adopted.

1.57 School Playing Fields and Recreation Grounds have been included within Settlement Boundaries and designated as IOWAs in view of their amenity value in both visual and recreational terms.

Policy 1.9

Important Open or Wooded Areas

Designated Important Open or Wooded Areas will be protected from development.

Re-use and Adaptation of Buildings (including Modern Buildings) in the Countryside

1.58 The re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings may be acceptable, subject to the nature and extent of the proposed new use being acceptable in planning terms. For instance, the change of use to a small commercial use may bring benefit to the local rural economy as may conversion to holiday accommodation or a countryside recreational use. It is important however that the scale of such changes are kept to a modest level so as to keep traffic impacts to a minimum and to avoid any adverse impacts upon the economic vitality of existing town and village centres. The floor area of proposed conversions should generally be below that stipulated in the definition of "Major" Development.

1.59 Conversion to residential use must be carefully considered in view of the overall strategy of sustainable development and protection of the countryside. To allow widespread conversion, particularly in isolated areas, will undermine this strategy by encouraging additional journeys by car and by adversely affecting the character of the countryside. Planning permission therefore will not usually be granted for change of use to residential unless the circumstances in the criteria of **Policy 1.10** can be met.

1.60 Other important considerations to be borne in mind are the age and quality of buildings and the reasons behind the need to convert to a new use. Modern buildings constructed since 1945 may often be of a non-traditional appearance and retention and re-use may not be of benefit to the character of an area. Similarly traditional buildings in the local vernacular must be carefully converted so as to not lose their original quality and distinctive features.

Policy 1.10

Re-use & Adaptation of Buildings (including Modern Buildings) in the Countryside

The change of use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside will be approved where one or more of the following criteria are met;

- (i) in open countryside locations the building(s) should not have become so derelict that they could not be brought back into use except by complete or substantial reconstruction;**
- (ii) the building(s) are of permanent and substantial construction and their form bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings;**
- (iii) proposals should be modest in scale, so as to avoid any adverse impact upon the economic vitality of nearby town and village centres, and to avoid excessive additional traffic growth.**

Permission for residential use will only be granted in the following circumstances:

- (i) where redevelopment for business, storage, tourism, community or recreational use is not a practicable solution;**
- (ii) the building(s) are not in an isolated position and are well-located to the Public Highway network and to community facilities and services;**
- (iii) the residential conversion is part of a scheme for business re-use;**
- (iv) the building(s) should not be close to a working farm where smells and noise may be a problem affecting residential amenity;**

(v) where building(s) are of traditional construction the residential activity associated with the conversion should not harm either the character of the building or the character of the locality.

Farmyards within Village Settlement Boundaries

1.61 Farmyards form an essential part of the historic development and character of the villages in North Dorset. They continue to be an important source of employment and business activity in the rural economy. The aim of this policy, therefore, is to seek to protect this important feature of village life.

1.62 Where farmyards are within village settlement boundaries there is a danger that an assumption may be made that permission will be granted automatically for residential redevelopment. This should not be the case and applications for redevelopment should be carefully judged against the criteria of the policy. If it is accepted that a working village farm has come to the end of its useful life then, in the first instance, change of use to a development that will aid the local economy will be encouraged (e.g. business or tourism use). Residential conversion will only be considered if that particular route to redevelopment is not practicable.

1.63 In most cases where a farmyard is on the edge of a village it has been included within the settlement boundary, particularly if it is part of the historic development pattern of the village and is physically linked to other buildings within the village. Post-war modern buildings of non-traditional nature on the edge of a village have generally been excluded from the village settlement boundaries. The proposed redevelopment and change of use of such areas of modern agricultural buildings represents, in the majority of cases, an unwarranted incursion of permanent non-essential development into the countryside.

1.64 The inspector in his report on the Local Plan Inquiry recommended that this policy and justification be removed from the plan. He felt that the inclusion of this policy actually had the opposite effect to that which it was trying to achieve; ie it actually encouraged unsuitable redevelopment proposals to come forward. He also recommended a review of farmyards where they adjoined open countryside and possibly removing them from within the Settlement Boundary. However the Council has decided to retain the policy and farmyards as put forward in the Deposit Plan. To make alterations now to Settlement Boundaries would inevitably lead to fresh objections being raised which would lead to a second Public Inquiry and thus delay the adoption of the Plan. The Council nevertheless will carry out a full re-survey of farmyards and a re-evaluation of this policy as a priority, at the first review of this Plan, post-adoption.

Policy 1.11

Farmyards within Village Settlement Boundaries

The change of use and redevelopment of farmyards within Settlement Boundaries will be granted permission if the following circumstances apply:

- (i) the character of any worthy, sound and traditional buildings on the site can be retained;**
- (ii) any unsightly buildings, plant, hard standings and other structures can be removed from the site;**
- (iii) the scale of the proposed redevelopment is in character with the village; (iv) where the farm yard is of historic interest its form and space will be retained;**

Residential use will be acceptable in the following circumstances;

- (i) where redevelopment for business, storage, tourism, community or recreational use is not a practicable solution;**
- (ii) where any remaining parts of the working farmyard would not cause significant problems of smell or noise;**

(iii) where the scale of residential development and the number of dwellings proposed would be within the overall strategy and the housing allocations of this Plan.

Rivers, Water & Drainage Services River Valleys

1.65 River valleys are an important landscape feature in North Dorset; the Stour and its tributaries, Winterborne and Tarrant river valleys being the most significant. In order to protect the regime of the major rivers and water courses, the following River Valley Policy has been developed which seeks to;

- ensure that river water quality is not adversely affected by possible pollution from development
- protect the wildlife, vegetation and landscape associated with the rivers
- ensure that proposals for countryside recreation along the river valleys are carried out in a sensitive and co-ordinated manner.

1.66 The River Valley Policy areas have been drawn up to include the whole valley floor which can be associated with the geography of the river. In the upper reaches of the Stour, Shreen Water, Lodden, Cale, and Lydden and along other smaller rivers, it has not been possible to provide detailed information on historical flood patterns. The absence of such information however is not indicative that there may not be any risk of flooding and the Technical Services Section of the District Council and Environment Agency will be consulted in all instances where proposed development is close to or will affect any watercourse so that an assessment can be made of the likely flood risk consequences of the proposal.

1.67 The Stour River valley is now subject to a joint initiative between the County and the District Councils. "The Stour Valley Project" aims to;

- conserve the special character of the valley's landscape and wildlife
- encourage public enjoyment and understanding of the area
- involve local communities in conservation projects.

1.68 It is also proposed to establish a continuation of the Stour Valley Way (long distance path) through the District to Blandford and then eventually northwards to Sturminster Newton, Gillingham and Stourhead.

Policy 1.12

River Valleys

Development will not be permitted within the River Valley areas defined on the Proposals Maps where;

- (i) the water quality of the river would be adversely affected by effluent pollution from the development.**
- (ii) the wildlife and their habitats, the vegetation and the landscape of the river valleys would be adversely affected by the development.**

Areas Liable to Flood

1.69 Known areas which are "liable to flood" are also shown on the Proposals Map. This information has been taken from the most up to date Environment Agency "section 105" map at the time of adopting the Local Plan. 'Areas Liable to Flood' are only generally defined on the Stour, Shreen Water, Lodden and the lower reaches of the Cale and Lydden. Except for certain appropriate uses, for example, for essential transport and infrastructure uses, development on 'green-field' land within an 'Area Liable to Flood' will not be permitted.

1.70 Development on "brownfield" land within an 'Area Liable to Flood' will only be permitted if (i) it is not within 'functional' flood plain where flood water frequently flows (ii) there are no other suitable sites outside of an 'Area Liable to Flood' (iii) measures can be incorporated into the scheme so that it will not result in life being endangered or there being an unacceptable likelihood of damage to property. 'Areas Defended by Flood Defence Scheme' are also shown on the Proposals Map. Most development will be

acceptable in flood risk terms, provided that it does not compromise the effectiveness of the defence itself.

Policy 1.13

Areas Liable to Flood

Development in a developed area within an Area Liable to Flood will only be permitted provided that criteria (i) and (ii) below are fulfilled.

Development in an undeveloped or sparsely developed area within an Area Liable to Flood will only be permitted if it is essential transport and utilities infrastructure, or a recreation, sport, amenity or conservation use, and that criteria (i) and (ii) below are fulfilled.

Development, whether in a developed or undeveloped area, within an Area Liable to Flood which is known to be sited where flood water frequently passes will only be permitted if it is essential transport and utilities infrastructure, or a recreation, sport, amenity or conservation use, and that criteria (i) and (ii) below are fulfilled.

(i) it can be demonstrated that there are no alternative sites for the development on other previously developed land with a lower probability of flooding;

(ii) and it can be demonstrated that after incorporating flood mitigation and, or, compensation, there would be an acceptable flood risk for the development and other land uses.

Development will not be permitted in the vicinity of any flood defence structure shown on the Proposals Map or in any subsequent Supplementary Planning Guidance on Flood Risk.

Drainage Requirements

1.71 Development should not proceed without adequate surface water drainage arrangements. To minimise flooding, surface water run-off from new development should be attenuated, as near to the source as possible, to that which would occur on the equivalent greenfield site. To achieve this, "sustainable" drainage systems, which are appropriate to the underlying ground conditions, should be incorporated into the design of a development at the earliest opportunity. Sustainable drainage systems include:

Infiltration devices, including:

- Permeable pavements
- Soakaways
- Filter drains and strips
- Swales with infiltration
- Infiltration basins

Storage basins or ponds including:

- Detention basins
- Balancing or attenuation ponds
- Reed beds
- Wetlands

1.72 As well as reducing total and peak flows of run-off, "sustainable" drainage systems can enhance the amenity and wildlife interest of developments and can facilitate natural groundwater recharge.

Policy 1.14

Surface Water Drainage Requirements

Development will only be permitted where arrangements can be made for the attenuation of surface water run-off involving either infiltration devices or storage basins or ponds, or if neither of these would be appropriate, where arrangements can be made involving underground storage.

1.73 In addition, development should not proceed without adequate foul drainage arrangements. This is particularly important in the heavy clay areas of the Blackmore Vale where the soil conditions often make septic tank drainage and/or soakaways difficult to operate. In areas where there are existing sewers, all development will connect to the main foul sewer network.

Policy 1.15

Foul Drainage Arrangements

Development will only be permitted where satisfactory arrangements can be made for the drainage of all foul water drainage. Foul water drainage should always be connected to main foul sewers where feasible.

Groundwater Source Protection

1.74 The chalk downlands of the District are a valuable source of groundwater which feeds aquifers and then supplies drinking water reservoirs. Effluent disposal from development must be carefully treated to avoid possible pollution of this resource. Some developments, which are a likely source of pollution may not be suitable within such areas of groundwater source protection.

1.75 The "Groundwater Source Protection Areas" shown on the Proposals Map, indicate as a guide, the major sources of public drinking water supplies in the Chalk downland areas. There are however a considerable number of relatively small licensed sources in other areas which have not yet been zoned by the Environment Agency. The following policy is therefore applicable throughout the District but will have particular relevance in the Source Protection Areas.

Policy 1.16

Groundwater Source Protection

Development which would have an unacceptable risk upon the water quality, quantity or natural flow patterns of a groundwater resource will not be permitted. This is especially important within the Groundwater Source Protection Areas defined on the Proposals Map and also where land may have been subject to previous contamination.

Sewage Treatment Works Protection Areas

1.76 Sewage Treatment Works are often a source of odour pollution and it is necessary to keep development of regularly occupied premises away from such works particularly where development occurs downwind of the prevailing wind direction.

1.77 Each Sewage Treatment Works therefore has a protection area drawn around it which is defined on the Proposals Maps. The protection area has been drawn up by Wessex Water, in relation to the size and potential odour hazard from their Works.

1.78 Where these areas impinge on land which may have potential for infill development or redevelopment and it is decided to grant permission, despite the risk of odour pollution, the Local Planning Authority will take steps to ensure that developers are made aware of the possibility of odour nuisance.

Policy 1.17

Sewage Treatment Works Protection Areas

Development Proposals resulting in regularly occupied premises will not be approved in close proximity to a Sewage Treatment Works within the areas shown on the Proposals Maps. In some cases, development may be approved on the edge of these areas if it is in a position which would not normally receive odours carried in the prevailing wind from the Sewage Treatment Works.

Waste Recycling

1.79 The collection of waste is a District Authority function, while waste disposal and planning is regulated by the County Authority. The Government has indicated that at least 25% of domestic waste should be recycled by the year 2005. The District Council is committed to recycling and as part of this drive a series of recycling centres have now been established, where household waste can be transferred to individual banks/containers. The large centres are concentrated in the five towns and also at Stourpaine Household Recycling Site. Smaller centres with more limited facilities are now being provided in the villages as and when sites become available. New housing developments in excess of 10 dwellings should have communal recycling facilities provided as part of the development unless there is already a centre close by. This will reduce the need to travel and also ease the burden placed on the kerbside collection of waste for recycling. In cases where there is a recycling facility close by, an equivalent financial contribution towards the improvement of that facility may be sought if necessary.

Policy 1.18

Waste Recycling Centres

Further to the District Council's Waste Recycling Plan, it is proposed to maintain a series of waste recycling centres in the main towns and villages. Centres should be sensitively sited and landscaped/screened where appropriate. Communal waste recycling facilities should be provided on all housing developments in excess of 10 dwellings unless there is already a centre close by.

Lighting Standards

1.80 The external lighting of new development areas has been the subject of increasing concern for the following reasons;

- the detrimental affect on previously unlit rural areas (i.e. "light pollution")
- the visual effect of tall lighting columns
- possible glare for highway users
- the effect on wildlife habitats
- high energy use

There is a clear case for introducing the following policy to effectively control lighting schemes proposed as part of new development applications.

Policy 1.19

Lighting Standards

The external lighting of new development will only be approved in the following circumstances where:

- (i) there is no detrimental effect on existing unlit rural areas;
- (ii) the scale of lighting columns is in keeping with the character of an area;
- (iii) highway safety would not be adversely affected;
- (iv) there would be no adverse effect on wildlife habitats;
- (v) the lighting scheme proposed is the minimum required for security or working purposes;
- (vi) light spillage and glare is minimised;
- (vii) any necessary landscaping is included as screening.

Contaminated Land

1.81 Land contamination, or the possibility of it, is a material consideration for the purposes of determining planning applications and when developing structure or local plans.

1.82 Previously developed land (brownfield sites) may have been contaminated by a variety of land uses, such as fuel filling stations, gas works, industrial sites etc. Such contamination may pose risks to current or future site occupiers, buildings on the site and to the environment.

1.83 The risks must be identified early in the development process to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are taken. This should take the form of a "source-pathway-receptor" assessment, whereby the sources of the hazard (e.g. heavy metal contamination), the receptor (e.g. public water supply borehole) and the pathway connecting the two (e.g. contaminated groundwater plume) are considered.

1.84 In this way the risks posed can be assessed and suitable mitigation put in place to reduce the risks to an acceptable level. This investigation should be carried out by the developer either before planning permission has been granted or by means of planning condition.

1.85 The planning authority must satisfy itself that the potential for contamination is properly assessed, and the development incorporates any necessary remediation. Where necessary, any planning permission should include appropriate site investigation and remediation conditions. Under the "suitable for use" approach, risks should be assessed, and remediation requirements set, on the basis of both the current use and circumstances of the land and its proposed new use. (This is in contrast to the approach under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which has been implemented as a means of dealing with the legacy of contaminated land which has arisen from the historical use of land and where only the current use and circumstances are considered.)

1.86 The principles of risk assessment and management and the arrangements for carrying out detailed inspection of potentially contaminated sites are discussed in detail in the authority's "Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy" and intending developers of contaminated land should also inspect this document.

1.87 Guidance to planning authorities is set out in Planning Policy Guidance: Planning and Pollution Control **PPG 23**), published in 1994, and **DOE Circular 11/95** The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions. The Government is currently preparing further planning guidance on land contamination, which will amplify the guidance in **PPG 23**, explain the interface with the "Part IIA regime" from a planning perspective, and provide planning authorities with technical and practical advice on land contamination issues. In the meantime, the guidance contained in **PPG 23** remains valid, references to the term "contaminated land" in that document should be interpreted in the general sense rather than according to the particular definition used for the purposes of the Part IIA regime.

1.88 In some cases, the carrying out of remediation activities under Part IIA may itself constitute "development" within the meaning given at section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and therefore require planning permission.

1.89 Where it is anticipated that contamination may be present on or near a proposed development area, a site assessment by the developer, will be required to characterise the contamination and establish the likely risks posed.

1.90 This assessment will be required either prior to the grant of planning permission or by condition, depending on the severity of the contamination and magnitude of risks posed, on a site specific basis.

1.91 In any case where new development is taking place, the onus is on the developer to provide and disclose all relevant information and it will be the responsibility of the developer to carry out the necessary remediation.

1.92 In most cases, the enforcement of any remediation requirements will be through planning conditions and building control, rather than through a remediation notice issued under part IIA.

Policy 1.20

Contaminated Land

Development will not be permitted on or near contaminated land unless sufficient practicable and effective measures will be taken to remediate the site so as not to:

- (i) expose the occupiers of the development and neighbouring land users to unacceptable risk from the contamination, or allow such a situation to continue;**
- (ii) lead to the pollution of any watercourse, water body or groundwater or allow such pollution to continue;**
- (iii) lead to contamination of adjoining land or allow such contamination to continue;**
- (iv) lead to the release of pollution to air, or**
- (v) threaten the structural integrity of any building on or adjoining the site.**

(c) Conservation of the Historic Environment

Introduction

1.93 The District has a rich heritage of historic buildings, townscapes and landscapes with a wide variety of rare and interesting flora and fauna. These are important assets, some of national repute, which should not be forgotten or underestimated.

1.94 The Government's **Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 15 "Planning and the Historic Environment"** issued in September 1994 reaffirms that it is fundamental to its policies for environmental protection for there to be effective protection of all aspects of the historic environment.

1.95 The historic environment is :-

- an essential part of our cultural heritage
- vital to our education and understanding of both past and present
- an asset in the quality of life, providing attractive environments for work and leisure
- an essential element of local distinctiveness and character.

1.96 The environment is under constant change and pressure for change. The policies of this plan will not necessarily seek to halt or obstruct such evolution but are designed to ensure that any change is controlled and positively managed. The emphasis will be on control rather than prevention.

1.97 North Dorset District Council is committed to the protection and enhancement of the environment and intends to ensure the proper care and stewardship of the historic environment by all those involved in a number of ways :-

- promotion of high standards of design;
- financial commitment and investment from public sources;
- encouraging through education a better understanding of the principles of conservation;

- working with other agencies to facilitate achievement of objectives;
- encouraging and working with community and volunteer groups.

Listed Buildings

1.98 There are approximately 2500 listed buildings in the District. Buildings are chosen to be included in the statutory list because of their architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are irreplaceable assets which provide invaluable insights into our social, religious and economic past, as well as being an invaluable part of the character of our towns, villages and countryside.

1.99 Many of the buildings will face some direct change or threat during the plan period, such as change in ownership, alteration, extension, demolition or neglect. Others will face indirect change through developments which affect their setting.

1.100 Government advice makes it clear that the District Council has a key responsibility to protect and preserve listed buildings - their interest, character and setting. The Council takes this responsibility seriously and in considering proposals to alter, extend or demolish a listed building it will have regard to the following matters;

- the importance of the building
- physical features of the building
- setting of the building
- benefits to the community that would result from demolition.

1.101 Fuller detail on these assessment criteria is contained in **Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 15 "Planning and the Historic Environment"** and further advice will be provided in the Council's own supplementary planning guidance, both of which should be fully consulted when considering the merits of any proposal within the context of these local plan policies. It should be remembered that any proposal to alter or extend an historic building, no matter how insignificant it may appear, will have an effect on the building's character, such that cumulatively the effect of a succession of minor works can be quite damaging to a building's historic integrity and character.

1.102 Nearly a quarter of all the listed buildings in the District are thatched. The District also has the highest survival rate of medieval smoke blackened thatch in the County. The loss of this thatch and the County's thatch traditions by the use of imported materials and thatching techniques is a real threat to our heritage that needs to be tackled. The Dorset Thatching report, published in 1997 by the County Council, sets out criteria for assessing proposals affecting historic thatched properties and will be used as supplementary planning guidance, by this Council, when determining planning applications. In addition **PPG 15**, paragraph C29 provides further advice on thatching work.

1.103 When submitting a planning application that relates to a listed building the District council will expect applicants to be able to justify their proposals showing how the works will affect the special interest of the building and why they are desirable or necessary.

Policy 1.21

Alterations to Listed Buildings

Development proposals which involve the alteration or extension of a listed building will only be permitted if the architectural and historic interest of the building will be preserved and no original or historic features will be destroyed

Policy 1.22

Demolition of Listed Buildings

Proposals which involve the demolition of a listed building will not be permitted unless;

- (i) all reasonable efforts to sustain the existing use or find viable new uses have been explored and failed;
- (ii) the preservation of the building in some form of charitable or community ownership is not possible or suitable;
- (iii) redevelopment would bring substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.

1.104 New development can have an adverse effect on the setting of a listed building not just in relation to the setting within its own grounds but also in its position and role in the street or landscape.

Policy 1.23

Setting of Listed Buildings

Development affecting the setting of a listed building and its contribution to the local scene will only be permitted provided that it either preserves or enhances the listed building's special interest or its setting.

1.105 Supplementary planning guidance on these issues on listed buildings and other historic buildings covering the following topics will be made available during the plan period:

- Repair techniques and traditions
- Alterations
- Listed Building law
- The architectural detailing of historic buildings
- Building materials

Conservation Areas

1.106 Section 69 of the Planning (Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on the District Council to consider the designation of "Areas of Special Architectural or Historic Interest", known as "Conservation Areas". The quality and interest of an area will be assessed by examining the following matters:-

- Historic layout of boundaries and routes
- Characteristic materials and forms
- Mix of uses
- Contribution of recent developments
- Hard and soft surfaces.

1.107 Conservation Area designation will recognise the individual importance and interrelationship of all these factors. The government has made it clear that designation is worthless without adequate policies of enhancement and protection. The policies of this local plan will ensure that the quality of the townscape or landscape and the extent to which individual elements contribute to it are adequately considered in the development control process.

1.108 It is very easy to upset the delicate balance and sometimes sensitive character of Conservation Areas or part of a Conservation Area by the loss of individual or groups of features or buildings and the introduction of ill conceived, poorly designed or sited new development. In particular the Council will wish to consider the effect of development on views into, out of and within the Conservation Area and not just the effect on the immediate surroundings. Also the Council will wish to consider the consequential and potentially harmful effects of development, e.g. excessive traffic generation on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The Council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area and it is incumbent on all those involved to ensure that changes will be for the better.

Policy 1.24

Character of Conservation Areas

The District Council will pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas and proposals for any new development, alterations and changes of use of existing buildings and land which have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area will not be permitted.

1.109 At the date of publication of the Plan there were 45 Conservation Areas in North Dorset;

Ashmore	Okeford Fitzpaine
Blandford, Blandford	Pimperne
St. Mary & Bryanston	Shaftesbury
Charlton Marshall	Shillingstone
Child Okeford	Iwerne Courtney (Shroton)
Compton Abbas	Stalbridge
Durweston	Stalbridge Weston
Farnham	Stourpaine
Fifehead Magdalen	Stour Provost
Fontmell Magna	Stourton Caundle
Gillingham	Sturminster Newton
Hazelbury Bryan	Sutton Waldron
Hilton	Tarrant Gunville
Hinton St. Mary	Tarrant Hinton
Ibberton	Tarrant Keyneston
Iwerne Minster	Tarrant Monkton
Kington Magna	Tarrant Rushton
Mappowder	Turnworth
Marnhull	West Stour
Milborne St. Andrew	Winterborne Houghton
Milton Abbas	Winterborne Stickland
Milton on Stour	Winterborne Whitechurch
Motcombe	Winterborne Zelston

1.110 Government advice now states clearly that there is a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Thus it is expected that proposals to demolish such buildings will be considered against the same criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. For cases where a building makes little or no such contribution the District Council will have to be given clear information about what is proposed for the site after demolition. In such instances and for new development sites consent will not be given unless acceptable and detailed plans are submitted.

Policy 1.25

Demolition in Conservation Areas

Proposals involving the demolition of unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area will not be permitted unless;

- (i) all reasonable efforts to sustain the existing use or find viable new uses have been explored and failed;**
- (ii) the preservation of the building in some form of charitable or community ownership is not possible or suitable;**
- (iii) re-development would bring substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.**

1.111 Demolition of a building will not always be followed immediately by new development. To avoid the appearance of unsightly gaps in Conservation Areas resulting from premature demolition the Council will need to ensure that redevelopment of a satisfactory standard will follow immediately.

1.112 To be able to assess the impact of a development on the character and appearance of a Conservation Area the District Council will need to be provided with detail of the proposal. It is expected that planning applications will be submitted with sufficient detail on the siting, layout, design, use of materials, landscaping and any other details necessary to allow a full understanding of the proposals and the likely effect on the area.

1.113 The quality of new development has been the subject of fierce and long debate. It is clear from the experiences of the past 30 years that in many cases there is considerable scope for improvement, not just in the detailed design but in the form and layout of buildings and the use of materials. To assist in the process of improvement and to provide some principles for assessment of planning applications this Council will produce supplementary planning guidance on the following matters:-

- Design and layout of new buildings
- Alterations and extensions.

1.114 It is the District Council's duty to consider proposals for the enhancement of Conservation Areas. As a part of its role in reviewing the boundaries of existing Conservation Areas and proposing new areas the District Council will ensure that the quality and character of these areas is fully understood by adopting the guidance provided by English Heritage in its publication "Conservation Area Practice" and the advice contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 15 "Planning and the Historic Environment."

1.115 Within Conservation Areas there may be a wide variety of architectural styles or different ways in which the roads are laid out, for example, between a town centre and its suburbs. It is the District Council's intention to identify sub areas indicating boundaries where there is a distinct change in environment, for example in the architectural style or layout of buildings. Understanding and identifying the way in which a town or village has developed will help to ensure that new development and change is appropriate to a particular area maintaining local identity and character.

1.116 The personalising or improving of houses through replacement windows and doors, rendering and stone cladding can have a dramatic and adverse effect on the character and appearance of a Conservation Area. Many such alterations do not normally require planning permission. Serving a Direction under Article 4 of the General Development Order 1988 can bring them under the control of the District Council to ensure that such changes are controlled and managed to the advantage of the area. To maintain local identity and preserve the character and appearance of Conservation Areas or parts of Conservation Areas the District Council will consider the restriction of permitted development rights by the use of Article 4 Directions.

Advertisement Control and Shop Fronts in Conservation Areas

1.117 A number of the District's Conservation Areas incorporate commercial high streets. While it is important to retain the vibrancy and vitality of such centres it is also important and necessary to control the use of advertisements to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of an area or individual buildings.

1.118 Shopfronts and advertisements can make a significant contribution to the character of commercial centres. Traditional shopfronts and advertisements are highly valued elements within town centres and

their removal will be resisted. Generally in most historic town centres new shopfronts and advertisements should conform to the same principles of design as the traditional ones. Modern materials, internal illumination and highly stylised lettering will seldom be acceptable. Similarly external security shutters and grilles will seldom be acceptable. The District Council will be producing supplementary planning guidance to establish basic principles and establish criteria for the assessment of planning applications.

Policy 1.26

Advertisements in Conservation Areas

Proposals to replace traditional fascia signs and hanging signs will be resisted. The Council will not permit new advertisements or alterations to existing ones that will have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Policy 1.27

Shopfronts in Conservation Areas

Proposals to alter or remove traditional shopfronts which will have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area will be resisted. Proposals for any new shopfront that will have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area will not be permitted.*

Archaeology

1.119 The District is very rich in archaeological remains from Prehistoric and Roman times, with a continuing wealth of remains in the medieval period. Archaeological remains are a finite and non-renewable resource, and in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction.

1.120 There are 155 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and many other sites of archaeological interest throughout the District. The County Council holds a site and monuments register which identifies all these sites. Those sites which have been identified are shown on the Proposals Map. The retention and evaluation of these sites is important for the better understanding of the country's social, cultural, economic and architectural history. Consent is required from the Secretary of State for any works which would affect a Scheduled Ancient Monument. In considering any proposals that may affect archaeological remains the District Council will follow the advice contained in **PPG 16 Archaeology and Planning**.

Policy 1.28

Archaeological Remains of National Importance

Permission will not be granted for development which would have an adverse effect upon nationally important archaeological remains and their settings, whether scheduled or not.

Policy 1.29

Archaeological Remains of Local Importance

Wherever possible archaeological remains should be preserved in situ. Permission will not be granted for development on sites containing locally important archaeological remains unless

preservation in situ is not appropriate and the importance of the development outweighs the local value of the remains. In such circumstances no development should take place until satisfactory archaeological investigations have been carried out by a reputable investigations body.

1.121 "The following policies apply to those sites defined on the Proposals Maps as Ancient Monuments or Sites of Archaeological Importance".

Policy 1.30

Archaeological Evaluations

Where archaeological remains may be affected by development proposals the Local Planning Authority may require;

- (i) the submission of archaeological evaluations with planning applications to define the character and condition of the remains, the likely impact of the development and the possible means of mitigating these effects;**
- (ii) by the use of planning conditions, archaeological investigation prior to the commencement of development for which planning permission has been granted;**
- (iii) archaeological monitoring during that development.**

Historic Parks and Gardens

1.122 No statutory control exists for the protection of parks and gardens, but there is a national register compiled by English Heritage which identifies historic parks and gardens of special historic interest.

1.123 There are 5 areas within the District included in the register, two of which are of national interest. There are many other areas, which although not of sufficient interest to be included in the register are of sufficient local interest to merit consideration in the development control process.

1.124 These parks and gardens are key elements in form and character of the landscape as well as being of interest in the history of landscape design. Safeguarding their setting, historic interest and character is essential to the overall conservation objectives of the local authority.

Policy 1.31

Historic Parks & Gardens

Development which would adversely affect the character, interest or setting of a historic park or garden will not be permitted.

(d) Landscape Protection and Ecology

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

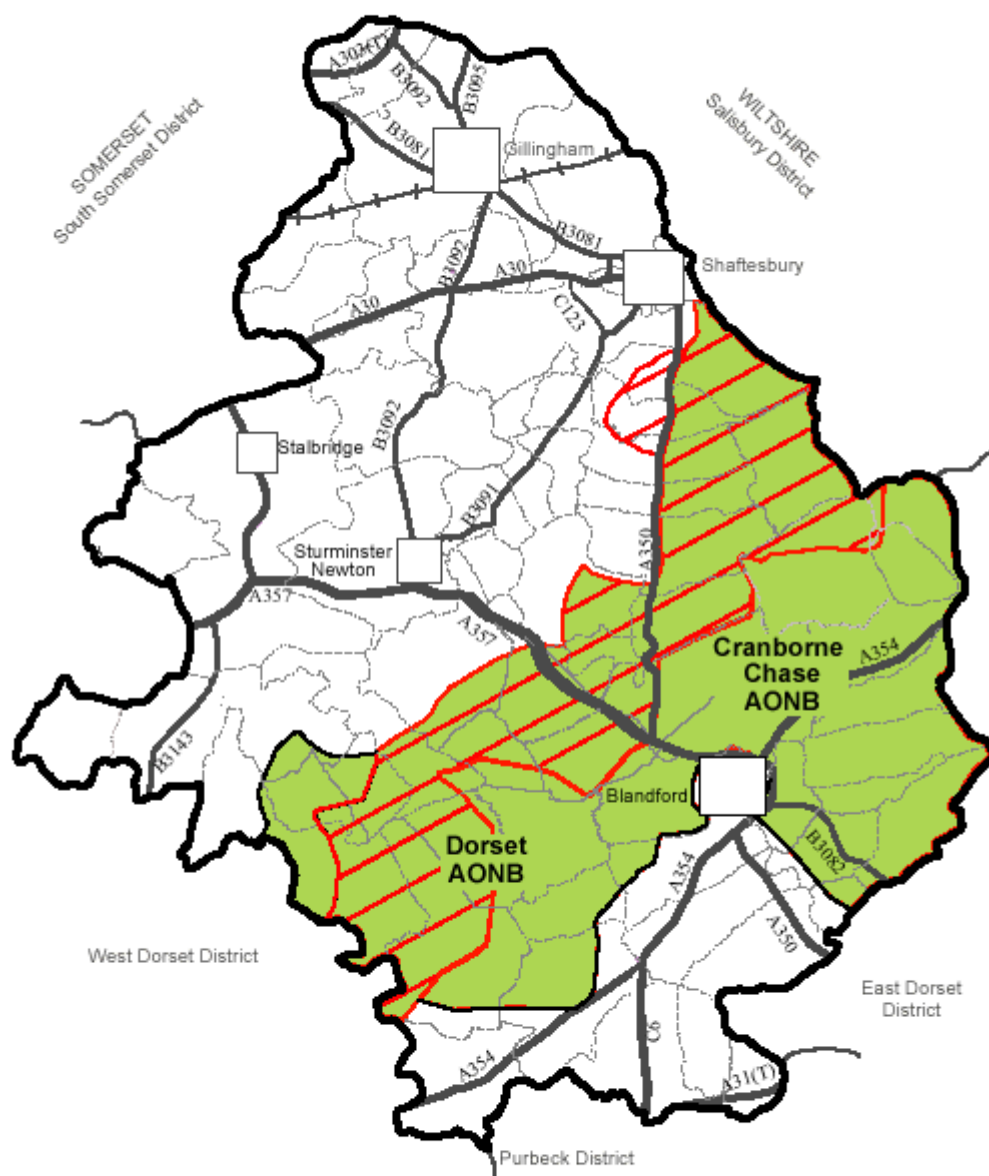
1.125 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated by the Countryside Commission. They cover approximately 13% of the total land area of England and Wales. The primary objective of designation is the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape.

1.126 A Countryside Commission policy statement published in 1991 has given greater emphasis to the designation of AONBs and seeks to raise awareness of the designation to ensure that it is given due consideration in the planning process. The statement emphasised that, in landscape terms, AONBs should enjoy equal status with National Parks.

1.127 Around 30% of the North Dorset area is designated under two AONBs (**see figure 2**); the Dorset AONB and the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB; reflecting the national importance of the local landscape. Within the AONBs particular attention will be paid to conserving the local character and scenic quality of the landscape and development will generally be restricted to that essential to maintain the rural economy or desirable for the enjoyment of its amenities. Most forms of major commercial and industrial development (apart from some tourism uses) are likely to have a negative impact upon the special landscape qualities of the AONBs. Where there is an overriding need to introduce development into the AONBs, and the development is acceptable in principle, special emphasis will be placed on scale, location and siting, and a particularly high standard of design and landscaping will be required.

FIGURE 2

AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREA



North Dorset
DISTRICT COUNCIL

- Parish Boundaries
- A Roads
- B & C Roads
- + + + + Railtrack

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Environmentally Sensitive Area

Policy 1.32

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Development proposals within the AONBs will only be permitted where they are in accordance with the policies of this local plan and provided that;

(i) the siting and scale of development is sympathetic with the landscape of the AONB in general and of the particular locality;

(ii) standards of landscaping and design are high, using materials which are appropriate to the locality and reflect the character of the area;

(iii) in the case of major commercial and industrial development proposals, there is a proven national need, no suitable site is available outside the AONBs and the development would be of benefit to present and future social and economic needs of the locality.

Landscape Character Areas

1.128 The conservation of the natural beauty of North Dorset can best be achieved through an appreciation of the distinctive character of different parts of the area. This arises from the geology, landform, drainage, soils and vegetation and the activities of man over the centuries. Based on these factors, broad landscape areas have been identified (outlined in the recent Countryside Commission Landscape Evaluation Study for Dorset). The ability of these areas to accommodate development forms the basis of the following countryside policy. Additional guidance is available in "A New View Of Dorset" (Dorset County Council, 1996). The Landscape Character Areas, which are shown on **Figure 3**, are;

North Dorset Limestone Ridges

- Low rounded limestone ridges
- Diverse scenery with mixed farming, dense hedgerows, some steep wooded slopes
- Expansive fairly open landscape, but with some enclosed valleys
- Numerous scattered villages and farms

Blackmore Vale

- Very broad, gently undulating clay vale, drained by the R. Stour & its dense network of tributaries
- Fine-grained mosaic of pastures, scattered villages and small woodlands
- Woodlands and fields form an irregular patchwork defined by dense hedgerows, dotted with distinctive mature oak trees
- Domestic, farmland landscape with a dense network of narrow, twisting lanes

Northern Scarp Hills

- Undulating foothills of the north chalk escarpment
- Varied, irregular patchwork of pasture, woodland and dense hedgerows
- Small villages are typically concentrated along the foot of the chalk escarpment
- Enclosed, secluded landscape with no abrupt edges

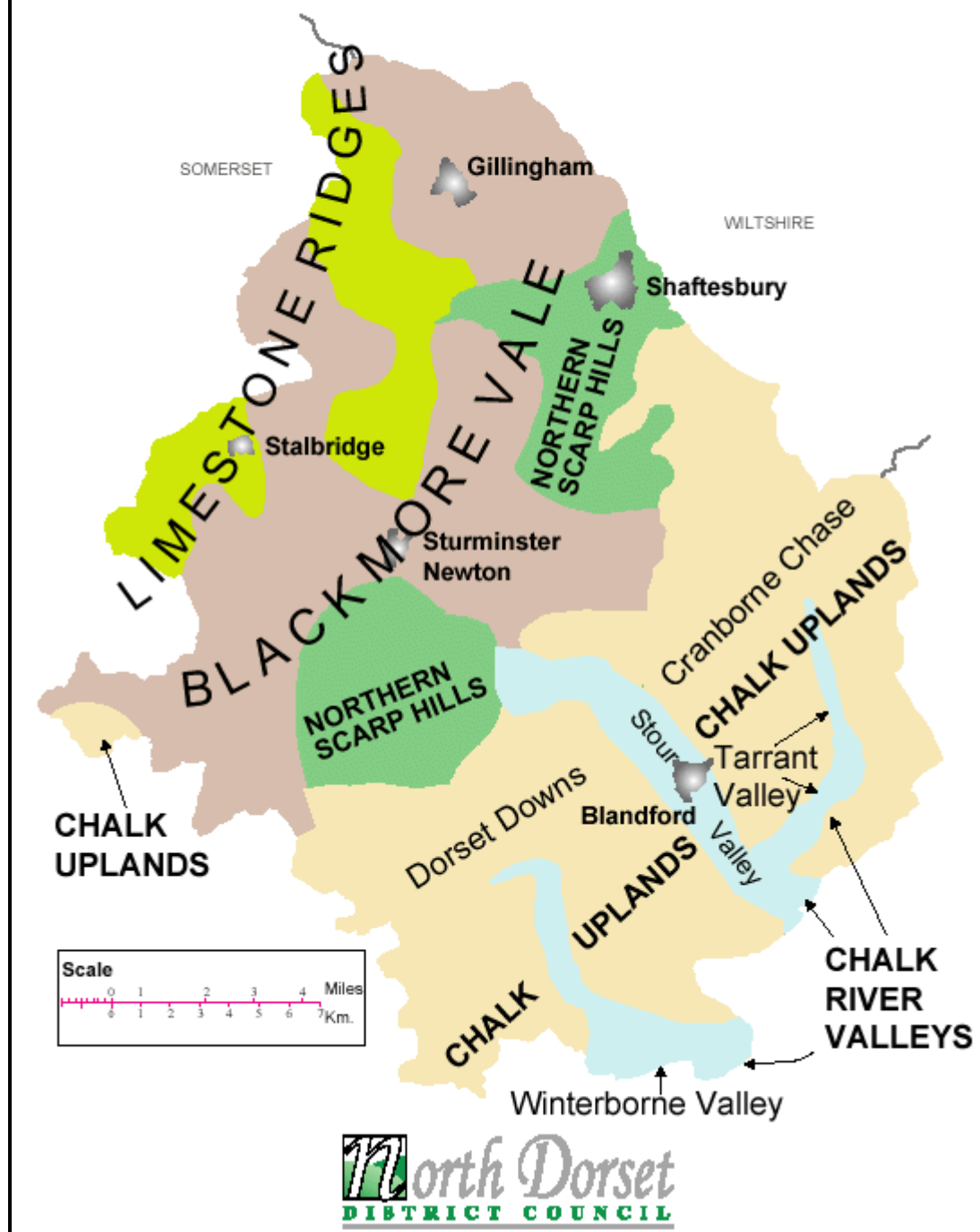
Chalk Uplands (The Dorset Downs & The Cranborne Chase) and The Chalk Escarpment

- Broad rolling landform with gently curving convex profiles
- Homogenous open landscape with expansive views
- Patchwork of large arable fields, defined by straight, narrow hedges
- Isolated small blocks of woodland with sharp geometric hedges
- Sparsely populated, with a widely spaced network of straight roads
- Marked variations in landscape character and landform along the scarp
- Steep, distinctive chalk margin, affording panoramic views over the surrounding countryside
- Open grassland and extensive blocks of woodland often form distinctive patterns and highly visible landmarks
- Settlements concentrated at the foot of escarpment slopes

Chalk River Valleys

- Chalk valley landform emphasised by agricultural patterns, with arable cultivation on gentle slopes, rough grazing on steep valley sides and pasture on the flat valley floors.
- Secluded and sheltered in character, chalk valleys have more trees than chalk uplands, with patches of woodland and winding ribbons of trees along the stream corridors
- Settlements and roads concentrated on valley floors
- Stour valley characterised by fairly large, open fields, but with a smaller mosaic of fields and copses along the river channels
- Predominantly pasture, but with some arable fields on marginal river terraces
- Settlements and roads concentrated along the outer margins of the valley floor, away from the floodplain.

FIGURE 3

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

1.129 The District Council will also take into account the effect of the designation of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Environmentally Sensitive Area when assessing development proposals under the following policy.

Policy 1.33**Landscape Character Areas**

Within each of the Landscape Character Areas, defined on the Proposals Map, development should be situated and designed so as to integrate with the distinctive landscape character of the area.

This will be particularly important within the designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Environmentally Sensitive Area.

Protected Areas of Nature Conservation Interest

1.130 The plan area contains a wide range of habitats of nature conservation interest, including a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs). With the continuing pressure on the countryside, it is increasingly important to protect the surviving sites of recognised importance.

International Sites

1.131 Sites of international importance are designated under European Community (EC) Directives. Three sites in North Dorset (Rooksmoor Copse, near Kings Stag,

Melbury and Fontmell Down and Lydlinch Common) are currently proposed for designation as Special Areas of Conservation (SACS) under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (The Habitats Directive).

1.132 Where a site is considered to be of international importance, economic and recreational requirements must be considered only after ecological, scientific and cultural requirements.

Policy 1.34

International Sites of Nature Conservation Interest

Proposals for development which may affect the integrity of a candidate or designated Special Area of Conservation, potential or classified Special Protection Area or Ramsar site will be subject to the most rigorous examination. Such proposals should be allowed only if there is no alternative solution and if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

In addition proposals for development which may affect a priority natural habitat or priority species should be allowed only if they are necessary for reasons of human health or public safety or for beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

National Sites

1.133 Sites such as those designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest are considered to be of national importance. They are notified by English Nature under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and have the purpose of affording protection to some of the most important wildlife areas. There are 13 SSSIs, covering nearly 1000 ha. in the North Dorset District. One of these, Hambledon Hill, is also a National Nature Reserve.

Policy 1.35

National Sites of Nature Conservation Interest

Proposals for development in or likely to affect Sites of Special Scientific Interest will be subject to special scrutiny. Where such development is likely to have an adverse effect on the SSSI, directly or indirectly, it will not be permitted unless the authority is satisfied that;

(i) the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the value of the site itself and the national policy to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the national network of such sites;

(ii) the development can be made subject to conditions or planning obligations to ensure the protection or enhancement of the site's nature conservation interest.

Where the site concerned is a National Nature Reserve (NNR) or a site identified under the Nature Conservation Review (NCR) or Geological Conservation Review (GCR) particular regard will be paid to the individual site's national importance.

Other Sites of Nature Conservation Importance

1.134 There are many areas within the District which, though not statutorily designated, have been identified by local conservation organisations for their substantive nature conservation value. These sites (identified as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) in this Local Plan), are important habitats and will be protected from development which would have an adverse impact upon their nature conservation value.

1.135 In addition to the statutory and non-statutory sites, government guidance acknowledges that the wider landscape plays a role in the maintenance of the current range and diversity of our flora, fauna, geological and landform features and the survival of important species. The European "Habitats" Directive encourages the management of these features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna. Examples of such features are rivers with their banks, traditional field boundary systems (such as hedgerows), ponds and small woods.

Policy 1.36

Sites of Nature Conservation Importance

Development likely to have an adverse effect on a Local Nature Reserve, a Site of Nature Conservation Interest or a Regionally Important Geomorphological or Geological Site, will not be approved unless the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that;

(i) there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh the intrinsic local nature conservation value of the site;

(ii) the development can be made subject to conditions or planning obligations that safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the site

In all cases where development is permitted which would damage the nature conservation value of the site, such damage will be kept to a minimum. Where appropriate the authority will consider the use of conditions and/or planning obligations to provide appropriate compensatory measures.

Policy 1.37

Other Landscape Features of Nature Conservation Importance

Regard will be had to the need to protect and enhance the continuity and integrity of landscape features which are of major importance for wildlife.

Development will be expected to fully consider nature conservation. Where development is permitted the following should be taken into account:

(i) important woodland, wetlands, trees, hedgerows, watercourses, ponds, geological features and other major natural features and habitats are retained;

- (ii) compensatory provision is made for replacement habitats/features of quality where the loss of existing habitats and/or features is unavoidable;
- (iii) habitat features, attractive to wildlife including those which meet the needs of particular species, are, where appropriate, incorporated in the development;
- (iv) full provision is made for the future management of retained and newly created wildlife features.

Protected Species and their Habitats

1.136 Proposals for development may affect the habitats of species protected by Acts of Parliament such as bats, barn owls, badgers and certain plants. It is considered important to protect these species by additional controls on development. For example, in considering proposals for the re-use of redundant buildings, a survey should be undertaken by or on behalf of the applicant to establish whether bats or barn owls are using this favoured habitat. Developers will be responsible for undertaking and submitting habitat surveys by reputable organisations.

1.137 When considering relevant development proposals the Council will seek and act on the advice of wildlife conservation bodies, in order to safeguard the habitats of protected species or determine appropriate mitigatory works such as the provision of alternative nesting and roosting boxes.

1.138 Increasingly, 'Biodiversity Action Plans' (BAP) are being used to help promote nature conservation aims under the aegis of Local Agenda 21. A Draft Biodiversity Action Plan for Dorset has been published, but has not yet been formally adopted. In the absence of a County-wide or District BAP, the Authority will have regard to the UK's and the Regional BAPs.

Policy 1.38

Protected Species and their Habitats

Development and other land use changes will not be permitted which may have an adverse effect, directly or indirectly, on all protected species and their habitats. Where development is permitted which may have an effect on such species or their habitats, conditions where appropriate will seek to;

- (i) facilitate the survival of individual members of the species;**
- (ii) reduce disturbance to a minimum;**
- (iii) provide adequate alternative habitats to sustain at least the current levels of populations.**

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA)

1.139 These areas are designated by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, in order to promote conservation practices in the farming industry in areas of high landscape, ecological and archaeological value. The South Wessex Downs ESA was designated in 1993 and covers the high downland plateau and scarp slopes of the Dorset Downs and the Cranborne Chase. Their designation does not introduce additional planning controls. The extent of the designated area is shown on **Figure 2**. Within the South Wessex Downs ESA, the conservation of those landscape, wildlife and historic features which contributed to the designation of the area as an ESA should be respected by development proposals. (**See Policy 1.33**).

Tree Preservation

1.140 Statutory powers are available to protect trees. Most trees within Conservation Areas already have some protection under this designation but these and other trees may be given the extra protection

afforded by Tree Preservation Orders. Anyone wishing to lop, top or fell a protected tree requires consent from the Council.

1.141 Tree Preservation Orders may be made in respect of individual trees, groups of trees or whole woodlands (also as areas, especially where development may pose an imminent threat) in the interest of preserving public amenity. Individual trees in towns and villages make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of an area and their loss is often very noticeable. In open countryside in areas which are generally more wooded, the loss of individual trees can be more easily accommodated without harming the amenity or character of the area.

1.142 Priority will be given to the protection of trees in the more vulnerable locations within towns and villages. The making of a Tree Preservation Order on individual trees in the countryside will be considered where the tree is clearly visible from public viewpoints, makes a significant contribution to the character of the area and is under threat of felling. The Authority will also have regard to the need to conserve local biodiversity particularly for wildlife interests in operating this policy.

Policy 1.39

Tree Preservation Orders

Tree Preservation Orders will be made to protect individual trees, groups of trees and woodlands that;

- (i) contribute to the amenity and character of an area;**
- (ii) are under a known threat of felling that would be detrimental to the amenity and character of an area;**
- (iii) are fine and rare species that make a particular contribution to the area's quality, character and interest.**

Tree Preservation Orders will be reviewed to take account of development, storm damage, age or legislative changes in order to maintain accurate and enforceable tree protection across the District.

Landscaping of New Development

1.143 Trees are an important and integral part of the urban and rural scene providing colour and shape to the spaces between buildings, enhancing the qualities of new development and helping to secure a successful relationship between buildings and the open countryside.

1.144 Planting of suitable species of trees and other landscaping in association with new development sites can make a worthwhile contribution to environmental improvement and nature conservation. All significant new development (over 0.1 ha.) will require the implementation of a comprehensive landscaping scheme.

1.145 Where existing trees are a significant landscape feature on any development site, the District Council will expect a full tree survey to form part of a submitted planning application.

Policy 1.40

Landscaping of New Development

On any development site where existing trees are a significant landscape feature, a full tree survey, (based on an accurate land survey), forming part of the submitted planning application is required. Existing woodland and the most significant trees and hedgerows will be retained wherever possible. Appropriate management initiatives will be encouraged.

Where appropriate, schemes for good quality hard and soft landscaping (and proper provision for long term landscape maintenance) should be submitted as an integral part of any development proposals, in order to enhance the environment and setting of new development or to help integrate the development into its surroundings.

Amenity Tree Planting

1.146 Protection of existing trees is not enough to ensure the long term survival of our tree population so positive action is required to ensure that new trees are planted. Grant aid for this is available from various sources, and the District Council will continue to give advice as to the most appropriate source of funding for a particular scheme.

1.147 In accordance with the Conservation Strategy, the District Council's own fund for amenity trees will continue to subsidise tree planting of indigenous or naturalised species by members of the public or other interested bodies such as schools and civic societies.

1.148 As part of its tree management strategy, the District Council is co-ordinating the long term re-establishment of the former Royal Forest of Gillingham. As a Community Woodland the project aims to combine private, voluntary and public interests in the Gillingham Forest area to conserve and enhance the environment while providing the impetus to appropriate economic and recreation developments.

1.149 Proposals for the planting of native woodland species and the planting of specimen trees within towns and villages will be generally encouraged except where there would be a net loss in nature conservation interest.

Policy 1.41

Amenity Tree Planting

In connection with development proposals, the planting of locally occurring trees, shrubs and hedges, and the positive management of trees and woodlands is proposed in order to;

- (i) strengthen existing tree cover**
- (ii) improve public amenity**
- (iii) create new woodlands**

unless there are overriding ecological, archaeological or local landscape or amenity objections.

Forestry Planting

1.150 The forests within the District have a considerable recreational and landscape value, as well as silvicultural value. While it is accepted that timber production should remain a priority, it is important that forestry proposals conserve and where appropriate enhance their historic, wildlife and landscape value. Recently the Government has endorsed the publication of the Forestry Commission's UK Forestry Standard which strives to increase the profile that forestry can make towards sustainable development.

1.151 Within the Plan area, the District Council is consulted on all forestry applications, including clear felling and planting design, except those that are covered by felling license exemptions. Forestry proposals which involve either felling or afforestation will be opposed if they would;

- have a detrimental effect on landscape character particularly within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- adversely affect the nature conservation or archaeological value of a site
- adversely affect an existing ancient semi-natural woodland
- remove existing public access to a site.

Footnotes:

1 District Wide Local Plan – Environmental and Sustainability Appraisal May 1998

2 See Appendix "Residential Design Guideline Summary"

* Special planning guidance on design and form of shopfronts and advertisements will be prepared by the local authority

Housing

Problems and Issues

2.1 The following problems and issues have been critical in drawing up the housing policies for this Local Plan.

Population Growth and Age Structure

2.2 The District has experienced a rapid rate of population growth over the last three decades. Between the 1981 and 1991 census counts, the resident population of the District grew by 10.9% making it the 24th fastest growing District in the Country. This can be compared with an increase of 8.3% in the County as a whole, and virtually no change at all in England and Wales. This growth has been caused by net inward migration rather than by natural increase. In fact, during the 1980's there was a slight excess of deaths over births in the District.

2.3 Population estimates produced by the County Council (based on the Registrar Generals Mid 1991 estimates, adjusted to account for the Structure Plan's suggested housing provision) indicate that the population of the District will increase from 53,900 in 1991, to around 64,530 in 2011, an average increase of about 530 persons per year. (1.0% per annum)

2.4 The age structure of the population is not expected to change markedly during this period. The proportion of young people (age 0-16) is expected to fall slightly from around 22% to 21%, as is the proportion of post retirement age (from 24%-21%). However, within the elderly population, the number of very elderly (age 85 +) will continue to rise from 1,100 in 1991 to over 1,900 in 2011, increasing the demand for certain health and social services.

2.5 The largest increase is expected in the pre-retirement age group (age 45-retirement age) where the numbers are expected to increase from around 10,000 to almost 15,000 (a 50% increase). While many people in this age group will still be in employment now, there will come a time when the 'bulge' passes retirement age and increases the pressure on services for the elderly.

Housing Growth

2.6 Pressures for new housing are arising both from people wishing to move into the area and from new households forming within the District. Average household size is falling throughout the country as people live longer, set up in independent homes earlier and couples divorce or split up more frequently. In North Dorset average household size is expected to fall from 2.39 persons per household in 1991 to 2.24 in 2011, creating a need for around 1,500 new dwellings just to house the existing population. On top of this, the incoming population will also need homes. During the 1970s around 350 dwellings were built each year. In the 1980s the construction rates increased to just under 400 dwellings per annum. Despite a depression in the housing market nationally during the early 1990s, levels of development have remained relatively high in North Dorset (averaging 394 dwellings per annum between 1990-96).

2.7 The crucial issue of how much new development should be accommodated in the District is determined by the Structure Plan. It is the role of the Local Plan to translate the broad policies of the Structure Plan into more detailed development control policies and map-based land allocations, bearing in mind the overall strategy of the Plan.

Locational Pressures for Housing Growth



2.8 Policies in the original Structure Plan (approved in 1983) aimed to concentrate development in the towns and a number of "Priority Villages". Some of these villages experienced large scale development during the 1980s, and now need time for new residents to settle in and local services to adapt.

2.9 In the 1990s the approved Structure Plan again proposed to locate most growth in the towns, but with more modest development in any village of reasonable size and with one or more basic facilities. Unfortunately, a legacy of outstanding planning permissions has meant that more development than was originally intended has taken place in the rural area. This Plan now has to determine exactly how much development should be located in the towns and villages respectively, and what measures should be taken to try and ensure those targets are met.

Type of Housing to be built

2.10 Another issue to be considered is what type of new housing should be built? The housing needs survey undertaken in the District in 1998 showed the existing stock to be heavily biased towards detached and semidetached houses and bungalows (80% of local stock compared with 53% nationally), whereas flats (8%) and terraced properties (12%) are under-represented compared with national figures (19% and 27% respectively). Also, bearing in mind the expected increase in smaller households during the Plan period, the Council is keen to encourage developers to build more small, (1 and 2 bed) dwellings at higher densities than have been achieved in the past. Good quality, higher density development can be achieved when developers and the Local Planning Authority work together towards agreed objectives on any particular site. The Council will produce Supplementary Planning Guidance and Development Briefs to establish guidelines for new residential development, as recommended in recent advice from the DETR and House Builders Federation (Housing Layouts- Lifting the Quality).

Affordable Housing

2.11 The inability of large numbers of people to compete successfully in the housing market remains a major problem. A District wide survey of local housing need undertaken in 1994, showed a need (in the period up to 2001), for around 130 affordable homes per annum, simply to meet the requirements of 'concealed' households in the District.

2.12 The Council transferred its housing stock to the Signpost Housing Association (formerly North Dorset Housing Association) in September 1994. Since then, it has sought to develop its enabling role by encouraging and helping to finance developments by many different Housing Associations operating in the District. On average about 80 new Housing Association dwellings have been built each year since 1994. The Council produces an annual "Housing Strategy Statement" which aims to draw together all the various branches of housing policy (such as affordable and special needs housing, energy efficiency and housing condition) and set targets for future action in each area. The preparation of this Local Plan presents an opportunity to identify new sites where affordable and special needs housing may be sought as part of the development. The issues to be decided are how much affordable housing will be needed during the Plan period, and where is it most needed?

The Structure Plan Strategy

2.13 The concept of sustainable development forms the guiding principle of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan to 2011. It does not rule out new development, but encourages us to consider its wider implications.

2.14 In respect of housing the Structure Plan aims to "make adequate provision for the housing needs of Dorset". In more detail, it aims to ensure that an adequate supply of dwellings is available to house the workforce necessary for the development of the local economy, to provide for those who cannot compete for market housing, and to ensure that those in special need of help or supervision are well housed.

2.15 The purpose of this Local Plan is to put flesh on the bones of the Structure Plan strategy by making proposals for the development of land which will help to meet the identified needs.

HOUSING OBJECTIVES

- To secure an adequate supply of a wide-range of housing types to meet the requirements of the population.
- To enable adequate provision of "affordable" housing for those of the local community who cannot easily compete in the housing market and to seek to maintain such stock for subsequent occupiers.
- To ensure that new housing development takes place in locations where it supports and reinforces the local economy, services and facilities, conserves land and energy resources, and does not harm sensitive environmental locations.
- To phase and co-ordinate development with the provision of social and service infrastructure.

The District Housing Allocation

2.16 The overall housing allocation for the District is set out in the Structure Plan. This Plan, in its turn has had to consider guidelines for future housing development set by the Government in its "Regional Planning Guidance for the South West" (R.P.G.10 - 1994).

2.17 The regional guidance recommended an annual average construction rate of 3,150 dwellings in Dorset between 1991 and 2011. When allowance had been made for those dwellings built between 1991 and 1994, this left a requirement for 53,900 dwellings to be built in the County between 1994 and 2011.

2.18 The Structure Plan, proposes a slightly lower figure of 52,900 dwellings for the County as a whole. This figure was investigated at an "Examination in Public" into the Structure Plan. The Panel conducting the examination concluded that the overall figure should be retained but that take-up of housing land should be carefully monitored to ensure that pressures on the housing market do not lead to an unacceptable increase in social problems. This approach was endorsed by the then Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions. For the purpose of this Local Plan therefore, the housing allocation for North Dorset set down in the Structure Plan, has been taken as the guideline on which to base the housing proposals of the Plan.

2.19 Housing Policy A of the Structure Plan proposes that about 5,900 dwellings should be constructed in North Dorset between April 1994 and March 2011. **Table 1** shows the situation with regard to outstanding commitments at 31st March 2000.

Table 1 North Dorset Housing Provision*

	Dwellings
Structure Plan allocation 1994-2011	about 5,900
Dwellings built 1994-2000	2,390
Estimated supply from	
Commitments**	1,072
Total commitments	3,470
Remainder for plan period	2,430

* Base date of 1.4.00

** Total commitments adjusted to allow for a likely take-up rate on windfall sites not yet started of 60% in the towns and 70% in the rural area. 100% take up rate assumed on other sites.

2.20 Of the outstanding requirement for 2,430 dwellings, some development will come forward on infill and windfall sites within the towns and villages, while the remainder will have to be sought on greenfield sites.

2.21 Assuming a continuation of past trends of windfall development in the towns and a rate reduced by 50% in the villages (to reflect the constraining influence of the settlement boundaries), it has been estimated that around 1,800 dwellings should be built on windfall sites during the plan period. When

development and commitments at 31st March 2000 are accounted for, it is calculated that around 680 dwellings will come forward on these sites during the remainder of the plan period.

2.22 This leaves a requirement of about 1,750 dwellings to be provided on greenfield sites. Altogether, development on greenfield sites will account for about 60% of the total development in the District, if these requirements are met. The Government has recently suggested¹ that nationally, up to 60% of new housing built over the next 10 years, should be on "brownfield" sites. (i.e. those sites which have been developed before). However, in a rural area such as North Dorset, this target would be extremely difficult to achieve. The densely built up centres of the small towns in the District offer few opportunities for brownfield development. This is a problem common throughout the South West region, where, in recent years only around 37% of new housing development has been on brownfield sites.

2.23 The government has indicated that it will expect Regional Planning Conferences to set more realistic targets for the development of housing on brownfield sites, for each region, together with indicative targets for Structure Plans and Local Plans. The aim of the most recent Regional Planning Guidance for the South West² is that 50% of new development should be on brownfield sites. As yet, this figure has not been disaggregated to County or District levels. Until this guidance is available, every encouragement will be given to developments on brownfield sites. However, the plan must also make adequate provision for greenfield development to ensure the housing requirements of the District are met.

Policy 2.1

Housing Provision 1994-2011

Provision will be made for the construction of about 5,900 dwellings in the period April 1994-March 2011. This includes about 3,470 dwellings, built or committed at 31st March 2000, about 680 dwellings to be built on windfall sites and about 1,750 dwellings to be built on sites allocated under **Policy 2.4 of the Plan.**

2.24 In order to promote sustainable patterns of development, most new housing will be concentrated in the four main towns of the District, in accordance with the overall strategy of the Plan set out in **Policy 1.1**. Furthermore, as part of the Government's drive towards achieving a higher proportion of development on previously developed (i.e. "brownfield") land, there needs to be a systematic appraisal of other development opportunities before greenfield sites are released. A "sequential approach" therefore will be used in determining planning applications to ensure that further greenfield development should only go ahead if it is necessary to meet the needs of the local community, and that the proposal could not be met in an alternative, more sustainable way.

2.25 As explained in **para 2.21** above the development potential of windfall sites in the District has been assessed. There are opportunities in each of the towns as well as many villages for developments that make good use of previously developed land or for conversion or re-use of existing buildings. This form of development will be encouraged. Further work will be undertaken to monitor and assess the potential of urban areas to accept more development of this type, in line with Regional Planning Guidance.

2.26 However, a proportion of the overall housing requirement in North Dorset will need to be met on greenfield sites. A number of these sites already have planning permission. (**See Policy 2.4.**) The Council will continue to monitor the land availability situation and in particular the availability of brownfield sites, in order to ensure that the future release of greenfield land does not impede brownfield development. Before making an application for a greenfield site, potential developers should therefore discuss with the Council the current land availability situation in the District and whether or not the proposed development might be realised on previously developed land. In deciding an application for greenfield development the Council should be satisfied that the sequential approach outlined above has been followed.

Policy 2.2

Making best use of housing land

The best possible use of land should be made by re-using derelict, disused or previously developed sites or buildings in preference to the development of greenfield land. Therefore before granting planning permission on a greenfield site, a sequential study should be undertaken to indicate whether or not the proposed development could be accommodated on previously used land.

Distribution of Development

2.27 In considering where new housing should be located, a first priority has been to focus development in the towns (principally Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury), in accordance with the overall strategy of the plan. Developments here will support the employment opportunities, shops, services and public transport links which already exist. A second aim has been to develop sites which are within reasonable walking or cycling distance of the town centres. Topographical constraints such as land of high landscape quality, land liable to flood, or physical barriers such as the Blandford bypass have also been taken into consideration.

2.28 Outside the towns, new greenfield sites have been restricted in an attempt to reduce the high levels of development seen in the rural areas in recent years. (Between 1990 and 1996 over 30% more dwellings were built than were planned).

2.29 The approximate distribution of development between the towns and rural area will be as set out in **Policy 2.3**.

Policy 2.3

Distribution of development

The approximate scale and rate of development in the towns and rural settlements will be as follows:

Blandford	about 1,050	(62 dwellings/year)
Gillingham	1,610	(95 dwellings/year)
Shaftesbury	1,170	(69 dwellings/year)
Sturminster Newton	640	(38 dwellings/year)
Stalbridge	170	(10 dwellings/year)
Rural Settlements	1,260	(74 dwellings/year)
Total	5,900	(347 dwellings/year)

Settlement Allocations

2.30 In order to meet the housing needs of the District, the sites identified under **Policy 2.4** below are allocated for residential use. The "potential dwelling supply" is a guide to each site's capacity, based on an average net site density of 30 dwellings per hectare, (unless indicated otherwise). The figures in Column A should be seen as a minimum, subject to good design and layout principles as in the Council's urban village approach. This is explained further in **para. 2.31** below. The "affordable housing potential" is a guide to the number of affordable (subsidised and low cost) dwellings which will be sought on particular sites. This is explained further under the section on affordable housing. The proposed phasing periods identified in Column C are explained below (**para. 2.40 – 2.45**). Each site is discussed in more detail under the relevant settlement statement in Part 2 of this document.

Policy 2.4

Settlement Allocations

The following sites in the Local Plan area are allocated for residential development:

<u>TOWN</u>	<u>SITE (REF)</u>	<u>AREA (HECTS.)</u>	<u>A POTENTIAL DWELLING SUPPLY</u>	<u>B AFFORDABLE HOUSING POTENTIAL</u>	<u>C PROPOSED PHASING**</u>
Blandford	'D' Off Langton Road (H/2/2)	3.4	60	20 (33%)	2
	'F' Off Shaftesbury Lane (H/2/3)*	8.0	260(min)	110 (42%)	2/3
Blandford		11.4	320(min)	130 To be discussed	
Gillingham	'C' Barnaby Mead (H/15/1) *	1.4	44		2
	'E' South of The Meadows (H/15/2)	3.0	90(min)	20 (22%)	3
	'F' Lodden Bridge Farm (H/15/3)*	2.8	111	24 (22%)	2
	'G' r/o Lockwood Terr. (H/15/4)*	3.2	126	28 (22%)	2
	'H' West of the Fire Station, Peacemarsh Farm (H/15/5) (Part only)*	2.0	71	16 (22%)	2
	'J' Land adj Ham Farm (H/15/6)	8.6	292	46 (22%)	2/3
Gillingham		21.0	734(min)	152	
Shaftesbury	Land on the eastern side of Shaftesbury	23.0	680(min)	164 (24%)	2/3
Shaftesbury		23.0	680(min)	164	
Sturminster Newton	'C' North of Livestock Market (H/47/2)	3.5	90(min)	20 (22%)	2
	'D' Honeymead (H/47/3)	1.5	45(min)	10 (22%)	3
Sturminster Newton		5.0	135(min)	30	

Stalbridge	'C' r/o Dikes Bakery, Barrow Hill. (H/40/1)	1.0	10(min)	To be discussed	2
Stalbridge		1.0	10(min)		
All towns	Total sites	61.4	1,879(min)	476 (25%)	
Rural Area					
W. Kingston	South of Broad Close (H/57/1)*	0.4	6	6 (100%)	2
All rural area		0.4	6	6 (100%)	
Total North Dorset		61.8	1,885(min)	482 (26%)	

* Sites where planning permission has been approved in principle on whole or part site since 01.04.00. NB The dwelling numbers indicated reflect the latest planning approval rather than the situation at 31.03.00. Thus the District total is higher than indicated in **Policy 2.1**. The figures for sites where applications have yet to be made are identified as a minimum as they have been calculated at a density of 30 dwellings to the hectare, or less in some cases.

**Phasing periods – Phase 2 between 01.04.00 and 31.03.06; Phase 3 between 01.04.06 and 31.03.11

Form of Major Housing Development

2.31 There is a need for major housing development to make better use of greenfield sites through careful design and use of higher densities. The "Urban Village" concept promotes housing design which always fronts onto public areas, creates natural vistas and transport links with existing developed areas, creates a sense of enclosure and is planned and integrated with open space, employment and community facilities. The Council has recently introduced an "Ecological Housing Code" which sets out standards on matters such as energy and water conservation and use of sustainable materials, by which all future developments by Registered Social Landlords will be judged. It is also hoped to promote this code with private sector developers.

Policy 2.5

Form of major housing development

Major new housing development should be planned as small, compact "urban villages". These should provide high quality living environments with convenient access by public transport to and co-ordinated development of, open space, local education, recreation and community facilities and employment opportunities, as well as a mix of housing which includes affordable housing and housing for special needs.

Infill and Windfall Development

2.32 In addition to the development of the allocated sites listed above, opportunities exist within the settlement boundaries of the towns and villages for infilling and small scale development or redevelopment. Windfall sites include previously-developed land that has unexpectedly become available as well as conversions. In the past some greenfield sites were included in this category. However, in accordance with PPG3, no new greenfield land will be considered as a windfall site. Estimates of the likely supply of dwellings on windfall sites are currently being updated through an "urban potential study". If the results of the study indicate that estimates in the Plan need amendment, revised figures will be published as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

2.33 Within the towns, some fairly substantial mixed use sites have been identified for development. (For instance the former Livestock Market at Sturminster Newton and Oakwoods site at Gillingham.) Development of these brownfield sites will contribute towards the windfall element of the housing allocation for each town.

2.34 However, not all sites within the settlement boundary will be suitable for development. (Particular care will be taken to protect the character of those sites identified as "Important Open or Wooded Areas.") The appropriate density of this form of development will depend on the character of the site and its location. Where small groups of houses are permissible, this should not, through aggregation, lead to the development of larger estates.

Policy 2.6

Infill/Windfall Development within Defined Settlement Boundaries

Within the defined settlement boundaries of the settlements listed in Policies 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4. Infilling and small scale development or redevelopment will be allowed, providing it is appropriate to the scale and character of the settlement and does not result in the loss of land allocated for other purposes.

Sites with Outstanding Planning Permission

2.35 In accordance with **PPG3**³ all applications for the renewal of a residential consent will be scrutinised for compliance with current policy. Renewal will not be automatic. Some applications may not meet current policy while others may need to be revised to accommodate higher quality development that makes better use of the available land.

Policy 2.7

Renewal of Unimplemented Consent

An application for the renewal of an unimplemented consent will only be approved providing the application is consistent with the objectives and policies of this Plan.

Monitoring

2.36 The Local Planning Authority will seek to ensure that the housing needs of the whole community are met through the housing policies of this Plan. To do this an effective system of monitoring must be in place so that any necessary adjustments to the Policies or their implementation can be put into practice quickly.

2.37 During the 1980s North Dorset experienced rapid growth rates. Actual development rates in the whole District exceeded those planned by around 13%. This trend has continued into the 1990s. During the first five years of this Plan period, the expected average development rate in the District has been exceeded by 18%. Excessive unplanned growth rates are not sustainable indefinitely since they can result in unexpected pressures on schools, health and social services as well as local infrastructure.

2.38 **PPG3** (para 77) sets out those factors which Local Planning Authorities need to monitor. These include:

- Number of dwellings provided in the Plan area
- Proportion of dwellings provided on previously developed land or by re-use of existing buildings
- Numbers of dwellings provided on windfall sites
- Numbers of affordable dwellings provided
- The variety of types and mix of sizes of housing
- Density of new development, and

- Car parking provision.

In order to be able to monitor these factors, a target or indicator needs to be established against which to measure progress. **Table 2** below sets out the indicators for each of these factors in North Dorset.

Table 2: Housing Indicators

Indicator	Plan period 1994-2011	Average annual rate
Overall dwelling numbers	5900 (100%)	347
Dwellings on previously developed (brownfield) sites	2000 (34%)	118
Dwellings on windfall sites	2230 (38%)	130
Affordable dwellings (1998-2011)	1170	90
Density of development	Min 30 dph subject to good design/layout	
Car Parking	Min 0, max 2 spaces per dwelling (dependant on location)	

Definition of indicators used.

Overall dwelling numbers: Dwellings includes all self-contained units of accommodation. The figure is set out in **Policy 2.1** and refers to gross completions.

Dwellings on previously developed (brownfield) sites: As defined in **PPG3**, includes land currently or previously occupied by a permanent structure, (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), including the curtilage of the site.

Windfall development: Windfall sites include any site not allocated for development in a Local Plan. Estimates of windfall development are based on past trends of such development with adjustments to account for current Plan policies. (See **Policy 2.6** and Housing Topic Paper 1999). Affordable dwellings: Includes both subsidised and low cost market housing specifically provided to meet identified housing need. Estimates of need based on 1998 Housing Needs Survey. (See **Policies 2.12, 2.13 and 2.14** and "The Need for Affordable Homes in North Dorset 1998-2011", December 1998).

Density of development: Refers to the net site density of any site. Includes access roads, parking areas, private gardens, incidental open space/play areas. As set out in **Policy 2.10** and paras **2.30, 2.46-2.47**.

Car parking: Includes the number of defined spaces per dwelling, (not other on-street parking). Standards set out in Table with **Policy 5.17**.

2.39 The District Council will monitor the factors outlined above and will publish an annual report detailing progress against the indicators in **Table 2**. Progress will also be assessed according to the phasing requirements of the Plan set out in **Table 3**, and for individual towns against the criteria in the Town Statements in Part 2 of the Plan. Where targets are being significantly exceeded or under achieved (i.e. by + or – 10%), the Council will take steps to rectify the situation as explained in the following section on phasing.

Policy 2.8

Monitoring the Availability of Land for Housing

The availability and take up of housing land will be monitored annually by the District Council to ensure that there is an adequate supply, that planned levels of brownfield and windfall development and affordable housing are being achieved, that density and car parking standards are being met and that necessary infrastructure is being provided.

Phasing the Release of Land for Development

2.40 **PPG3** requires that Local Plans should include policies for the release of sites for housing development, following the presumption that previously developed land should be developed before greenfield sites. Unfortunately, many of the larger greenfield sites allocated in this Plan had already been granted permission before this requirement came into effect.

2.41 In order to manage the controlled release of the remaining housing land, to ensure that as far as possible "previously developed" land is brought forward for development before greenfield land is released and to enable the provision of necessary infrastructure alongside new housing, the Plan period has been divided into three phases of development and sites programmed accordingly. (See **Policy 2.4** and further details under each town statement).

2.42 Phase 1 covers the period of 01.04.94 – 31.03.00 during which the Plan was being developed and the first sites released. Phase 2 covers the period 01.04.00 – 31.03.06 during which the bulk of new sites will be brought forward for development, although not all will be built out during this period. The final phase of 01.04.06 – 31.03.11 will allow for adjustments to be made according to progress on earlier phases. For instance if planned densities on earlier sites have been exceeded or more windfall development than anticipated has come forward, the sites allocated for the final phase may be held back or additional windfall development be refused permission until the situation has stabilised. Conversely, if some sites planned for earlier phases have not come forward, or windfall/brownfield or affordable housing development has fallen short of expectations, sites planned for the later phase may be released earlier to ensure that anticipated development rates will be achieved.

2.43 The phasing of individual sites is shown in **Policy 2.4**. As mentioned above, a large amount of development is scheduled for Phase 2, largely because it has been committed through early granting of consent. The anticipated rates of development in each phase, based on commitments and the phasing programme identified in **Policy 2.4** is as follows:

Table 3 Phasing - Expected Rates of Development

PHASE	DWELLINGS BUILT OR ANTICIPATED AT MARCH 2002	AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE
1. 1994-2000	2390	398
2. 2000-2006	2650* Est	442
3. 2006-2011	1270* Est	254
TOTAL 1994-2011	6310** Est	371

*Figures updated at Local Plan Committee 04.04.02.

**This figure represents a 7% over-supply on the original planned total of 5900 and should not be seen as the base figure for dwelling supply in the District.

2.44 When a site is programmed for a particular phase it is intended that development should not start on site before the beginning of that phase. Planning applications may be processed in the run up to that period, but may be subject of conditions or a legal agreement to ensure that development does not commence until the relevant period. In some cases phasing may be related to the provision of a particular facility or service that is of strategic importance to the development of the Town. For instance in Gillingham the provision of a new primary school at Ham is needed to serve the south-eastern part of the town. Development of the Ham Farm site needs to account for this.

2.45 To merit a change from the phasing programme set out in the Plan it must be shown that planned levels of development are being significantly exceeded or under achieved (i.e. by + or – 10%). This assessment should be made towards the end of a particular phase when enough time has elapsed to be able to gauge whether or not the strategy is being met. Any proposed changes to the Plan's programme of development will be published as Supplementary Planning Guidance and made available for public comment prior to implementation.

Policy 2.9

Phasing the Release of Land for Development

In order to manage the controlled release of housing land throughout the Plan period, and ensure that as far as is practicable previously developed land is brought forward for development in advance of the release of new greenfield sites, new housing allocations will be divided between three phases of development.

Planning permission for any site may be withheld or be subject to conditions restricting the commencement of development until a later phase, if monitoring indicates that:

- (i) planned construction rates are being significantly exceeded,
- (ii) the planned proportion of development on previously developed land or windfall sites is not being achieved, or
- (iii) necessary infrastructure provision or affordable housing targets related to that site cannot be achieved.

Conversely, development programmed for a later phase may be brought forward if planned construction rates, levels of affordable housing, or strategically important infrastructure are being significantly under achieved and the earlier release of greenfield land is the only means to resolve this situation.

Any revisions to the phasing programme will be published as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Density of New Development

2.46 The density of any new development will vary considerably from site to site. In the past higher densities have normally prevailed in town or village centres, with lower densities towards the outskirts. However, in view of the need to house growing numbers of small households and to protect the countryside from unnecessary development, it is likely that average densities of new development on the edge of settlements will need to be higher than in the past. Government advice is that densities of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare should be encouraged, with greater intensity of development at locations with good public transport accessibility.

2.47 The potential dwelling supply calculated on most greenfield sites has assumed an average net site density of 30 dwellings per hectare. However, many sites are being developed at higher densities, in line with Government advice. It is anticipated that most sites will contain a mix of dwelling types offering areas both above and below the average. (see also the section on Low Cost Market Housing **paras. 2.80 – 2.85**). Ultimately, the density of new development should respect the character of the locality. Good design can be achieved with higher densities if care is taken in the way the site is laid out and with the form of housing provided. These issues are particularly important in Conservation Areas.

Policy 2.10

Density of New Development

The density of new development should make full and effective use of the proposed site, bearing in mind the character of the locality and following the principles of good design in line with the urban village approach.

Dwelling Extensions

2.48 Extensions to dwellings will be required for a variety of reasons. However, poorly designed extensions can cause a number of problems. They can detract from the character of the original dwelling, damage the street scene and may adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties. Smaller extensions often fall within the "permitted development" limits of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, and do not require planning permission. In certain circumstances, such as in developments of a particularly high density, the conversion of an historic building or development of agricultural, affordable or low cost dwellings, the Local Planning Authority may consider removing some or all of the householder "permitted development" rights.

Policy 2.11

Extension to Dwellings

Proposals for the extension of existing residential properties will be permitted provided that:

- (i) the plot size of the existing property is large enough to accommodate the extension without resulting in a cramped or overdeveloped site;**
- (ii) the scale and design of the proposal compliments the existing dwelling.**
- (iii) the character of neighbouring properties and amenity enjoyed by their occupants are not jeopardised.**

Affordable Housing

The situation in North Dorset

2.49 The Council is concerned with the lack of accommodation in the District to satisfy the needs of those who cannot compete in the open market. The high level of migration into North Dorset forces house prices up as the newcomers often have greater resources than those living and working locally. However some new comers will also be in need of affordable housing - for instance, some people seeking a job in the area, or elderly people needing to move closer to their relatives.

2.50 In 1998, the Council commissioned a second Housing Needs Survey to find out more about the housing problems in the District. Several relevant factors shown up by the survey are identified below:

- There were around 980 "concealed"⁴ households in the District, of whom 75% were single person households. Over 80% of the concealed households were seeking 1 or 2 bed accommodation.
- The average income of house purchasers in the District was £26,400. However, over 90% of the concealed households in the District had incomes of £17,500 or less.
- The average price of property in the District was £82,800 (some £9,000 higher than the UK average). There was very little property available at a price below £50,000.

North Dorset has a much lower proportion of flats and terraced houses within its housing stock than the national average (In 1991 the local proportion was 28% compared with 47% nationally. In 1998 the proportion had dropped to around 20% locally).

2.51 It was clear from these findings that there is still an "affordability" problem in the District, and a need for more small dwellings. Although the situation does seem to have improved since 1994 when over 1,600 concealed households were identified, it should not be assumed that this necessarily indicates a downward trend in housing need. A report analysing the results of the survey, entitled "The need for Affordable Homes in North Dorset, 1998 – 2011" has now been published by the District Council. The Council will continue to monitor the housing need situation closely, and will publish further information as and when available.

What is meant by "affordable" housing?

2.52 The Government uses the term "affordable" housing "to encompass both low-cost market and subsidised housing, that will be available to people who cannot afford to occupy houses generally available on the open market".

2.53 Subsidised housing is normally provided by a "registered social landlord" (i.e. a housing association or other body regulated by the Housing Corporation as a social landlord, as defined by the Housing Act 1996). The accommodation provided is usually subsidised by grants from the Housing Corporation and/or Local Authority. Rent/mortgage levels are controlled ultimately by Housing Corporation sanctions. Occupation is limited to those on a "Waiting List" or "Housing Needs Register". It is therefore relatively easy for the Local Authority to monitor this form of housing and ensure that those in most need of local housing benefit from the provision.

2.54 Low cost market housing is understood to be housing which is provided by the private sector, where the price of property may be restricted through conditions or legal agreement requiring for instance, a higher than average density of development, a restriction of "permitted development" rights and/or control over the type of occupants, (e.g. by limiting the housing provided to people over a certain age).

2.55 There are several problems in trying to equate this type of housing with affordable housing provided through subsidy. First, low cost market housing can only effectively be provided in the larger towns of the District where land values are generally lower than in the villages. Subsidised housing however, can be provided throughout the District. Secondly, the Local Authority has no means of monitoring who actually purchases the "low cost" property. Some could be purchased by people who have the means to afford more expensive properties but choose, (for retirement or other reasons) to buy a smaller, cheaper property.

2.56 If the Council tried to impose tighter controls, for example restricting occupation of the low cost housing to those who satisfy the criteria of "Local housing need", (set out in [para 2.59](#) below), it would place an onerous burden on the Local Planning Authority, who would have to monitor and enforce the proper occupation of the property, not just initially, but for every subsequent change of ownership. North Dorset District Council does not have the resources to undertake such measures.

2.57 The Council's aim is to increase the stock of affordable homes in the District to meet the needs of those households who cannot afford to purchase or rent housing which is generally available on the open market. It is accepted that both low cost and subsidised forms of housing have a role to play in meeting the need for affordable homes. Low cost market housing can provide a "foot in the door" of home ownership for first time buyers, while subsidised housing provides homes for individuals and families who have no means or desires to own their own home. Thus the council will seek through the policies of this Plan to increase the stock of both types of affordable housing wherever possible and achievable.

2.58 The 1998 Housing Needs Survey showed that those households earning less than £20,000 would find it very difficult to purchase anything more than a small flat or terraced property in one of the four main towns in the District. The calculation of the overall level of housing need explained below, thus relates to households whose income is below this threshold and who are unlikely to be able to access property priced at or above average priced terraced dwellings in the District.

Who qualifies as in "local housing need"?

2.59 There are four main categories of household accepted as in housing need:

1. Those households already living in the area who need separate accommodation, (such as newly married or co-habiting couples, or people forced to seek a new home because of family break up or other problems).
2. Existing residents who have to find alternative accommodation because of changes in their financial circumstances, (for instance through loss of a job or tied accommodation, or through changes in the Housing Benefit regulations), or because they are living in housing which is insanitary, overcrowded, temporary or occupied on insecure terms.
3. Households who need to move into the area, (for instance those people who need to move close to relatives for reasons of health or social support.)
4. People with the offer of a job in the locality, but who cannot take up the offer because of a lack of affordable housing.

2.60 Of course many people could claim that they satisfy these criteria, the deciding factor has to be whether they could afford local market housing. To qualify as being in local housing need, the household should have been identified through a local Housing Needs survey, be included on the current Housing

Needs Register or should provide the relevant information on their local connections, income level etc. on a form to be provided by the Council.

What is meant by "local"?

2.61 Affordable housing should be provided to meet local needs. To this end, potential occupants of affordable housing schemes from the parish or town where the proposal is located, or an adjacent parish will have highest priority. However, it should be recognised that people from other locations may also have valid reasons for needing to move to a particular town or village. As such, if there are insufficient occupants from the immediate area those from a wider area within the District, then from the County, adjacent Local Authorities and elsewhere will be considered, providing they meet one of the above criteria.

2.62 In the case of housing allowed under the rural "exceptions" policy (**see Policy 2.14** below) the Council will expect occupants to have a close connection to the particular village where a scheme is proposed, or an adjacent parish.

The level of need in the District

2.63 The results of the 1998 Housing Needs Survey have been used to project forward the need for affordable homes in the District up to 2011. (The detailed calculations are explained in the report "The Need for Affordable Homes in North Dorset 1998 – 2011").

2.64 Altogether, it is shown that in order to meet the needs of those on the current "Housing Needs Register" as well as an estimated future needs of homeless and concealed households, around 1,615 new affordable dwellings will be needed. Most of this need is for subsidised housing.

2.65 To meet this need in full would require an annual construction programme of 124 dwellings, which is equivalent to 36% of the average annual new build programme in the District. When existing planning consents are taken into account, the proportion of subsidised housing required rises to just over 50%.

2.66 To expect to achieve such a high proportion from each new development site is unrealistic. It is also unlikely that the necessary financial resources from this Authority and the Housing Corporation will be available to help fund such a heavy new build programme. Bearing these factors in mind, the Council proposes a more realistic target of 650 new subsidised dwellings to be built between 1998 and 2011.

2.67 Low cost market housing also has a role to play in meeting needs. Those households who are earning between £10,000 and £20,000 should be able to purchase a property priced at between £31,500 and £63,000. (This is based on the formula: Property price = 3 x household income + 5%).

2.68 A few small flats and terraced houses are available at this price in the four main towns. However, prices in the rural area are much higher and low cost market housing is not expected to be achievable here.

2.69 Altogether the results of the Housing Need Survey show that around 520 low cost market flats and terraced houses should be provided. These will help meet the needs of the many small, low income households, who are hoping to buy a property in the District. Thus, the overall target for affordable housing in the District is for 650 subsidised and 520 low cost market dwellings, 1170 dwellings in total.

2.70 The level of provision sought in particular towns and villages, should reflect the local need in that area. As such, the total requirement will be split in the following manner: Blandford 36% (420 dwells.), Gillingham 22% (260 dwells.), Shaftesbury 22% (260 dwells.), Sturminster Newton 9% (100 dwells.) and Stalbridge, and the remaining rural area 11% (130 dwells.). This forms the basis on which the targets for the individual sites identified in Policy 2.4 have been calculated. If necessary, these targets may be adjusted in the light of any changes in the pattern and type of housing need shown through later surveys.

On which Sites will Affordable Housing be Sought?

2.71 A community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration which may properly be taken into account in formulating development plan policies. The Council will therefore seek to negotiate with developers to secure a proportion of the dwellings on specific, "suitable" sites as affordable homes. The proportion of dwellings sought will reflect local need in the area. For guidance, the "Affordable Housing Potential" of new housing allocations in the plan, is shown in column B of **Policy 2.4**.

2.72 Guidelines on the size of site on which local authorities may negotiate for an element of affordable housing are set out in Circular 6/98. This Circular introduced the ability for Local Planning Authorities to adopt "appropriate" thresholds, based on an assessment of local needs and the available supply of land for housing, in settlements with a population of 3,000 or fewer. It also suggests that, in larger settlements where there are "exceptional local constraints" a threshold below the normal 25 dwellings, or 1.0 hectare site size, may be introduced.

2.73 The Housing Needs Survey has shown that, despite the building of about 100 subsidised dwellings over the last four years, there is still a significant need for more affordable housing in Blandford. The tight-knit character of the town means that there are limited opportunities for windfall sites of 25 dwellings or 1.0 hectare to come forward. Nothing of this scale has become available during the last four years. Allocated sites are also more restricted here than in Gillingham and Shaftesbury, as the town has almost reached the practical limits for sustainable growth. The Council therefore proposes to implement the lower threshold of 15 dwellings or 0.5 hectares in Blandford.

2.74 This lower threshold will also apply to Sturminster Newton whose population is below 3,000. The normal threshold of 25 dwellings or 1.0 hectare will apply in Gillingham and Shaftesbury.

2.75 In Stalbridge and the villages listed in Policy 1.4, around 100 units of subsidised housing are needed on windfall sites. When existing commitments are accounted for, over 40 units will still be needed. In view of the limited availability of sites of 15 or more dwellings, or 0.5 hectare in size in the villages, a lower threshold of 8 dwellings or 0.25 hectare is proposed. The Housing Needs Survey showed that needs in most villages were for around 3 or 4 dwellings. A site of 8 dwellings (or 0.25 ha) is considered to be the minimum practicable size of site on which to negotiate for this level of subsidised housing. No low cost market housing is being sought in the villages as residential land values are too high to enable housing to be developed at an affordable price.

Policy 2.12

Size of Site on which Affordable Housing will be Sought.

In order to achieve an element of affordable housing on both allocated and windfall sites, negotiations will be entered into with developers of the following sites:

- (i) In **Gillingham and Shaftesbury**, housing developments of 25 or more dwellings or residential sites of 1 hectare or more, irrespective of the number of dwellings;
- (ii) In **Blandford and Sturminster Newton**, housing developments of 15 or more dwellings or residential sites of 0.5 hectares or more, irrespective of dwelling numbers;
- (iii) In **Stalbridge** and the villages listed under Policy 1.4 of this plan, housing developments of 8 or more dwellings, or residential sites of 0.25 hectares or more, irrespective of dwelling numbers.

Subsidised Housing

2.76 In respect of the subsidised housing the Council will encourage the developer to make arrangements with a registered social landlord who will develop and/or manage this element of the scheme. Where the registered social landlord is both developer and manager of the housing, further planning constraints will not normally be necessary. (Other than in the case of the rural "exceptions" policy. See **paras. 2.92 – 2.96** below).

2.77 Where a private developer is to build dwellings which a registered social landlord will subsequently manage, the Council may wish to negotiate a legal obligation with the developer to ensure that a proportion of the general market housing cannot be occupied until the affordable element has been built and transferred to a registered social landlord. Or if a registered social landlord is not forthcoming, the Council may seek to negotiate a financial contribution towards an alternative site in the same town or village.

2.78 In transferring the land (or dwellings) to a registered social landlord, a level of subsidy may have to be met by the landowner. The aim of the subsidy is to enable the housing to be provided at a rent (or joint rent/mortgage) which will be affordable by those in housing need. For example, it was shown in **para. 2.50** above that those defined as in need of subsidised housing (i.e. were earning less than £17,500) had incomes at least 33% below that of the average house purchaser in the District. The level of subsidy needed may therefore be in the region of one third of the freehold value of the property, or equivalent to free or substantially discounted land, depending on the particular circumstances (location etc.) of the proposed development.

2.79 To ensure that the housing remains available at an affordable price/rent to subsequent occupants, a legal obligation may be sought from the developer (unless it is a registered social landlord) to limit the occupation of the property, (both for initial and subsequent occupants), to those in local housing need. (See **para 2.59** above).

Low Cost Market Housing

2.80 In respect of the low cost market housing, the Council's aim is to increase the supply of small flats, bedsits and terraced dwellings in the District. The Housing Needs Survey showed that over 80% of the concealed households were seeking 1 or 2 bedroom sized accommodation.

2.81 The Council wish to negotiate with developers to achieve the targets set out in Column 'B' of **Policy 2.4** on the "allocated" sites and similar proportions on any suitable windfall sites in the towns.

2.82 To achieve housing which is affordable, these units may be built at higher than average densities, minimal car parking requirements will be applied and "permitted development" rights may be restricted to ensure that the dwellings remain available as small units. Planning conditions or a legal agreement may be required to ensure that the appropriate mix and size of dwelling is provided.

2.83 In the past, problems have arisen in defining what is an affordable price for this type of housing. Setting a "top price" will not be effective over the full term of the Local Plan, and will not reflect the various income levels of the households in need.

2.84 To clarify the Council's intentions on this issue, low cost market housing is defined as follows:

"A low cost market dwelling shall be priced at no more than 3 x household income + 5% of those households identified as in local housing need in up-to-date housing needs survey approved by the Council. A mixture of dwelling types should be provided in any low cost market scheme".

2.85 The Council will initiate regular district-wide housing need surveys to provide an up to date information base. In intervening periods more limited surveys may be undertaken, or updated house price/income data will be published by the Planning Department. This will be used as the basis for any legal agreements or planning conditions applied to this type of housing.

Greenfield Sites

2.86 In deciding which particular sites are suitable, for affordable housing, the Council has borne in mind the relevant size of site and other factors such as the availability of local services and public transport, as well as the need to consider the cost of meeting other planning objectives (such as expensive highways infrastructure) on some sites.

2.87 **Policy 2.4** shows what the Council considers to be the affordable housing potential of the sites allocated in this plan, and this will form the basis for any future negotiations with developers.

2.88 Some of the sites listed in **Policy 2.4** are relatively large, and in two or more separate ownerships. In such a situation the Council will wish to negotiate the best possible location for the affordable housing within the site, but will expect all landowners involved to contribute towards the cost of provision. Occasionally, a site may satisfy all the criteria for the provision of affordable housing, but it may be considered preferable to seek or give a financial or other contribution to a site elsewhere in the locality. The Council will be willing to negotiate in this way providing it will help to achieve the overall targets for affordable housing set out in this Plan.

Windfall Sites

2.89 It is hoped that the remaining 520 or so affordable dwellings, will be provided on windfall sites. Where sites of the relevant size set out in **Policy 2.11** come forward, the Council will seek to negotiate a

proportion of the development as affordable housing; the proportion will reflect the level of local need shown in an up to date survey.

2.90 In the past, Housing Associations have independently acquired and developed small sites in the main towns and villages, or have developed land which they already own to provide additional affordable dwellings. The Council will encourage further developments of this nature, particularly where they would involve the re-use of vacant floor space in or around town centres, conversions of large property into units more suitable for small households, or the bringing into use of vacant or derelict land. Windfall developments will be particularly important in Blandford and the rural settlements, since greenfield opportunities here are limited.

2.91 In all affordable housing schemes, the Council will seek to incorporate a mix of housing types and sizes, to enable a well balanced community to develop, and will expect a good quality of design which respects the character of the locality.

Policy 2.13

Affordable Housing within defined Settlement Boundaries

Insofar as there is an unmet need identified in an up to date survey in the locality, negotiations will be held with developers in order to secure a proportion of affordable homes on suitable sites (as defined in Policy 2.12), which come forward for development within the settlements listed in policies 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4. of this plan. The overall target in the District is for about 1170 affordable dwellings (650 subsidised and 520 low cost market) to be provided between 1998 and 2011. In order to meet this target, the "affordable housing potential" of the individual sites listed under Policy 2.4, or a proportion of the development on any suitable windfall sites will be sought through negotiations. The subsidised housing provided under this policy should:

- benefit from a subsidy to enable the development of property at affordable rents (or joint rent/mortgage);
- always be available as affordable housing for people in local housing need;

The low cost market housing provided under this policy should be affordable by the majority of those identified as in local housing need in an up to date Housing Needs Survey. This type of housing will be sought in the towns listed in Policy 1.2 and Sturminster Newton, where land prices are such that the housing provided should be affordable to those in local housing need. Exceptionally, where there are compelling reasons to restrict the ultimate size of these dwellings, permitted development rights may be restricted to ensure that they remain available as small dwellings.

Therefore, unless the developer is a registered social landlord, permission may be subject to conditions or a legal obligation negotiated to ensure that these requirements are met.

Rural "exception" Sites

2.92 In villages where it can be shown (through a Housing Needs Survey or waiting list data) that a need exists for a small development of affordable homes which cannot be met on an allocated or windfall site, the Local Planning Authority may, as an exception to normal policy, give sympathetic consideration to a suitable site within or adjacent to the settlement boundary. This policy will apply to all settlements of 3,000 or fewer population (including the small town of Stalbridge).

2.93 This policy will also apply to villages or hamlets without a defined settlement boundary, subject to the scale of development proposed being related to the size of settlement. (i.e. Within a small hamlet, a single dwelling or pair of dwellings may be all that should be provided). In small settlements of a dispersed character, the proposal should take the form of infilling of an otherwise built up frontage, to avoid further extension of the settlement. Where a registered social landlord wishes to redevelop its own property and possibly intensify use of the site, the proposed development will be considered under this policy.

2.94 Safeguards (in the form of a legal agreement), to ensure the continuing use of the property to meet local needs will be essential in this form of development, even if the developer is a registered social landlord. The Council will not wish to include clauses in such an agreement, to enable sale of the property on the open market as a last resort, since this would jeopardize local trust in the rural "exceptions" policy.

2.95 Occasionally, the need may arise for a single private dwelling, for a household with local connections but no proven agricultural or forestry need. Such proposals should be considered under the "exceptions" policy set out below. Dwellings allowed under this policy are likely to be restricted in floorspace or number of bedrooms and may have "permitted development" rights withdrawn, to ensure that the dwelling remains "affordable" for future as well as initial occupants. Persons applying in this way must show that they satisfy the criteria of need set out in **para 2.59** above and that their need is strictly related to the parish where the housing is being sought, or an adjacent parish. The Council will also wish to ensure that all other means of providing housing locally have been explored before granting permission for this type of development.

2.96 Any development permitted under this policy will not count against the overall housing allocation for the District, but will be taken into account as helping to meet the need for affordable housing, when the Plan is reviewed.

Policy 2.14

Rural "Exceptions" Sites for Affordable Housing

In villages and the small town of **Stalbridge**, the development of affordable housing may be permitted on small sites within or adjacent to the settlement that would not be acceptable for general housing use, providing that the proposal:

- (i) meets a proven and identified local need which cannot be otherwise met;
- (ii) includes appropriate safeguards to guarantee the continuing use of the dwellings for those in local need;
- (iii) is of a size appropriate to the needs of the household;
- (iv) is of a scale and character suited to the local surroundings;

and therefore permission will be subject to conditions or a legal obligation will be negotiated to ensure that these requirements are met.

Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside

2.97 Although new residential development in the countryside is not normally permitted, there are occasions, such as when an existing dwelling falls into disrepair, that it may reasonably be replaced on a one for one basis. If the dwelling concerned is a Listed Building, the criteria set out in **Policy 1.22** will be used to determine whether it may be demolished.

2.98 A replacement dwelling should be designed to a high standard and respect the character of the rural area. Proposals for replacement dwellings will only be acceptable if they relate to existing buildings where the use has not been abandoned. Mobile homes, or other dwellings allowed on a temporary basis, will not be considered suitable for replacement by permanent dwellings, unless their need has been justified during the trial period.

Policy 2.15

Replacement dwellings in the Countryside

The replacement of an existing dwelling in the countryside will be permitted provided that:

- (i) the use of the existing dwelling has not been abandoned;**
- (ii) the original dwelling is not a chalet, mobile home, or the result of a temporary permission which has expired;**
- (iii) the proposal is a one for one replacement.**

Dwellings for Agricultural or Forestry Workers

2.99 One of the few occasions when a new dwelling may be permitted in the countryside, is to satisfy the need of a farm or forestry enterprise. In determining planning applications for such dwellings the Local Planning Authority will consider the needs of the enterprise concerned, not those of the potential owner or occupier.

2.100 Planning permission will only be granted for a dwelling which is essential to the enterprise concerned. The applicant will be expected to consider the suitability of any other housing available on the farm or locally, or the possibility of converting a redundant building on the unit, before pursuing a new dwelling. Where any dwelling(s) have recently been sold separately from the holding concerned, the Local Planning Authority will expect a reasoned justification for an additional dwelling.

2.101 Dwellings which are unusually large in relation to the needs of the unit, or expensive to build in relation to the income the unit can sustain in the long term, will not be permitted. In some cases it may be necessary to restrict some "permitted development" rights, to ensure that the dwelling does not become too large or expensive to maintain for the unit concerned. The new dwelling should if possible, be situated within or close to an existing settlement, or if this is not feasible, should be related to the main buildings of the farm or forestry unit.

2.102 The applicant will be expected to submit evidence of the functional need for the dwelling. The Planning Authority will also require financial evidence to support the stated intentions of the enterprise concerned. Where information supporting an application is inconclusive, or the application relates to a new enterprise, the Local Planning Authority may grant temporary permission for a caravan or other temporary accommodation to allow time for the viability of the unit to be established.

2.103 Any permission granted will be subject to an "occupancy" condition to ensure that the dwelling is kept available to meet the established need. In certain circumstances, the Local Planning Authority may also impose an occupancy condition on other dwellings on the unit which, at the time of the application, are under the control of the applicant and are used in connection with the farm or forestry enterprise. A legal agreement may also be used to tie a farmhouse to adjacent farm buildings or the agricultural land of the unit. These measures should help protect the countryside from unnecessary development whilst still allowing new dwellings where the need can be justified.

Policy 2.16

Agricultural and Forestry Workers Dwellings

Proposals for new permanent dwellings for agricultural or forestry workers will only be permitted in the countryside where:

- (i) it is essential for the proper functioning of the holding for a full time worker (or additional worker) to be resident;**
- (ii) the holding has been established for at least 3 years and can show sound financial evidence to substantiate the future viability of the unit and thus justify a new dwelling;**
- (iii) the need cannot be met by other housing available on the unit or locally, or by the conversion of any suitable redundant buildings on the holding;**
- (iv) the size of dwelling is appropriate to the needs of the enterprise;**

(v) the amenities of the surrounding area can be safeguarded and visual intrusion in the countryside is minimized;

(vi) occupancy is limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality, in agriculture or forestry, or a widow or widower of such a person and to any resident dependents.

If the evidence supporting an application is inconclusive, or the dwelling is needed to support a new farming or forestry activity, permission for a caravan or other temporary accommodation may be granted for a limited period.

Removal of Agricultural Occupancy Conditions

2.104 Applications for the removal of occupancy conditions will be considered against an assessment of the continuing need for the restricted dwelling in the local area. The removal of a condition will not be permitted unless it can be proved that there is no longer a requirement for an agricultural dwelling on the holding or in the locality, and that a requirement is unlikely to arise in the future. The Local Planning Authority will expect the property to have been advertised at its value with the agricultural restriction, for a period of at least six months, to test the local market. The term "in the locality" as included in the occupancy condition, will normally be interpreted as within 15 minutes travelling time by car (or about 8 miles) from the enterprise concerned.

Policy 2.17

Removal of Agricultural Occupancy Conditions

Proposals for the removal of agricultural occupancy conditions will not be approved unless it can be shown that there is no longer a need for such a dwelling on the holding or elsewhere in the locality, nor is there likely to be in the foreseeable future, and that a reasonable and sustained attempt has been made to market the property at a price which reflects the occupancy condition.

Mobile Homes

2.105 There are currently three, long established private mobile home parks providing permanent residential accommodation in the District at Winterborne Whitechurch, Ashley Wood (Tarrant Keynston) and Sherborne Causeway (Motcombe). Individual mobile homes also provide temporary accommodation in a number of situations throughout the District.

2.106 The Structure Plan, Housing Policy E states:

"Proposals for the development of residential caravan sites should be treated in the same manner as permanent residential development and be subject to the same policies, except where visual appearance would make a site unacceptable".

2.107 Although the high quality of landscape in North Dorset means that new opportunities for this type of development in acceptable locations will be limited, any planning applications will be considered against the Structure Plan policy and the general assessment criteria of this plan (**Policy 1.8**).

2.108 However, there is also a need in the District, for individual mobile homes to be used temporarily in different situations. For instance, planning permission may be sought for a mobile home, where there is a need to prove the viability of an agricultural holding, before permission is granted for a permanent dwelling; to house elderly relatives close to their carers (or vice versa), where the practicality or cost of a permanent extension is unwarranted; to accommodate the occupants of a dwelling being restored/rebuilt; or to accommodate a gypsy household (**see Policy 2.21**).

2.109 Applications for this type of use may often be in areas where the establishment of a separate residential use would not normally be acceptable. In these circumstances permission will only be granted where the need can be justified, and the normal assessment criteria met. Any permission granted will

also be limited to a specific time period which will be determined by the Council, depending on the circumstances of the proposal. A legal obligation will be sought from the applicant to ensure that, at the end of the period, the site will be returned to its previous use. This will enable the Council to maintain long term control over the site.

Policy 2.18

Temporary mobile homes to meet special needs.

In areas where a separate residential use would not normally be allowed but the need for a mobile home (or residential caravan) can be justified and the normal assessment criteria met, planning permission will be granted for a period of time, defined by the District Council, to meet the specific needs of the applicant. Any planning approval will be subject to conditions or a planning obligation will be sought, to ensure the removal of the mobile home and reinstatement of the site to its previous use, at the end of the specified period.

Conversion of Property to Multiple Units

2.110 Dwellings are not always occupied by single family units, but may be shared for a number of reasons. For instance, a house may be used by students, each with their own bedroom, but sharing other facilities. A property may offer bed and breakfast or guest house accommodation on a short-term basis for holidaymakers or on a longer term for the homeless. A property may also be divided into self-contained flats.

2.111 The District Council has adopted a Corporate Policy⁵ which defines the various categories in more detail. Under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, the use of a dwelling house for any of the various categories of multiple occupation usually requires planning consent except in the case of houses occupied on a shared basis where no more than six people share the accommodation and live as a single household.

2.112 It is recognised that the conversion of a property to multiple accommodation, can make good use of a building by utilising vacant or under-used space and providing relatively cheap units of housing. However problems can also arise. The demand for car parking space, for storage of refuse, clothes drying facilities etc. all increase as more households are accommodated. The cumulative effects of several conversions may harm the character of an area by the extensive hard surfacing of gardens or development of unsightly external staircases. Generally conversion to self-contained units of accommodation is preferable to units with shared facilities since residents identify more closely with their own accommodation and are likely to maintain better standards of upkeep.

Policy 2.19

Conversion of Property to Multiple Units

The conversion of suitable non-residential buildings or the sub-division of large houses to provide new housing accommodation will be permitted where the following criteria are met;

- (i) the intensity of the proposed use will not harm the character or appearance of the area or the amenities enjoyed by occupants of adjacent properties;**
- (ii) adequate space can be provided for practical needs such as clothes drying and storage of dustbins, and for the amenity of the occupants of the new dwelling units;**
- (iii) the building is suitable for conversion without significant extension or alteration to its character;**

(iv) car parking can be achieved, in accordance with **Policy 5.17**, without harm to the character of the area. Account will be taken of the cumulative effect of conversions on the character and amenities of the area.

Flats over Shops

2.113 The "Flats Over The Shop" Initiative launched by the Government in the Autumn of 1991 and earlier campaigns by English Heritage have highlighted the under use of upper floors in central commercial areas and the potential of this space as a housing resource. In encouraging conversion to residential use, the Local Planning Authority may help to stimulate the creation of a mixed range and tenure of housing to satisfy the needs of a broad cross-section of the local community. Where such sites are unsuitable for residential conversion, alternative proposals such as office/business uses may be considered as being appropriate. The policy relating to this form of development is included under the "Shopping" section of the Plan. (**Policy. 3.27**).

Residential Care Homes

2.114 Within the settlement boundaries of the towns and larger villages, there may be opportunities to convert existing or build new property to satisfy the special requirements of groups of the elderly, handicapped, infirm etc. In view of the special needs of these groups, proposals should be well located in relation to local services and amenities, designed to provide adequate on-site amenity space, with a site layout that enables access for wheelchair users. Proposals should also respect the character of the neighbourhood. As too many schemes of a similar type of high density accommodation could have an adverse effect on an area, the cumulative effect of such schemes will be taken into account.

2.115 Additionally, in the move to provide care in the local community, the need may arise to convert a large property in one of the smaller settlements of the District. It may be beneficial for those whose physical or mental impediments are not too severe, to live in a family type situation in a rural community. (Such a location is unlikely to be suitable for the more elderly or severely handicapped, who need to be within easy walking distance of the services and facilities that the larger settlements provide).

2.116 Where such a proposal involves more than six people sharing the accommodation and living as a single household, planning permission will be required. Proposals will be acceptable providing they show respect for character of the property and local area and satisfy the normal assessment criteria of **Policy 1.8**.

Policy 2.20

Residential Care Homes

Within the Settlement Boundaries of towns and villages identified under **Policies 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4**, proposals for the conversion of existing or development of new accommodation to satisfy the special needs of groups of elderly, infirm, or handicapped people will be permitted, provided that:

- (i) the proposal respects the character of the neighbourhood and will not result in an over-concentration of such development in any area;
- (ii) the proposal is well related to local services and amenities;
- (iii) the proposed layout of the site makes adequate provision for the needs of the disabled.

Additionally, proposals to convert a property in a small village or hamlet in the countryside to house people with less severe handicap, will be considered acceptable providing the normal assessment criteria in **Policy 1.8** can be met.

Housing for the Disabled

2.117 Disability, either temporary or permanent, potentially affects everyone at some stage in their lives. Even perfectly able bodied people have difficulties as parents of young children, in manoeuvring bulky prams or pushchairs in and out of houses. Proposals for the development of land provide the opportunity to secure a more accessible environment for everyone.

2.118 The Government has now amended part M of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 1991, to require all new dwellings to be designed and constructed to a standard to meet the needs of the disabled. Item 12 of **Policy 1.8** (Standard Assessment Criteria) of this Plan, reinforces this requirement by setting out this Authority's intention to negotiate with developers for site layouts to provide adequate access for the disabled.

Provision for Gypsies

2.119 There are currently two authorised Local Authority sites for gypsies at Shaftesbury and Thornicombe, as well as several small, privately owned sites around the District. In recent years, several unauthorised sites used by gypsies and other travellers have sprung up throughout the District, in some cases causing concern to nearby residents.

2.120 The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 repealed the duty of County Councils to provide adequate accommodation for gypsies. However local authorities will continue to have discretionary powers to provide sites and they have a continuing role, as planning authorities, in relation to both public and private sites. These changes are expected to lead to more applications for private gypsy sites. More private sites should release pitches on local authority sites for those gypsies most in need of public provision. The District Council will monitor the overall need for provision, through the six monthly counts of gypsies in the District undertaken by the Environmental Health Department.

2.121 The definition of gypsies is now taken to mean "persons who wander or travel for the purpose of making or seeking their livelihood" and does not include persons who move from place to place without any connection between their movement and their means of livelihood.⁶ Some "New Age Travellers" may fall within this definition. It is up to the Local Authority to decide whether any particular group is composed of gypsies.

2.122 The burden of the provision of sites is likely to fall on rural areas, however consideration will have to be given to other policies which seek to protect the countryside. In particular, sites will not be appropriate in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or sites of nature conservation or archaeological interest. Favourable consideration may however be given to the redevelopment of derelict or unused sites in the countryside. A distinction will be made between short-term (or transit) sites where only a basic level of services need to be provided, and longer term sites where higher standards including hard-standings for caravans will be needed.

2.123 Any new permanent sites for gypsies should have good vehicular access and be reasonably convenient for schools and other community facilities, such as public transport, shops, doctors and public telephones. Potential nuisance to neighbours from vehicle movements and business uses on these typically mixed use sites will be taken into consideration. All sites should be landscaped to an appropriate standard.

2.124 Conditions or a legal agreement should be attached to the short term/transit sites to restrict their use to a maximum of 9 months in any year. This will give a chance for the site to be cleared during the months when there are fewer gypsies moving through the District.

2.125 Where no other suitable sites or pitches are available, applications for small privately owned sites for an individual family will be considered against the general criteria for larger sites. However, in view of the fact that gypsies are by definition, nomadic, where applications for the stationing of a mobile home or caravan are otherwise acceptable, permission will only be granted for a temporary period. The period allowed will be determined in accordance with the family's needs (for instance to allow stability while children are of school age.) However, as permanent residential development would not normally be allowed in the countryside, the Council will wish to ensure long term control over the site and will seek the restoration of the site to its former condition, once the time period has elapsed. (**See also Policy 2.18**).

Policy 2.21

Gypsy Sites

The following general requirements will apply to sites for use by gypsies:

- (i) the site should not be used other than as a caravan site for occupation by gypsies as defined in section 24⁽⁸⁾ of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960;
- (ii) if the development is likely to cause harm to a sensitive environmental location (e.g. an AONB), or area of nature conservation or archaeological value permission will not be granted;
- (iii) vehicle movements, noise, fumes and any subsidiary business activities should cause no significant, substantiated nuisance to others;
- (iv) the site can be adequately serviced;
- (v) no serious highway problem would result;
- (vi) the amenity of occupants of any adjacent properties is not unduly affected.

In addition, long term sites should be reasonably related to schools and other community facilities, and a legal agreement may be sought to control the management of the site. On short-term (or transit) sites a legal obligation will be sought or conditions used to restrict the use of the site to 9 months in any year. Where no other sites are available, temporary permission for a caravan or mobile home to house a gypsy family on a small privately owned site, may be granted providing the above criteria are satisfied.

Footnotes:

1 DETR "Planning for Communities of the Future"

2 **RPG10 (2001)**

3 **PPG 3 Para 40**

4 "Concealed" households are those living within an existing household, but in need of accommodation of their own

5 NDDC Corporate Policy, Houses in Multiple Occupation. November 1993

6 Ref: DoE Circular 18/94

THE ECONOMY

Problems and Issues

Employment Structure

3.1 The 1991 Census of Employment showed that the District had a higher than average number of persons employed in agriculture. Between 1987 and 1989 the figure had fallen from 7.7% to 6.9% but then rose during the next two year period to 7.3% in 1991. In 2001 this figure had fallen again to 7%. This compares with a national figure of 2% and a figure of 4% for the south west region. The need for diversification within the agricultural industry will have far reaching implications for the Plan. Blandford Camp continues to be a major employer in the area.



Unemployment

3.2 In September 2002, the unemployment rate in the Poole and Shaftesbury travel to work areas was 1.3% and 0.9% respectively. Since early 1994 there has been a slow reduction in the number of unemployed persons to 230 in North Dorset, representing 0.7% of the workforce, in September 2002. This low figure, however, does disguise local out-migration to work and the loss of young people who have to leave the district to enter higher education.

3.3 The District consistently maintains an unemployment rate lower than that of the South West region which peaked at just over 10% in early 1993 but has since fallen to 2.0% in September 2002. North Dorset continues to have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the region but the high employment dependence on the agricultural sector combined with the restructuring of the industry may affect future unemployment rates. It is therefore essential that flexible policies are incorporated into the Plan to promote employment opportunities for the overall needs of the labour force.

Past Development Trends

3.4 The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan requires 40 Ha. of land to be developed for employment purposes within the district by the year 2011. Having regard to this guideline figure and past development rates, it is believed that sufficient land has been identified in this plan to meet the needs of the growing economy. Between 1986 and 1995 approximately 23 hectares were developed for a variety of employment uses. Despite this development, few businesses have been attracted to the District and growth is mainly attributed to the expansion of existing firms.

3.5 The area has a variety of industrial sites and premises. Sites range from fully serviced areas on modern business parks, to low rental units in converted agricultural buildings, which provide a range of opportunities for businesses moving into the area or outgrowing their present premises.

Strengthening the Economy

3.6 It is envisaged that the principal source of additional employment over the coming years will be generated by successful companies already located in the District. The introduction of European controls will place a burden on existing businesses by requiring compliance with new regulations. In appropriate circumstances consideration will be given to providing financial assistance. In conjunction with the South West Regional Development Agency, the local authority will continue to promote the area as a location for inward investment.

3.7 The western and northern sections of the District were designated a "Rural Development Area" (subsequently re-named a "Rural Priority Area") in 1994. Joint initiatives to provide serviced industrial land and workspace accommodation will be pursued. In addition, funds will be sought from the Government and the European Commission to assist in the economic enhancement of the area.

The Structure Plan Strategy

3.8 The Structure Plan's strategic objectives in relation to the economy aim to;

- provide for the restructuring of the economy and the development of local enterprise
- increase job and wealth creation
- support the expansion of and creation of new firms
- attract inward investment.
- maintain and develop a tourist industry which benefits the local economy whilst respecting the host environment
- maintain the role of the towns as the main employment and shopping centres.

(a) Employment

EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVES

- To maintain, improve and diversify employment opportunities for the local community.
- To maintain an adequate land supply in a variety of locations for future employment need.
- To support the expansion of existing and creation of new businesses.
- To direct development towards sites which are well located to existing social & service infrastructure.

Overall Employment Strategy

3.9 Main employment development will be concentrated in Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury in line with the overall strategy of the Plan to encourage sustainable development. Sturminster Newton is less well located to the Primary Route network but still has an important role to play as an employment centre serving a wide area which includes Stalbridge.

3.10 In the Rural Priority Area (RPA) there will be special emphasis on the creation of new enterprises which create better long term job prospects and skills training for the local workforce.

Policy 3.1

Overall Employment Strategy

A range of sites will be made available within the towns for the comprehensive development of employment uses. Additional as yet unidentified sites may be allowed in the Rural Priority Area where development would:

- (i) broaden and sustain the economic base of the area;
- (ii) provide a range of employment opportunities;
- (iii) not result in overriding harm to landscape quality and amenity;
- (iv) not give rise to an unacceptable increase in traffic to and from site.

Allocated Employment Sites within Settlement Boundaries

3.11 Continued activity on existing sites and the development of new allocated sites will ensure a ready supply of employment land. The following defined Employment Sites, both existing and proposed, are thought sufficient to meet the needs of the population throughout the Plan period. Development for business, general industrial and storage or distribution use will be permitted within the defined

Employment Areas. In addition, proposals for the sale of bulky and specialised goods will be considered where a more central location is inappropriate and where the proposed development is in accordance with **Policy 3.23**.

Policy 3.2

Development on Defined Employment Areas

Development for Business (B1), General Industrial (B2) and Storage/Distribution (B8) uses will be permitted within the defined Employment Areas.

Existing Developed Employment Areas within Settlement Boundaries

Settlement	Site ref.	Location
Blandford	E/2/1	Sunrise Business Park
	E/2/2	Blandford Heights & Clump Farm
	E/2/3	Holland Way
	E/2/4	The Brewery
	E/2/5	Stour Park
Bourton	E/3/1	Former Unigate factory
Durweston	E/10/1	Old Brewery Workshops
Gillingham	E/15/1	Station Road
	E/15/2	Brickfields Business Park
	E/15/3	Tomlins Lane
	E/15/4	Gillbury Yard
Hazelbury Bryan	E/17/2	M. Richards / F.Martin
Hinton St. Mary	E/19/1	Bartlett's Yard
	E/19/2	Old Estate Yard / White and Sons Ltd/Nicholsons Yard
Kings Stag	E/23/1	Holwell Road
Milborne St. Andrew	E/30/1	Blandford Road
Motcombe	E/33/1	Case & Sons
Okeford Fitzpaine	E/34/1	Faccenda Ltd
Pimperne	E/35/1	Down Road
	E/35/2	Blandford Road
Pulham	E/36/2	Pulham Saw Mills site
Shaftesbury	E/37/1	Longmead Industrial Estate
	E/37/2	Wincombe Business Park
	E/37/3	C B Morgan Ltd.
	E/37/5	Blackmore Creamery
Shillingstone	E/38/1	St Patricks Industrial Estate
Stalbridge	E/40/1	Station Road
Stalbridge - Gibbs Marsh	E/41/1	Gibbs Marsh Trading Estate
Sturminster Newton	E/47/1	Butts Pond Industrial Estate

	E/47/2	North Dorset Business Park (Formerly Rolls Mill)
	E/47/3	The Creamery Site
	E/47/4	Manston Road
Winterborne Kingston	E/57/1	North Street

Land with Outstanding Planning Permission or Developed (1994/7) for Employment Uses

Settlement	Site ref.	Area developed 1994-7	remaining	Location
Blandford	E/2/2	Not yet available	2.5 ha.	Blandford Heights
	E/2/5	"	1.2 ha.	Stour Park
Gillingham	E/15/1	"	1.0 ha.	Station Road
	E/15/2	"	4.0 ha.	Brickfields
	E/15/3	"	8.0 ha.	Sigma Aldridge
Shaftesbury	E/37/2	"	3.0 ha.	Wincombe Business Park
	E/37/1	"	0.3 ha.	Longmead
Stalbridge	E/40/1	"	0.8 ha.	Station Road
	E40/2	"	1.0 ha.	Station Road
Sturminster Newton	E/47/2	"	6.4 ha.	North Dorset Bus.Park (Rolls Mill)
Total			28.2 ha.	

Proposed New Employment Allocations

Settlement	Site ref.	Area	Location
Blandford	E/2/6	7.5 ha.	Shaftesbury Lane
Bourton	E/3/2	0.5 ha.	South of Lilac Cottage
			(Site restricted to B1/B8 use)
Gillingham	Site I	2.5 ha.	Peacemarch
	Site L	4.5 ha.	Park Farm
	Site K	1.5 ha.	Higher Ham Farm
Okeford Fitzpaine	E/34/2	2.1 ha.	Poultry Houses
Shaftesbury	E/37/4	7.0 ha.	South of A30
Total		25.6 ha.	

Monitoring

3.12 The take up of employment land will continue to be monitored on an annual basis to ensure that a sufficient supply continues to be readily available throughout the Plan period. The District and County Councils will publish such information annually.

Retention of Employment Areas and Uses

3.13 The provision of a wide range of employment opportunities and adequate infrastructure is essential to the well-being of the economy. In order to maintain sites in a variety of locations, all existing

employment areas will be retained. Permission for change of use or redevelopment within the defined employment areas other than for business, industrial, storage or distribution use will not be permitted, except for the retailing of bulky household, agricultural or motoring goods (see **Policy 3.24**). It is essential to maintain as many buildings in employment use as possible to maintain the economic opportunities in the District.

3.14 Although some employment areas in open countryside locations are defined (e.g. Blackmore Creamery, near Shaftesbury), a considerable number of established sites lie outside the Inset Plan areas and thus are not defined. Examples include the former County Surveyor's Depot at Todber and Wessex Park Homes near Okeford Fitzpaine. **Policy 3.3** relates to all such sites and buildings irrespective of their location.

Policy 3.3

Retention of Employment Areas & Uses.

To protect future employment prospects, permission for the change of use of a building or site from an employment to non-employment use will not be permitted.

Employment Development in Rural Areas

(i) The Villages

3.15 Many businesses can be carried out in rural areas without causing unnecessary disturbance through increased traffic, noise, pollution or other adverse effects. Such businesses create a valuable source of employment and income for the local population. Proposals which will increase the provision of local employment, reduce the need to travel and help to encourage young people to stay within the area, are supported. Consideration will also be given to proposals which make use of an under-used building (s).

Policy 3.4

Employment Development within Defined Settlements

Proposals for the small scale development or expansion of firms and businesses within existing Settlement Boundaries may be permitted providing that the proposal maintains or increases job opportunities for people in rural areas, that the proposal is compatible with the area and that the quality of life of local residents is not prejudiced.

(ii) The Countryside

3.16 Major new employment developments will normally only be permitted on allocated or existing employment sites within one of the towns in the District. However, there are many small-scale rural enterprises, located in the countryside outside a settlement boundary, which provide a valuable source of local employment. One of the objectives of this Plan therefore, is to support and maintain these rural businesses. Under the following policy, the establishment or expansion of rural enterprises will be permitted especially where buildings are re-used or additional use made of land within the curtilage of the development. Whilst substantial development of greenfield sites in the countryside is contrary not only to the aims of sustainable development but also to the conservation of the countryside and will not be permitted under this policy, it is important not to jeopardise the future of rural enterprise. The small scale expansion of sites, considered to represent about a 25% increase in original site area, will be permitted where development does not harm the local environment and there is no significant increase in traffic generation. (**See also Policy 1.10**; Reuse and Adaptation of Buildings, including modern buildings, in the Countryside.)

Policy 3.5

Employment Development within the Countryside

Proposals for the small scale expansion or development of new rural enterprises within the countryside will only be permitted where;

- (i) existing buildings are re-used;
- (ii) additional use is made of land within the curtilage of the development;
- (iii) or the proposal is a small scale extension to an established site.

There should be no adverse effect on the countryside with regard to scale, character and appearance of new buildings nor should substantial additional traffic be generated to the site.

Proposals should be compatible with **Policy 1.10**; *"Re-use and Adaptation of Buildings, including modern buildings, in the Countryside"*.

(iii) Relocation of Poorly Sited Village Industries

3.17 Village industries make a valuable contribution to the local economy and are historically, an important part of a thriving village. However, were some of the industries located within the villages to be established today, their interests could in some cases be better served in another location. Where such village industries could be better served on another identified employment area, relocation of these businesses is supported. Where it is not possible to relocate such firms to existing employment areas, permission may be granted on another unallocated site subject to the development policies of the plan.

Policy 3.6

Relocation of Poorly Sited Village Industries

The relocation of poorly sited village industries to other existing employment areas is supported. Where this cannot be achieved for economic or environmental reasons, an alternative unallocated site may be permitted.

Restrictions on Employment Uses

3.18 Where employment uses abut residential areas, the quality of life of residents will need to be protected. Permission for employment uses adjacent to residential areas will be granted, subject to evidence that neighbouring land uses will not be adversely affected. Factors such as noise, pollution and traffic generation will be controlled through planning conditions to safeguard the quality of life.

Policy 3.7

Restrictions on Employment

Development If planning permission is to be granted for new employment uses adjacent to residential areas, the permission will be conditioned to ensure the interests of neighbouring uses are protected.

Working From Home

3.19 Technological advances and the growth in small businesses are likely to result in an increased incidence of home working. Where the use of part of a dwelling for business purposes does not change the overall character of the dwelling, planning permission is not required. When the business ceases to be ancillary to the use as a dwelling, planning permission is required. When considering applications for business use, regard will be given to the proposed intensity of use of the building, movements to and from the business and the nature and scale of the proposal.

Policy 3.8

Working from Home

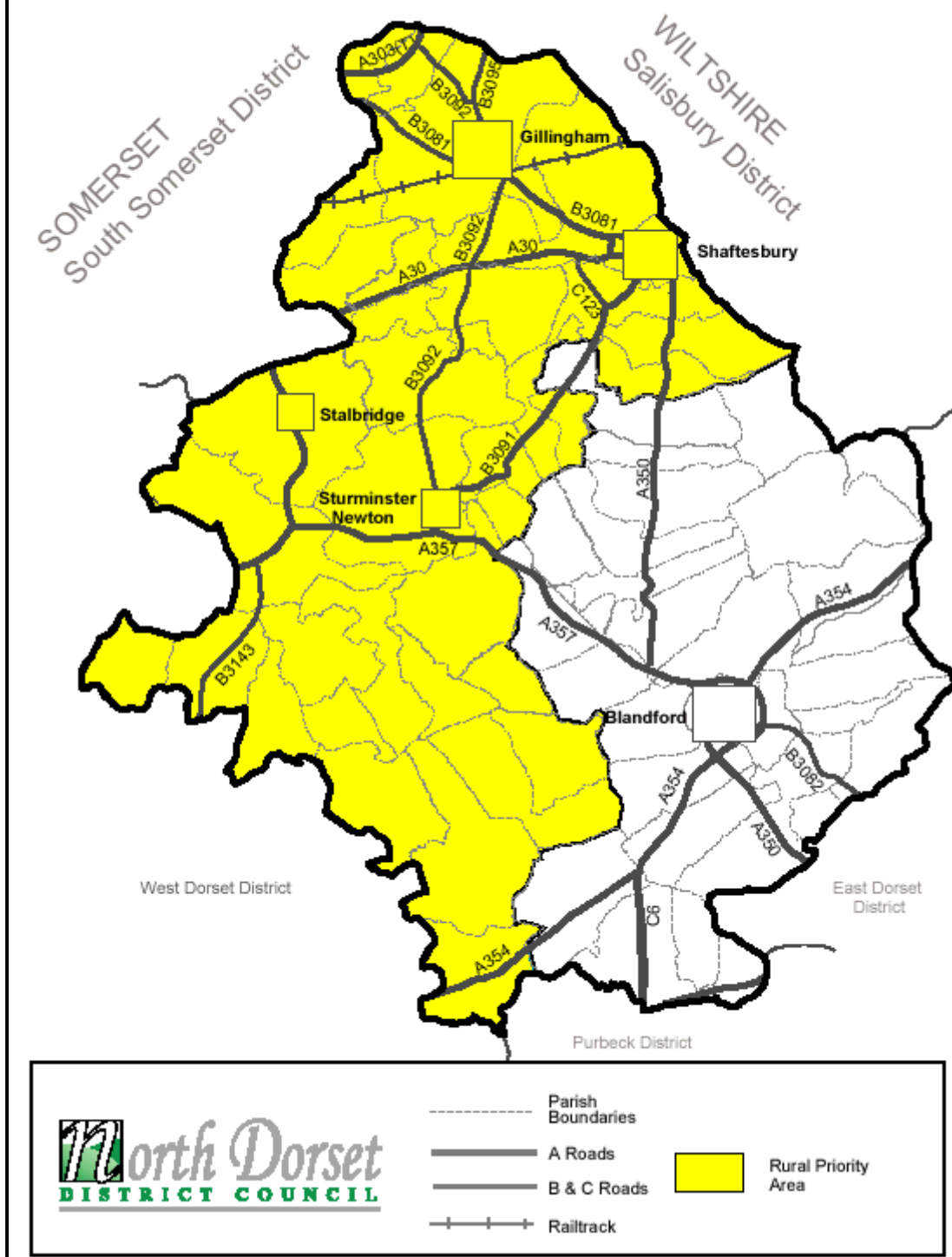
Planning applications for business use within residential property will be approved, subject to the following factors being at levels acceptable to the neighbourhood;

- (i) traffic movements to and from the business;**
- (ii) noise emissions and pollution levels;**
- (iii) hours of business operation;**
- (iv) the effect of the business on the amenity and character of the neighbourhood.**

Development within the Rural Priority Area

3.20 The northern and western sections of the District fall within the Rural Priority Area (RPA). These are areas where a degree of rural deprivation is experienced and there is a stronger case for central government funding towards rural regeneration. Planning permission will only be granted in accordance with **Policy 3.1**. The extent of the designated area is shown on **Figure 4**.

FIGURE 4
RURAL PRIORITY AREA



Agriculture

Protection of Agricultural Land

3.21 Agriculture, despite the effects of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Community and the drive towards diversification, continues to be a major part of the local economy. There is a continuing need therefore for the policies of this Plan to protect the best and most versatile land from large-scale development whilst allowing for sensitive diversification of the industry. Within the principles of

sustainable development, the best and most versatile land, Grades 1, 2 and 3a, will be protected. However, where lower grade land, Grade 3b, 4 and 5 is of high ecological / wildlife value, this will be taken into consideration when assessing the effects of loss to development.

Policy 3.9

Change of Use of Agricultural Land.

The use of best and most versatile agricultural land should be avoided. If agricultural land needs to be developed and there is a choice between sites in different grades (Agricultural Land Classification grades 1-5), land of the lowest grade available should be used, unless other sustainability considerations outweigh the agricultural considerations.

Agricultural Diversification

3.22 Agriculture continues to make a valuable contribution to the rural economy and is an important source of employment. However, at a time when farmers are being encouraged to reduce levels of production, they are increasingly looking for alternative ways of generating income. Applications for permission to diversify parts of farm holdings, will be assessed with particular regard to the following policies;

- Re-use and Adaptation of Buildings in the Countryside (**Policy 1.10**)
- Farmyards within Village Settlement Boundaries (**Policy 1.11**)
- Employment development within the Countryside (**Policy 3.5**)

Livestock Units

3.23 Whilst the erection of certain agricultural buildings is already permitted under current planning legislation, those to be used for the accommodation of livestock which are within 400m of a protected building require the express grant of planning permission by the planning authority. Although planning legislation makes no distinction between intensive and extensive livestock units, the former are generally perceived as being those which have little or no dependence upon the farm land on which they are located. Changes to regulations governing conditions under which livestock can be kept may require existing buildings to be extended and preventative steps to be taken to reduce current levels of noise and odour. When assessing proposals for new livestock units the protection of residential amenity will be considered.

Policy 3.10

Livestock Units

The establishment of new or expansion of existing units will only be permitted where the development;

- (i) does not reduce residential amenity by increasing noise or odour to unacceptable levels;**
- (ii) is well screened and landscaped;**
- (iii) is well located to the road network which is capable of accommodating any additional traffic.**

Development should take account of the prevailing wind direction and use existing landscape features, such as woodlands, to minimise potential environmental impact. A planning application must be accompanied by a Waste Management Plan detailing the proposed methods of disposal.

Livestock Markets

3.24 Until 1997 there were two markets operating within the District at Sturminster Newton and Shaftesbury. However with the closure of the former the surviving market at Shaftesbury has taken over as a centre for both markets. The future of the Shaftesbury market too has been uncertain as there were proposals for the development of a supermarket on the site. Although this proposal has now been superseded by one which excludes the market site, the site could still be subject to pressure for redevelopment in the future.

3.25 In order to help resolve the future of markets within the District, the Council commissioned a Dorset Livestock Market study which was undertaken by the RPS Clouston Consultancy. The results of the study show that there is a need for a continuing livestock market to serve the District and that this would be best achieved through the development of a greenfield site. At present it is premature to identify a proposed site in this Local Plan. However, the following policy sets out criteria by which to judge any future applications.

Policy 3.11

New Livestock Markets

Proposals for a new site for a livestock market in the District should meet the following criteria;

- be of between 6.0 and 10.0ha in size;
- be easily accessible from a Primary or County Distributor road;
- be in the area to the south / south west of **Shaftesbury** (i.e. between **Blandford**, **Sturminster Newton** and **Shaftesbury**).

Storage of Hazardous Substances

3.26 The Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 and Regulations 1992 require consent to be obtained for the storage of a hazardous substance in an amount at or above its controlled quantity. The Act gives the determining authority the opportunity to consider whether the proposed storage or use of a significant quantity of a hazardous substance is appropriate to a particular location. Applications for the storage of substances identified in the Regulations as being hazardous will also be assessed against the development criteria of the Plan.

Control of Emissions from Industrial Development

3.27 It is not the role of the planning system to duplicate controls governing emissions from industrial development. However, the production of certain products, e.g. paint and chemicals, can result in the emission of undesirable odours or the production of effluent. Although such industries are valuable as a source of employment, where emissions are considered to be hazardous to the host environment or amenity of the area, permission to develop will not be granted.

Renewable Energy

3.28 The Government's policy on renewable energy, as set out in Energy Paper 62 (March 1994), seeks to stimulate the development of new and renewable energy sources where proposals are economically attractive and environmentally acceptable. The Department of Trade and Industry estimates that at least 25% of current electricity use could be met by renewable sources by 2025.

3.29 Proposals for the generation of renewable energy sources form a key part of the overall Local Plan Strategy for Sustainable Development. The need for renewable energy will be balanced against the impact of the scheme on the local environment. Particular consideration will be given to the landscape and ecological value of the nationally designated areas within the District. The Council acknowledges the advice in **PPG 22** that a variety of factors specific to the technology involved have to be taken into

account in assessing planning applications for renewable energy systems. When considering any proposals the Council will balance the impact of development on the environment against the benefits of development.

3.30 A study undertaken in 1994 by the Energy Technology Support Unit (ETSU) and Southern Electric, sought to assess the potential of the Southern Electric Region as a location for renewable energy generation. The results of this study suggest that North Dorset is most likely to come under pressure from wind farm proposals. However, as technological advances are made within the industry during the plan period other types of renewable energy development cannot be discounted.

3.31 The most suitable sites for wind farm development are thought to be located on the crests of the scarp slopes where annual mean wind speeds are the highest in the District. However, the siting of wind turbines within the Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is unlikely to be visually acceptable.

Policy 3.12

Renewable Energy

The benefits of proposals for the generation of energy from renewable sources will be balanced against the effects of the proposal on the landscape, particularly that which is nationally protected/designated. Where there is an overriding loss of landscape quality or overriding harm to a site of acknowledged importance, permission will not be granted.

In the case of wind turbines, noise emissions, shadow flicker and reflection should not affect the amenity of existing residential buildings.

Advertisements

(including Advance Roadside Advertising)

3.32 Advertising is a key ingredient to the vitality of town centres and is often an important factor in the commercial success of many businesses. Those located in the more remote rural areas rely heavily on roadside advertising to attract passing trade. By using the Control of Advertisement Regulations and guidance provided in **Planning Policy Guidance Note No.19 "Outdoor Advertisement Control"** the Planning Authority will continue to seek to ensure that the impact of advertisements, through number and location, does not have a detrimental effect on the character of the countryside.

3.33 Special consideration will be given to the effect of advertisements within designated landscape and Conservation Areas.

Policy 3.13

Advertisements

Advertisement consent will only be granted if the following conditions are met;

- (i) the advertisement as a whole is in keeping with the scale and character of the surrounding area;**
- (ii) the materials used and the size of lettering are appropriate for the immediate locality;**
- iii) the public safety of those using the highway will not be adversely affected.**

Illumination of an advertisement will be permitted, except where it is inappropriate on amenity or public safety grounds.

Telecommunications Development

3.34 The Government policy on telecommunications is to promote growth of new and existing systems through encouraging competition between providers. Modern telecommunications are a vital element in ensuring the economic attractiveness of the region and can help to overcome the remoteness from major population and employment centres. In addition, the widespread use of modern technology can further the aims of sustainability by reducing the need to travel.

3.35 Code System Operators are required under the Telecommunications Act 1984 to provide a certain level of service, in terms of geographical coverage and to respond to customer requirements of service and quality. Each license imposes certain conditions covering such areas as mast sharing, establishing need and the removal of redundant structures.

3.36 The development of modern telecommunications networks includes underground cables, masts, satellite dishes, transmitter aerials and permanent buildings. Proposals which require planning permission, either by virtue of their size or location, will be assessed against the need to provide a comprehensive telecommunication network and the need to conserve the visual quality of the environment.

3.37 For instance, telecommunication masts on hill-tops should be located away from exposed areas and make the best use of tree cover and the topography to mask their effect on the landscape. Satellite dishes should, if at all possible, be located on rear elevations or on outbuildings which are away from and out of sight of the public domain.

Policy 3.14

Telecommunications Development

The installation of telecommunications equipment requiring planning permission will only be approved if the development has been designed to minimise, within existing technological constraints, the visual impact on the environment and there is no material harm to a site of acknowledged importance. Where a choice of sites offer a comparable standard of service, that of least visual exposure will be favoured.

In the case of large masts, evidence should be provided that use cannot be made of existing buildings or structures.

(b) Shopping

SHOPPING OBJECTIVES

- To maintain the vitality and viability of town centres.
- To maintain and improve adequate and well located facilities for local communities.
- To encourage new and innovative enterprises.
- To secure inward investment into the district.

Promotion of the Existing Shopping Centres

3.38 The District has four main shopping centres at Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton. These towns offer both retail and business opportunities and provide an essential service role to their respective catchment areas. In an attempt to increase existing levels of vitality and viability a diversity of mixed use development within these areas will be encouraged. Within the four main centres, properties have been surveyed to define "primary" and "secondary" shopping frontages based on ground floor use.

Policy 3.15

Promotion of Shopping Centres

The vitality of **Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton** shopping centres will be maintained and promoted.

Policy 3.16

New Retail Outlets in Town Centres

Within primary shopping frontage areas, development of additional retail uses (A1) will be permitted. Development of financial and professional services (A2) and food and drink uses (A3) will be permitted within secondary frontage areas subject to criteria in **Policy 3.17**.

3.39 Whilst trying to create town centres which offer a wide range of facilities, a balance must be struck when allowing mixed development so as not to reduce the degree of choice within a certain sector. In an attempt to allow flexibility of use but still preserve a wide range of uses, it is thought that any change of use of A1 premises should not result in more than three adjacent units falling into another category of the Use Class Order.

Policy 3.17

Change of Use in Retail Areas

The retailing function of shopping centres will be protected by resisting the loss of A1 premises within the primary shopping frontage area.

The change of use of retailing units within primary shopping frontage areas to financial/professional and food and drink uses will only be permitted where one or more of the following applies;

- (i) the vitality and viability of the area is not prejudiced;
- (ii) change of use does not result in an unacceptable concentration of similar uses. (e.g.) at least 1 adjoining unit should be in retail (A1) use;
- (iii) the existing shop frontage is retained.

Applications for change of use to professional or food and drink uses in the secondary shopping frontage areas will be permitted. Change of use to other uses may be permitted where the property is on the periphery of the area with minimal pedestrian flows and providing that the existing shop front and fascia are retained where commercial redevelopment occurs.

3.40 There are two smaller local centres at Stalbridge and Marnhull which provide local convenience facilities for their immediate catchment areas. They have an important role to play in meeting people's day to day needs so reducing the need to travel. In order to maintain and enhance the function of these local centres, existing shopping facilities should be safeguarded and opportunities for development promoted.

Policy 3.18

Local Centres at Marnhull and Stalbridge

The vitality and viability of Marnhull and Stalbridge as local shopping centres will be maintained and promoted. Additional retail and service uses (A1, A2 and A3) will be permitted. The change of use of existing retail and service uses will not be permitted where this would cause significant harm to the level of easily accessible convenience facilities demanded by and available to the local community so as to support the principles of sustainability and reduced transport use.

Out of Town Centre Retail Development

3.41 Recent surveys indicate that on a national scale, the development of "out of town" retail centres can damage not only the viability and vitality of existing shopping centres but also the survival of local neighbourhood shops. Out of town retailing can also lead to additional car-borne shopping trips and is not easily justified under a sustainable development strategy.

3.42 In some cases however, it may be possible to locate additional large stores (in excess of 500m², 5,400ft², of net retail floorspace) on the edge of town centres. Development on the edge of town centres can often provide an additional attraction which will promote use of the existing town centre, particularly where additional walkways, public transport facilities and car parking promote links to the town centre. 'Large stores' are defined as in excess of 500m² in the definition of major development contained in **Policy 1.1**; The Sustainable Development Strategy. For the purposes of this policy, 500m² is the maximum unit size appropriate for a village or a neighbourhood location. Stores in excess of this size may adversely affect the viability and vitality of existing shopping centres.

3.43 Any proposals for new major retail development will be considered with regard to the "sequential" approach contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 6 "Town Centres and Retail Developments". The onus is on the developer to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that all potential town centre options have been fully investigated and there is no other suitable site closer to the town centre. Where the proposed store is thought to pose a potential threat to certain sectors of the town centre, planning consents may be conditioned to limit the range of goods sold in out-of-town centre stores.

3.44 All applications for more than 500m², (5,400ft²), net retail floorspace outside the town centre shall be accompanied by retail and transport assessments. It is considered that, due to the specific local circumstances that operate in North Dorset, this figure represents the limit in terms of the size of development above which there is the potential for the development to adversely affect the vitality and viability of existing centres. A recent research paper published by DETR entitled "The impact of Large Foodstores on Market Towns and District Centres" (1998) identified a number of issues associated with the provision of new large scale convenience stores. It highlighted the fact that their impact may not be solely limited to other supermarkets but may also adversely affect comparison and service uses. Impact was increased for stores located away from the town centre and cumulative and long term impact were found to be particularly important considerations. Indeed the report concluded that large foodstores can have an adverse impact on market towns and smaller centres may require additional protection. The relatively small size of existing shopping centres in the District and the already high incidence of convenience retailing in large stores as a proportion of total floor space highlight the importance for all applications for out of town centre retail developments in excess of 500sq. metres of net floorspace to be accompanied by appropriate retail and transport assessments.

3.45 Retail and transport assessments must contain the following information:

- The need for the development and the estimated extent of existing and future demand in the town's shopping catchment area for additional floorspace for either food or non-food retailing (whichever is relevant).
- Whether a sequential approach to site selection has been adopted and the availability of alternative sites.
- The likely economic impact on town centres, local centres and villages including the cumulative effects of recently completed developments and outstanding planning permission.
- The accessibility by a choice of means of transport, assessing the proportion of customers likely to arrive by the different modes.
- Likely changes in travel pattern over a catchment area.
- Any significant environmental effects.

Policy 3.19

Out of Town Centre Retail Development

Where the results of a "sequential" test show there are no suitable sites within or on the edge of the town centre, development may be permitted where the proposal;

- (i) either by itself or cumulatively with other existing or proposed developments, does not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the town centre;
- (ii) is accessible by a choice of means of transport and promotes pedestrian and cycleway linkages with the existing town centre;
- (iii) is of an appropriate scale for the size of the centre;
- (iv) is for small neighbourhood centres of not more than 500m², (5,400ft²) net retail floorspace.

All applications for more than 500m², (5,400ft²), net retail floorspace outside or adjoining the town centre should be accompanied by retail and transport assessments.

Design of Shopfronts

3.46 Shopfronts make a significant contribution to the street scene and their retention, where appropriate, will be sought. This is particularly important in Conservation Areas and other areas of historic or architectural importance. The retention and restoration of shopfronts will be promoted where they are in keeping with the character of the building. (See also **paras. 1.113 –1.114** relating to Conservation areas).

Policy 3.20

Design of Shopfronts

The provision of shopfronts of a high design standard and appearance will be permitted where appropriate to the building and complementary to the street scene.

Village Facilities

3.47 Village shops, post offices and public houses are an essential part of the rural economy, particularly in villages where the level of car ownership is low or the population is elderly. The loss of such facilities usually has a detrimental effect on the vitality and attractiveness of such settlements. It is therefore desirable to maintain these facilities and their loss will thus be resisted. However, in certain cases it may be uneconomical for the use to continue; any planning application for a change of use made on these grounds must be accompanied by evidence that attempts have been made to dispose of the business as an ongoing concern. The mixed use of premises will be encouraged where this will ensure facilities are maintained.

Policy 3.21

The Retention of Village Facilities

To ensure a range of facilities remains available in rural areas, village shops, post offices and public houses should be retained and change of use will not be permitted where this would

cause significant harm to the level of easily accessible convenience facilities demanded by and available to the local community so as to support the principles of sustainability and reduced transport use. Retention of facilities will be sought by the mixed use of premises.

Development of Local Shopping Facilities

3.48 Some local shopping areas have the ability to expand thus increasing the range of facilities, particularly in rural areas. Where such proposals will meet a local need, permission will be granted subject to the proposal meeting all other policies in the Plan.

Policy 3.22

Development of Local Shopping Facilities

Proposals for the development of local shopping facilities in villages and new residential areas will be permitted, providing that the proposal is compatible with the character of the locality.

Retailing within Employment Areas

3.49 Some large non-food retail developments, (e.g. bulky goods, retailing builders merchants, car dealers and those involving the on-site manufacture of ancillary goods) are inappropriate in historic town centres where there are problems of accommodating large floor areas and car parking/ servicing areas. Larger developments however, may be more appropriately located on employment areas, providing that there are premises/land available and sufficient vacant land remains to cater for future employment demand.

Policy 3.23

Retailing within Employment Areas

Where the results of a sequential test show there are no suitable sites within the town centre, development for the retailing of bulky or specialist goods may be permitted on employment land where the proposal;

- (i) either by itself or cumulatively with other existing or proposed developments, does not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the town centre;**
- (ii) is of a size which cannot be satisfactorily accommodated in an existing shopping centre;**
- (iii) is not solely for the sale of food or clothing;**
- (iv) is accessible by a choice of means of transport;**
- (v) does not result in significant additional travelling;**
- (vi) does not result in insufficient employment land remaining to meet the needs of the local workforce.**

Farm Shops

3.50 Farm shops can be a valuable local asset but can also create problems, (e.g. increased traffic generation), and may have a harmful effect on existing village facilities. Whilst the sale of produce from the farm does not usually require planning permission, permission will be required for more extensive

retail use. In such cases planning permission may be granted providing that the viability of existing shops is not reduced.

Policy 3.24

Farm Shops

Establishment of small scale farm shops will only be permitted providing the proposal is restricted primarily to the sale of farm produce. The ancillary sale of food and convenience goods to serve the needs of the local community may be permitted where there would be no adverse effect on the vitality and viability of existing retail centres.

Garden Centres

3.51 A garden centre normally sells goods brought into the site in addition to those produced on the site. The scale of the business and the range of products sold means that garden centres usually require large sites to accommodate sufficient numbers of buildings, car parking spaces and display areas. The visual impact of garden centres on the locality can thus be significant and development will be strictly controlled to safeguard the quality of the area. Garden centres can also attract large numbers of visitors. In many parts of the area, the local highway network is incapable of accommodating the resultant increases in traffic flow. Any proposals for the development of garden centres should be well located in relation to the primary highway network. Unless controlled through planning agreements, a wide range of goods, e.g. sheds and conservatories may be sold from the site. To ensure that the site does not become a general shopping development, the goods to be sold will be restricted to those associated with horticulture and gardening.

Policy 3.25

Garden Centres

Proposals for new garden centres will be permitted, providing the proposal is not detrimental to the character and amenity of the area and the site is well located to the highway network. Planning Agreements will be used to restrict the sale of goods to those associated with horticulture and gardening.

Commercial Nurseries

3.52 Unlike a garden centre a nursery business generally sells goods which are produced on the site. They provide a valuable source of local employment, particularly within the rural environment. The scale and impact of nursery development on the landscape is generally less than that of a garden centre.

Policy 3.26

Nurseries

Proposals for new nurseries will be permitted providing that the proposal is not detrimental to the character and amenity of the area and is well located in relation to the highway network.

Space over Commercial Premises

3.53 There are many sites within town and neighbourhood centres where the re-use of space above commercial premises offers the opportunity to create additional housing for those wishing to live within a more "urban" environment. Such conversion will not only lead to an economic use of an under-utilised asset, but will ensure that a mixed range and tenure of housing is created to meet the needs of a broad cross-section of the community. Where conversion to a residential use is not acceptable, other economic uses will be considered providing that a retail use is retained at ground floor level.

Policy 3.27

Space over Commercial Premises

The residential development of space over commercial property will be approved, providing that adequate standards of amenity and privacy are maintained and adequate pedestrian access and parking can be provided. Where residential use is unacceptable alternative uses will be considered, providing a retail use is retained at ground floor level.

(c) Tourism

TOURISM OBJECTIVES

- To promote the District's tourist attractions and to encourage, where appropriate, the controlled development of the District as a visitor destination for the benefit of the local economy.
- To spread the geographic coverage of tourism throughout the district

Tourism Developments

3.54 North Dorset has a varied landscape, and historical features are attractive to a growing number of holidaymakers. Tourism forms part of the employment base of the District and can help to assist rural diversification. At the same time, care must be taken to ensure that tourism does not destroy the environment which forms the basis of the attraction to the area. Some built facilities may be required within the District; the conversion of an existing building is preferable to the construction of new buildings. The link between countryside recreation and tourism is illustrated by the circular cycleway which has been signposted around the District. Further opportunities may arise with the development of additional cycling routes such as the National Cycle Network ([see para.4.31](#), [Policy 4.10](#) and [Policy 4.11](#)). The appeal of long distance walks is increasing in popularity, again providing opportunity for the further development of tourist facilities away from the traditional destinations. This will help to secure the wider development of facilities throughout the District.

Policy 3.28

Development of Tourist Attractions

Proposals for the development or extension of tourist facilities and attractions will be granted planning permission unless;

- (i) the proposal is out of character, design and scale with the area in which it is proposed;
- (ii) the location is unsuitable for an increased numbers of visitors;
- (iii) the local road network is unsuitable to serve the site in relation to the volume and type of traffic likely to be generated.

All new tourist attractions must have the potential for access by viable public transport systems.

Development of Built Holiday Accommodation

3.55 Most of the holiday accommodation within the District is small scale, ranging from quality hotels to friendly bed and breakfast and self catering accommodation. In some cases planning permission is not required for private houses to be used for bed and breakfast accommodation. However, where planning permission is required for bed and breakfast accommodation and where proposals for the change of use of large properties to hotels are being considered, the general assessment criteria will apply. In the case of purpose built holiday accommodation, the following policy will also apply.

Policy 3.29

Development of Built Holiday Accommodation

The development of built accommodation (excluding holiday chalets) will be permitted within settlement boundaries providing that the assessment criteria of the plan can be met.

Development outside the settlement boundaries will only be permitted if the proposal makes use of an existing building and satisfies the relevant criteria. (see Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings, [Policy 1.10](#))

Chalets, Caravans and Camping

3.56 The District only has a few holiday caravan and camping sites at present. The Structure Plan gives more encouragement than previously to the development of caravan parks inland. The location of such sites will need to be assessed against environmental policies and there should not be an over concentration in one location. It is recognised that in the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty there may be opportunities for the development of small scale sites for tents and caravans.

Policy 3.30

Development of Chalet, Caravan and Camping Sites

Chalet, caravan and camping sites will only be permitted subject to;

- (i) the compatibility of the proposal in character, design and scale with the area in which it is proposed;**
- (ii) the capacity of the location to accept increased numbers of visitors;**
- (iii) the effects of the proposal on the amenity and interests of local residents and visitors;**
- (iv) the adequacy of the road network serving the site in relation to the volume and type of traffic;**
- (v) adequate screening of the site in a manner compatible with the landscape.**

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND RECREATION

Problems and Issues

Future Provision

4.1 In order to allow housing development to go ahead and to make housing proposals acceptable in land use planning terms, adequate provision of community infrastructure is required. However, the limited resources available to Local Authorities will make the provision of future community services and recreational facilities difficult to achieve. Developers may be asked to contribute financially towards their provision. Contributions will be sought when necessary to enable development to proceed. They will be directly related to the proposed development, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind and reasonable in all other respects, and accord with national guidance (currently contained in **Circular 1/97 Planning Obligations**). In accordance with para B13 of **Circular 1/97** a number of developers may be approached to contribute jointly to an improved facility which will be of benefit to all of them and the community at large. Guidance for developers will be produced from time to time and will provide further details.



Playing Field Provision

4.2 Specific standards for the provision of playing fields in a rural District are difficult to apply, particularly given the balance of the population. **Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 17**, advises that Local Authorities should assess local need for recreational facilities. Work has started on assessing local needs and will be incorporated into future drafts of the Plan. Until this is done the National Playing Field Association standard on playing fields will apply.

Indoor Sports Provision

4.3 The District Council's adopted strategy "Review of the Councils Recreation Policies; August 1994" commits it to maintaining the existing indoor sports facilities at Blandford Upper School and the Leisure Centre at Gillingham. Further facilities have been built for joint use at Shaftesbury School. The District Council has also built a leisure and recreation hall at Sturminster Newton. Every encouragement will be given both to Public and State Schools in the District to improve their joint use facilities.

Countryside Recreation

4.4 The increasing importance of recreation in the countryside is recognised, given the need to diversify the local economy and the need to support the requirements of the growing "tourism and leisure market". There is obviously an overlap between provision for tourists and being used by residents and facilities provided primarily for residents gaining by being used by tourists.

The Structure Plan Strategy

4.5 The Structure Plan policies relevant to community services and recreation require the location of larger facilities to be in the main settlements in order to minimise environmental damage and the need to travel. Whilst the attraction of the countryside for recreation is recognised, this is qualified by the need to ensure this is compatible with the rural environment and accessible from the main centres of population. There are policies which reflect the need for increasing the supply of open space and for protection of existing open space.

(a) Community Facilities

COMMUNITY FACILITIES OBJECTIVE

- To maintain and improve the provision of Community facilities and services and to relate these adequately to the needs of the local population

Provision of Services

4.6 It is envisaged that specialised health care, education and other community services such as hospitals and secondary schools will be located in the towns. Other settlements have need for smaller facilities, for example first schools and surgeries for General Practitioners. The importance of these facilities to the smaller settlements is recognised.

Policy 4.1

Provision of Specialised Services

Specialised education, health and other community service developments will be located in the towns of **Blandford**, **Gillingham**, **Shaftesbury** and **Sturminster Newton**.

Education

4.7 Changes in numbers on school rolls vary from area to area and in some instances new or replacement sites are required for schools or additional land is needed for extensions to school sites. Many increases may be catered for by extending school buildings on existing school sites, in which case proposals will be expected to meet **Policy 1.8**. Land may be required for additional playing fields at Stalbridge Primary School but this has not yet been quantified. In settlements included in **Policy 4.2**; "Land Required for Educational Use", residential development may need to make provision of education facilities as set out in **paragraph 4.1** above.

Policy 4.2

Land Required for Educational Use

Sites at the following locations are reserved for educational use:

- (i) Black Lane, **Blandford** - Replacement site for Archbishop Wake First School.
- (ii) Site J; Ham, **Gillingham** - site for new primary school.

In order for residential development to be acceptable in land use planning terms, appropriate provision may be sought for the following educational facilities when they are directly related to and necessary for the development to proceed, having regard to the type, location, scale and impact of the development proposed.

- **Blandford** – extension at Milldown Middle School.
- **Gillingham** – the development of a Primary School at Site J.
- **Shaftesbury** – extension of First and Middle Schools.
- **Sturminster Newton** – extension of William Barnes Primary School.

Community Use of Educational Facilities

4.8 In the towns and villages opportunities may exist to make further use of indoor and outdoor school facilities, subject to considerations of car parking and hours of operation.

Surplus Educational Facilities

4.9 Should school buildings become surplus to educational use, consideration should be given to the possibilities of local community use of the building. Other uses will be considered if this is not the case. Redevelopment of school playing fields will only be permitted if there is excess provision of such land or if replacement areas are provided. (see **Policy 4.6**).

Community Buildings, Village Halls and Libraries

4.10 The increasing population of the larger settlements creates demand for a building to be able to provide a larger venue to serve the whole town and also to be available for a variety of uses. A proposal for such a hall is made in this plan for Gillingham. Consideration is also being given to possible sites for a larger hall in Shaftesbury. (For proposals see the Local Area Policies).

4.11 Neighbourhood halls for new residential estates are needed in particular for day-time use when joint use of schools is not available. These halls need to be well located and near to the population they are to serve and to be accessible by foot rather than increasing dependency on the car. They should be within a 1000m radius or 15 minute walk time of the majority of the population served by the hall. Work done by other authorities shows that a standard provision of a 220m² hall is required for a population of 2000. Proposals for new neighbourhood halls are made in this plan at Blandford and Shaftesbury. (For details see the Local Area Policies section).

4.12 Libraries are also important and are located in the towns whilst the rural areas are served by travelling libraries. The library in Blandford is not considered adequate for the town and Dorset County Council have acquired a site in West Street for a replacement library.

4.13 Whilst in the main, places of worship are established within existing settlements, there are some groups who wish to establish new centres of a variety of sizes, throughout the District. At present, no allocations are made. Any proposals would be judged on the basis of policies in the plan.

4.14 Where the provision of additional residential development creates a need to provide, improve or replace a community building serving the locality, the Local Planning Authority may seek contributions from developers based on the demands created by the development. Such negotiations will follow the approach outlined in **paragraph 4.1**. It is intended to establish, with town and parish councils, a hierarchy of settlements for such improvements. Where the facility is of such a scale that it provides for a wider catchment area than the settlement within which it is located, the negotiations will be based on development within that wider area.

Policy 4.3

New Community Buildings, Village Halls and Libraries

Land is reserved at West Street, **Blandford** for a library. Land is reserved for community buildings (or expansion of existing) on the following sites;

- (i) Shaftesbury Lane, **Blandford** (Site F) Neighbourhood Hall;
- (ii) **Shaftesbury** Neighbourhood Hall;
- (iii) Rear of Pigeon Close, **Blandford St Mary** Neighbourhood Hall;
- (iv) **Gillingham**; three alternative option sites for a Central Community Hall:
 - (a) Land at Chantry Fields,
 - (b) Land adj. Gillingham Leisure Centre or
 - (c) Land at redevelopment site GH9.2, "Oakwoods" Station Road South;
- (v) **Gillingham**, expansion of provision at the Cemetery Road Youth Centre.

In the above settlements (and the relevant catchment area for (iv)) in order to make proposals acceptable in land-use planning terms, appropriate provision may be sought for these facilities which are directly related to and necessary for the development to proceed, having regard to the type, location, scale and impact of the development proposed.

'Percent for Arts'

4.15 Local Authorities are being urged to make developers aware of the contribution of their proposals to the environment and to adopt the principle whereby a proportion of the capital budget for a major development should be set aside for commissioning new works (such as sculpture, tiling and paving design), to be executed as part of the development.

Policy 4.4

Percent for Arts

On sites for major development (as defined in [paragraph 1.24](#)) negotiations to seek up to one percent of the overall cost of the development may be held. Any work commissioned should be designed as an integral part of the project and should be readily viewed from a public area.

(b) Recreation

RECREATION OBJECTIVE

- **To maintain and improve the provision of all forms of indoor and outdoor recreation and to relate these adequately to the needs of the local population.**

Outdoor Sports Pitches and other Recreational Open Space

4.16 The importance that all playing pitches and other recreation facilities such as greens, courts, tracks and training areas, irrespective of ownership, contribute to towns and villages is recognised.

4.17 An assessment of existing clubs and their use of pitches is being made (see [paragraph 4.2](#)), but prior to this a standard needs to be adopted by which the provision of playing pitches and other recreational open space and proposals for changes of use of existing spaces can be assessed. It is proposed to use the National Playing Fields Association Standard of 1.6-1.8ha (4.0-4.5 acres) per 1000 population for youth and adult use. This comprises 1.2ha (3.0 acres) for minimum pitch provision and 0.4-0.6ha (1.0-1.5 acres) for greens, courts, athletic tracks and other miscellaneous provision.

4.18 It may be possible in some cases to improve and extend provision on existing sites, by ground improvements for example or by securing tenure. All weather pitches allow more matches to be played and can also be used for training. If these are floodlit then hours of use can also be extended (subject to a satisfactory assessment of the effect of the lighting on the amenity of the surrounding area). The requirement for all weather pitches in the district will be assessed.

4.19 Additional recreational areas with sports pitches are proposed in the following settlements; Blandford, Gillingham, Milborne St. Andrew and Shaftesbury. Details regarding these proposals can be found in Part 2 of the Plan. There is also a need for an improved recreation area/sports pitches at Stalbridge. Residential development may be required to make provision for recreation facilities on a basis set out in [paragraph 4.1](#) above.

4.20 The National Playing Fields Association does not include in its standards, areas for informal and casual recreation, such as, for example the land at the Milldown in Blandford. Proposals to improve public access to such areas of land are identified on the proposal maps and included within Part 2 of the Written Statement.

Policy 4.5

Provision of Outdoor Sports Pitches and other Recreational Open Space

Provision of outdoor sports pitches and other recreational open space will be assessed against the National Playing Fields Association Standard of 1.6-1.8ha (4.0-4.5 acres) per 1000 population for youth and adult use.

Sites at the following locations are reserved for outdoor sports pitches and other recreational use;

- (i) **Blandford**, for provision to the north-east of the bypass (R/2/1);
- (ii) **Gillingham**, for provision on land adjacent to the Football Club, Hardings Lane (R/15/1);
- (iii) **Shaftesbury**, for provision of facilities on land to the south of Wincombe Lane (R/37/1).

In the above settlements and their relevant catchment areas, in order to make residential development acceptable in land-use planning terms, appropriate provision may be sought for outdoor sport facilities when it is directly related to and necessary for the development to proceed, having regard to the type, location, scale and impact of the development proposed.

4.21 It is important that playing fields and other recreational spaces are protected from development. Until an assessment of local need is made, the NPFA standard in **Policy 4.5** will be used to judge whether there is an excess of sports pitches in the area. Proposals affecting sports pitches are also referred to the Sports Council for consideration.

Policy 4.6

Loss of Outdoor Sports Pitches & other Recreational Open Space

Development which would lead to the loss of public or private sports fields, other recreational open space or school playing fields will not be permitted unless:

- (i) the facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site;
- (ii) alternative recreational open space of adequate area and quality and in an appropriate location is made available;
- (iii) there is an excess of sports pitches and public open space in the area.

Indoor Sports & Leisure Provision

4.22 There are four main centres at Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton. It is intended to maintain and improve these centres and to expand the centre at Gillingham to provide for the increasing size of the town. In the rural areas, the joint use of school facilities and the use of village halls will help to provide local small scale facilities. The Local Authority has a rural sports development service to facilitate the establishment of leisure activities in particular for those who have poor access to the main centres.

Policy 4.7

Indoor Sports and Leisure Provision

- (i) The expansion of the Leisure Centre at Gillingham, on land within the existing site is proposed.

In the above settlement (and its catchment area), in order to make proposals acceptable in land-use planning terms, appropriate provision may be sought, for indoor sports facilities, when it is directly related to and necessary for the development to proceed, having regard to the type, location, scale and impact of the development proposed.

4.23 The use of redundant buildings especially in the villages for recreation provision will be supported.

4.24 The Council will support the development of new recreation facilities where they meet with the policies of the Local Plan: · by the private sector · by local voluntary groups and other organisations · in association with other developments · in partnership with other organisations, the Local Authority will provide recreation facilities where opportunity arises.

Play Areas and Amenity Open Space for Residential Estates

4.25 It is important to retain existing play areas and outdoor amenity open space for residential estates (see **Policy 4.6** Loss of Outdoor Sports Pitches and other Recreational Open Space). It is also important for new residential development that is designated for families, to provide for casual childrens' play space and equipped childrens' playgrounds, based on the scale of the development. All types of residential development should provide amenity open space.

4.26 The Local Planning Authority will seek the provision of casual/informal children's play space at the standard of the National Playing Fields Association i.e. 0.4 to 0.5 ha. per 1000 population and the provision of an equipped children's play area at the ratio of 0.2 to 0.3 ha. per 1000 population. An assessment will be made of the capacity of existing play spaces. This will be used to identify where provision is required. Where the assessment indicates there are adequate facilities in the vicinity of a proposed development then the standards will be relaxed.

4.27 In cases where there is underprovision of playspace within safe pedestrian distance (less than 200 metres for pre-school children and 400 metres for older children) the provision of such spaces, the area of which will be directly related to the size of the proposed development, will be sought. Any changes to playing space requirements resulting from work to be done on the Leisure Needs Survey will be progressed through Local Plan procedures.

4.28 Such provision is expected to be a fundamental part of the design of the housing layout and must be clearly visible from a number of dwellings and easily accessible. Where this cannot be achieved due to the physical constraints of the site, a capital contribution to the provision of an off-site facility in an acceptable location may be sought. If there is an existing equipped play area in an acceptable location serving a lower than standard population then contributions may be sought for the improvement of the facility. It may be possible for a developer, District Council and Town or Parish Council to work together to supply an equipped play area for the new development and an under-provided existing area through its grant scheme.

4.29 The National Playing Fields Association standard does not include a requirement for amenity open space. This is considered to be required for the majority of residential developments. The amount will vary according to the site and may be part of a scheme to landscape the site or conserve existing trees, hedges or habitats.

4.30 The future maintenance of ancillary play areas and amenity open space for residential estates will normally be expected to be the responsibility of Town or Parish Councils, Residents Associations or similar bodies, and a commuted sum for maintenance will be required from the developer where the play area is principally of benefit to the development itself, in accordance with **Circular 1/97 paragraph B14**.

Policy 4.8

Play Areas and Amenity Open Space for Residential Estates

Residential development will be required to provide casual childrens' play space at a ratio of 0.4 - 0.5 ha. per 1000 population and equipped play areas at a ratio of 0.2 - 0.3 ha per 1000 population (where a shortfall in existing provision is identified) as well as amenity areas, directly related to and necessary for the development, having regard to the type, location, scale and cumulative impact of the development proposed, and the physical constraints of the site.

A commuted sum for maintenance may be required where the play area is principally of benefit to the development itself. Where the physical constraints of the site do not allow for this provision, a contribution to an off site facility and a commuted sum for maintenance may be sought (where the play area is principally of benefit to the development itself).

Within new developments play areas should be within safe pedestrian distance - less than 200 metres for pre-school children and 400 metres for older children.

Countryside Recreation

4.31 It is recognised that the area is attractive for countryside recreation but as with tourism it is important that any provision of facilities does not affect the quality of the area. The District Council endorsed Dorset County Council's strategy to conserve the character, landscape and wildlife of an area whilst enhancing public enjoyment and understanding of the countryside. Whilst many forms of recreation are informal, some recreation provision does require facilities and some organised recreation requires the use of an area of land. A policy to limit the impact of such uses is required.

Policy 4.9

Countryside Recreation Proposals

Proposals for the provision of recreational and sporting facilities or use of land for recreational and sporting purposes in the countryside will be permitted, subject to:

- (i) the compatibility of the proposed facility and/or the proposed use in character, design and scale with the site and surroundings;
- (ii) the capacity of the location to accept increased numbers of visitors;
- (iii) the likely effects of the proposal on the amenity and interests of local residents and visitors;
- (iv) the re-use and adaptation of existing buildings will generally be preferable to the erection of new buildings;
- (v) the potential for access by viable public transport systems.

4.32 Walking, cycling and horse riding activities are typical of the types of recreation which are undertaken already within the District and which are generally increasing.

4.33 The Ridgeway Long Distance Walk between Avebury and Lyme Regis is way-marked and the 'Stour Valley Way' is now also way-marked as a long distance path. Part of the 'Way' uses the redundant "Somerset and Dorset" railway line owned by the County Council between Spetisbury and Blandford St. Mary. This stretch will also be capable of use by cyclists, and suitable for wheelchair users.

4.34 Encouragement will be given to setting up a network of way-marked bridleways and footpaths, linking main settlement and tourist areas, in particular creating circular routes from the long distance footpaths. A way marked cycleway on public roads has been established. and shorter links created within the main 73 mile route. The route is now being promoted as a Regional Route for recreational cycling by Sustrans.

4.35 As part of the National Cycle Network proposals, development work is underway on a proposed link between the Poole/Bournemouth conurbation and the Bristol/Bath conurbation. A major part of the route is planned to traverse the District northwards through Blandford to Gillingham with a spur to Shaftesbury. The network will connect towns and countryside and is intended not only to provide long distance recreational routes but primarily to link towns to the surrounding countryside for utility use. As work is at a preliminary stage it is not possible to show this on the Proposals Map but an indicative route is shown on the Local Plan Key Diagram. (**Figure 1**).

4.36 Walking and cycling both have benefits for tourism and the local economy. Both are sustainable ways of exploring the area and lead to requirements for accommodation and refreshments thus adding to the local economy.

4.37 Parts of this network of long distance footpaths and cycleways are proposed through some major development areas in the District's main towns. Development in these areas will increase the need for implementation and the Local Authority may seek commensurate contributions from developers to help meet construction costs.

4.38 There may be some opportunities to re-use other lengths of the disused "Somerset and Dorset" railway line as put forward in **Policy 4.11** below and these should be encouraged.

4.39 As the proposed conversions of the disused railway line, as set out in **Policy 4.10** and **Policy 4.11**, affect linear features which may form important wildlife corridors, the provisions of **Policy 1.37** "Other Landscape Features of Nature Conservation Importance" apply. Measures should be taken to provide nature trails and interpretation facilities.

Policy 4.10

Long Distance Footpaths and Cycleways ("Trailways")

A network of long distance footpaths and cycleways will be developed, maintained and improved where necessary. Proposals under this Policy are;

The Wessex Ridgeway; upgrading of status.

Conversion of Redundant Railway Line; the "Stour Valley Way" is proposed along the section between **Blandford St. Mary** and **Spetisbury**. Alternative routes over short distances will be considered if this enables use of the land.

North Dorset Cycleway; additional links with the 'loop' and links to other routes.

National Cycle Network; part of a regional link northwards from **Blandford** to **Gillingham** with a spur to **Shaftesbury**.

The development of additional tourist facilities adjacent to these routes will be approved in appropriate locations.

Policy 4.11

The Use of Redundant Railway Lines

The Local Authority will explore opportunities for the re-use of the Somerset and Dorset disused railway line for utility and recreational purposes, where it is not required for other transport purposes. Proposals which would prejudice the provision of a recreational route on redundant lines will not be permitted unless an alternative route over a short distance is provided as part of the proposals for the land.

TRANSPORTATION

Problems and Issues

Introduction

5.1 Government planning policy guidance for local transport requires that the need to travel, especially by car, is reduced. To support this approach the Local Transport Plan indicates that:

"Development funds are being used to promote alternative forms of transport, particularly within the larger towns where development is being concentrated. Traffic and speed management schemes are planned throughout the area, with priority being given to smaller towns and the A350/C13 road corridors. Throughout this area improvements to public transport are aimed at increasing accessibility to local services and shops to reduce social exclusion".



Local Objectives and Targets:

- To improve access to the area by public transport, by improving the rail service at Gillingham and developing Gillingham as a railhead and major bus/rail interchange;
- Developing a network of safe cycle routes and provision of the National Cycle Network through the area;
- Requiring all new developments to support the Local Transport Plan and Local Plan land use strategy, particularly in respect of widening travel choice;
- Reducing the impact of traffic in the towns and villages, particularly in the A350 corridor;
- New and improved village footways;
- Ensuring all villages, with 50 or more dwellings, have a daily bus service to their nearest market town;
- Improved bus links to Bournemouth, Poole and Yeovil; and
- To reduce the rate of traffic growth in the North Dorset area by 10%.

5.2 In support of the Local Transport Plan the District Plan objectives are:

TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES

- **To seek adequate and safe highways, including provision for walking, cycling and public transport.**
- **To minimise the need to travel by locating services and employment opportunities in existing local centres, thereby protecting and enhancing the viability and utility of these centres**
- **To locate development relative to the highway and public transport network**

Responsibilities

5.3 Within the District Plan area there are three levels of public responsibility for transport. The trunk roads are primarily the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Transport, and as such are managed by the Department of Transport and the Highways Agency. The "Local Highway Authority" is responsible for all local highway matters, including public transport, non-trunk road highway planning, maintenance

and improvement and traffic management measures. The District Council is responsible for the provision of public car parks.

Roads and Traffic

5.4 The road links from North Dorset towards the South East Region have improved considerably in recent years with the A303/M3, the M27 and the A31 providing dual carriageway links to London and to south Hampshire and beyond. The main road connections from North Dorset to the west, along the A31 and the A35, are improving with by-passes for most of the towns or villages either built or planned. Connections northwards to the regional and national road networks are relatively poor, creating lengthy journeys and environmental problems on existing roads. Nevertheless, the A350 and C13 will remain an important link in the north-south strategic highway network throughout the district and beyond. Further studies will be carried out to affirm the status of the route as part of a regional strategy.

Car Ownership

5.5 The number of households lacking cars in North Dorset is 18.8%¹. In Dorset as a whole the number of households lacking cars is 23.9% and in England and Wales this figure is much higher at 32.3%. The comparatively high household car ownership in North Dorset is a reflection of the scattered rural population throughout much of the District.

Traffic Problems

5.6 Traffic problems occur where the traffic flows are too great for the capacity of the road system, and this is usually reflected in congestion and accidents. Accidents tend to emerge where there are particular inadequacies such as poor visibility, conflicting movements and lack of control at junctions, lack of footways, inadequate pedestrian crossing places, narrow and winding main roads and excessive traffic volumes and speeds. On many roads, the volume of car and lorry traffic acts as a serious deterrent to other users, such as pedestrians and cyclists. These problems cannot be considered in isolation as the causes are interrelated so that even minor changes in the network can have significant repercussions. It is, therefore, important to consider the widest implications of any policy or proposal intended to benefit one section of the travelling public because of possible disadvantages to others.

5.7 Environmental problems may emerge even where roads are adequate to carry traffic flows safely, but pass through sensitive areas such as residential streets, town or village centres or past schools and playgrounds. Few of the roads in the District have been built as specialised traffic routes and many carry substantial flows of heavy goods vehicles. New by-pass roads to relieve the environmental pressures in towns and villages are costly and often raise equally serious, but different problems because of their impact on farming, forests, landscape, wildlife or archaeology.

5.8 **Table 5.1** shows the 24 hour annual average daily traffic flows (AADF) for the most heavily used roads in the Local Plan area during the 'low season' (spring and autumn). It also shows the number of medium and heavy goods vehicles using these roads. These figures are updated at regular intervals and can be seen in diagrammatic form in the Local Transport Plan or Annual Progress Reports.

Table 5.1
Two-way Traffic Flows on Major Roads in North Dorset (2001)

PRIMARY ROUTES	AADT 2001	Growth 90-01	HGV
A350 NORTH OF SHAFTESBURY	9,000	22%	750
A350 SPETISBURY	10,300	12%	650
A350 IWERNE MINSTER	3,000	-3%	400
A350 BLANDFORD BYPASS, (North)	8,000	25%	1000
A354 BLANDFORD BYPASS, (East)	17,000	33%	n/a
A354 BLANDFORD BYPASS, (S.East)	16,900	37%	1000
A354 BLANDFORD BYPASS, (South)	7,700	38%	450
A354 CANADA FARM (East of Blandford)	5,100	8%	400

A354	MILBORNE ST.ANDREW	4,900	20%	n/a
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COUNTY DISTRIBUTOR ROUTES

<u>PRIMARY ROUTES</u>		<u>AADT</u>	<u>Growth</u>	<u>HGV</u>
		<u>2001</u>	<u>90-01</u>	
A30	FIVE BRIDGES	4,800	2%	400
A30	EAST OF SHAFTESBURY	6,500	12%	n/a
A357	WEST OF SHILLINGSTONE	6,300	8%	400
B3081	WEST OF GILLINGHAM	3,700	19%	300
B3081	EAST OF GILLINGHAM	8,600	28%	600
B3081	SOUTH OF SHAFTESBURY	6,500	17%	300
B3092	MILTON ON STOUR	5,100	18%	300

OTHER ROUTES

<u>PRIMARY ROUTES</u>		<u>AADT</u>	<u>Growth</u>	<u>HGV</u>
		<u>2001</u>	<u>90-01</u>	
B3092	HINTON ST.MARY	2,900	7%	n/a
B3091	MANSTON - North West of village	1,500	0%	50
C13	STOURPAINE	5,400	26%	300

5.9 Over the period from 1990 to 2001, there has been considerable traffic growth on the main routes in rural Dorset. Traffic flows have increased by an average of 38% on main routes, with 19% growth being experienced on the A350 corridor. Heavy goods vehicles account for about 10% of traffic on these routes.

Accidents

5.10 During the three year period from 1999 to 2001 there were 11 fatal, 145 serious and 547 slight injury accidents in the District Plan area. In 2000 pedal cyclists accounted for 5.0% of all road casualties within Dorset, two wheeled motor vehicles for 6% and pedestrians for 10%.

Public Transport

5.11 **Table 5.2** shows the low use of public transport and the high use of the car for journeys to work in North Dorset. This low use of public transport and high dependence on the car is a reflection of the dispersed pattern of rural trips.

Table 5.2
Journey to Work by Mode of Travel (1991 Census)

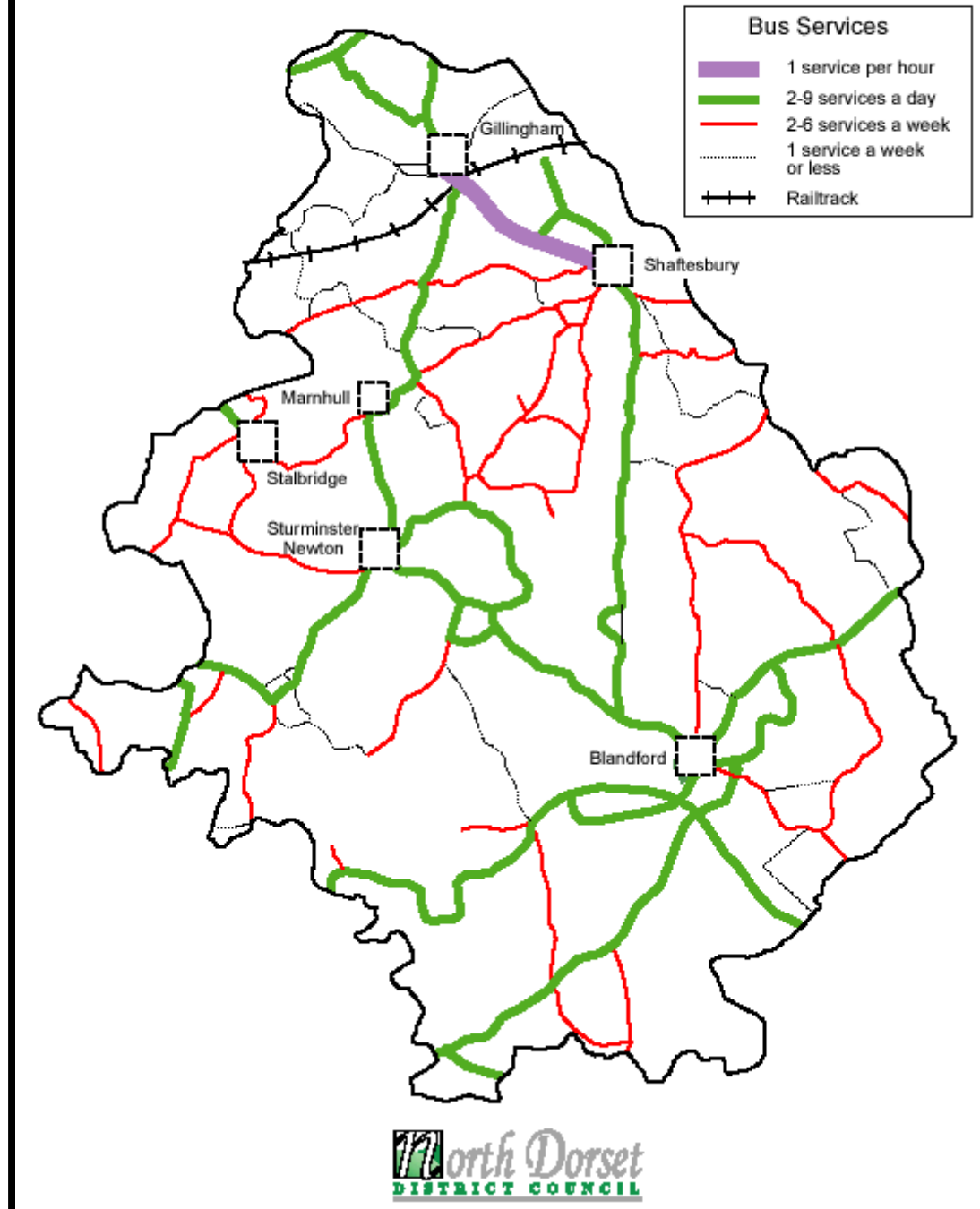
<u>Mode of Travel to work</u>	<u>District of Residence</u>	
	<u>North Dorset (%)</u>	<u>Dorset (%)</u>
Rail	0.6	0.9
Bus	1.8	5.2
Car Driver	58.1	60.9
Car Passenger	7.7	7.1
Motor Cycle	1.9	2.4
Pedal Cycle	2.7	4.1

Walk	15.4	11.3
Other	0.5	0.5
Works at Home	11.4	7.5

5.12 The deregulation of the bus service means that operators only offer services where they are commercially viable. In the smaller towns and rural areas high frequency services are unlikely to be justified by demand and would be less fuel efficient than using cars. **Figure 5** shows that at 2002 the highest frequency of bus services are concentrated upon the towns of Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton.

Figure 5

NORTH DORSET Public Transport Provision



5.13 The one remaining railway station in the District is at Gillingham, on the London to Exeter Line. The railway is significant for longer distance trips, its use being dominated by passenger services.

Alternative modes of travel

5.14 Within settlements which have experienced increased traffic the need for footways and pedestrian areas has increased. Hitherto, only very limited provision has been made for 'utility' cycling (cycling as a means of transport). However, there are more facilities for recreational use. There is an extensive network of public rights of way in the form of footpaths and bridleways. Many of these, however, do not link to form longer distance routes and others are severed by busy roads. A circular recreational

cycleway has recently been established, utilising mainly quiet country lanes throughout North Dorset. (See also **para. 4.34**).

General Policies and Proposals

5.15 The transport content of this plan has been developed around the framework of the strategic transportation proposals in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan. The District Plan elaborates on the Structure Plan proposals and includes additional proposals which the Highway Authority intends to introduce before 2011.

5.16 The specific transport proposals set out in the District Plan for public consideration include new road schemes and improvements, traffic management measures, the co-ordination of public transport services, the movement of freight, the control of car and lorry parking and the improvement of cyclist and pedestrian safety.

5.17 Although all the main highway schemes in the area are shown in the Plan, the proposals put forward for discussion are those which have not yet received planning permission. The government also advises (in Planning Policy Guidance Note 13) that debate possible under the Highways Act 1980 about trunk roads should not be duplicated in the public examination of structure and local plans. Nevertheless, trunk road schemes should be included for information in this Local Plan since they can have an important influence on development patterns, and an indication of their priority and timing will be given where this is known. Currently, however, there are no Trunk Road schemes proposed in North Dorset.

5.18 In the case of Local Authority 'strategic' road proposals included in the Structure Plan, the need for the road will already have been examined, and questions for the Local Plan will normally be limited to the detailed alignment of the road. Local Authority roads which are not strategic are not included in the Structure Plan and both the need for the road and the line of the route are matters for the Local Plan to consider.

5.19 The Local Plan contains proposals for major traffic management schemes. It does not, however, concern itself with local traffic management measures (for example, waiting restrictions or speed limits); such matters are dealt with under the relevant road traffic legislation and are not part of the statutory local plan process.

5.20 The County Council now prepares a five year Local Transport Plan (LTP) within the context of its own corporate strategy, national and regional plans and the local Government policies for transport as laid down in the 1998 White Paper "A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone". A guiding principle of Dorset's LTP is sustainability. The County also prepares an "Annual Monitoring Report", which is designed to monitor and report progress in the delivery of the LTP.

The Road Hierarchy

5.21 The Structure Plan recognises that the safe and efficient transportation of people and goods is essential to the prosperity of the area. Fundamental to this movement of traffic is the establishment of a hierarchy of roads which allows for the direction of traffic, by signing and design principles, onto roads most relevant for their journey purpose. It also assists in improving accessibility to and from the national highway network and also within the Plan area. Additionally, the establishment of a road hierarchy aids the reduction of extraneous traffic in residential and shopping areas, thereby improving the environment for the local population and assisting road safety. The hierarchy of roads in the local plan is defined as follows:

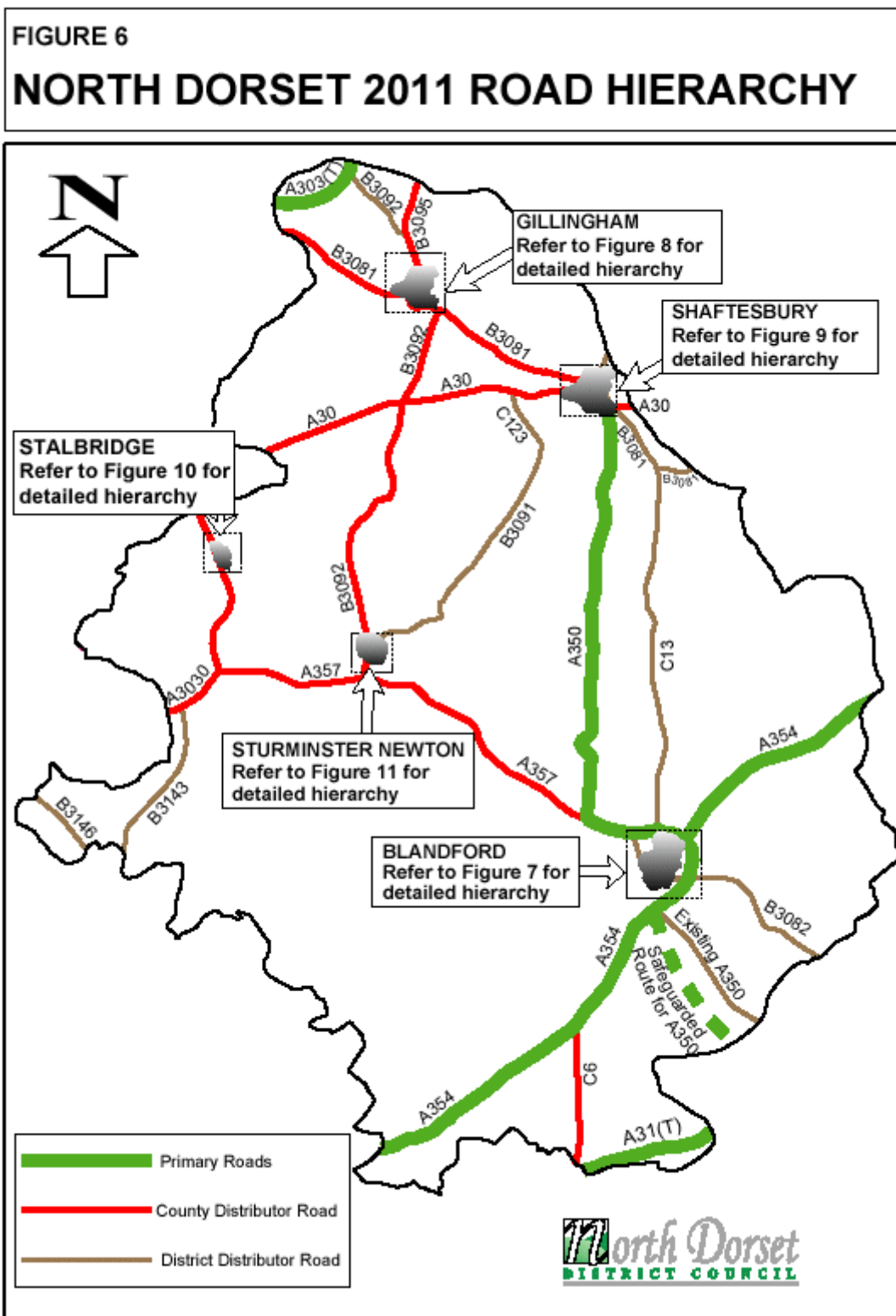
Strategic Roads

- Primary Roads
 - County Distributor Roads
- Defined nationally & in the Structure Plan

Non-Strategic Roads

- District Distributor Roads
 - Local Distributor Roads
 - Other Rural Roads
 - Access and Service Roads
- Defined in District and Borough Local Plans

5.22 In defining the Primary, County Distributor and District Distributor networks as shown in **Figure 6**, it is assumed that new roads will be substantially completed or committed for construction by the end of the plan period. However, the hierarchy will vary within the life of the Plan as new roads are completed and existing roads regraded. The policies and standards applying to the road hierarchy are defined below.



Primary Roads

5.23 Primary roads form part of the National Primary Route Network as defined by the Government. They provide the links connecting North Dorset with other parts of the country and cater for the movement of traffic into and out of the area. They also form a network for longer distant trips between

homes and major employment centres within the area. Along with some County Distributors, Primary roads form the preferred network for use by heavy goods vehicle movements.

5.24 County Distributor roads link major areas of activity, towns and commercial centres in North Dorset with each other and with the Primary Routes. Their function is to provide a network of roads on which shorter trips can be made as safely and conveniently as circumstances permit.

5.25 Structure Plan Transportation Policy V for Primary and County Distributor Roads states: "The strategic highway network, comprising Primary and County Distributor routes, will be managed to ensure maximum operational efficiency by such measures as junction improvements and by the restriction of parking, turning movements and development access".

County Distributor Roads

5.26 County Distributor roads link major areas of activity, towns and commercial centres in North Dorset with each other and with the Primary Routes. Their function is to provide a network of roads on which shorter trips can be made as safely and conveniently as circumstances permit.

Policy 5.1

Non Strategic Road Network

Where new accesses or direct accesses to new development on District Distributor Roads, Other Rural Roads and Urban Local Distributor Roads are permitted, this will require the provision of adequate visibility, parking and a satisfactory means of turning vehicles within the curtilage of the site.

District Distributor Roads

5.27 District Distributor roads are designed to connect areas of residential, shopping, industrial and commercial development with each other, within the Local Plan area. They also link to the County and Primary road networks.

Policy 5.2

New District Distributor Roads

Access to new district distributor roads will be limited to junctions with local distributor roads at selected points; there should be no frontage access or on-street parking.

New roads will be designed with regard for existing natural features, including hedgerows and trees; landscape treatment will include the planting of groups of trees, and earth mounding where appropriate.

Where a footway is provided along the road in the absence of a separate footway system in the locality, it will be divided from the carriageway by a landscaped verge designed to secure pedestrian segregation from moving vehicles.

Where facilities for cyclists are required these will be provided either by way of an additional segregated cycle track or by a widened shared use footway/cycleway, such widening to include a landscaped verge to secure pedestrian and cycle segregation from the carriageway.

Policy 5.3

Existing District Distributor Roads

On existing Distributor Roads the opportunity will be taken to close existing vehicular frontage access when development takes place and alternative means of access can be achieved.

Traffic management measures may be adopted to increase traffic capacity and safety. Such measures may include the closure of selected junctions with side roads; control of conflicting traffic movements at junctions; one - way streets; waiting restrictions; provision of service facilities in front or at the rear of groups of dwellings or shops; lay-bys at bus stops; and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

Other Rural Roads

5.28 It is recognised that non-strategic roads in rural areas, other than those defined as District Distributor Roads, are generally multi-purpose. They connect areas of residential, shopping, commercial and agricultural development with each other. They also serve as a means of direct access to properties, as a means of access to more important roads from villages and local areas and as through routes for small volumes of traffic to other villages and areas beyond the immediate locality. They also carry a variety of users, including pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, cars, agricultural traffic and lorries.

Policy 5.4

Other Rural Routes

Improvements to other rural roads will be limited to those required to improve safety for all users and, where this is possible, these will be designed so as to discourage overall increases in traffic speeds. In villages or on lengths of road which connect outlying housing to village facilities, priority will be given to improvements which enhance pedestrian safety including, where this cannot be achieved otherwise, the provision of segregated foot and cycle ways. On appropriate roads within villages, traffic management schemes may be introduced to calm the traffic.

Urban Local Distributor Roads

5.29 Urban local distributor roads distribute traffic within the urban areas. They form the main connection between residential and industrial areas and the District Distributor network; and thence to the County Distributor and Primary networks.

Policy 5.5

New Urban Local Distributor Roads

New local distributor roads will be designed for local traffic only and will be aligned to discourage extraneous traffic from entering the districts they serve. They will be planned as an integral part of the layout of new development areas, including provision for separate footway and cycleway systems and landscaping. There will be restrictions on frontage access and on-street parking.

Policy 5.6

Existing Urban Local Distributor Roads

On existing local distributor roads, restrictions on new frontage access and on-street parking will be introduced, in connection with new development. Where possible through traffic will be diverted onto roads of a higher status by means of traffic management. Roads will be adapted to serve local needs only by reduction of carriageway width, widening of footways and verges, landscape treatment and other suitable means to deter extraneous traffic and enhance the quality of the environment.

In appropriate circumstances existing local distributor roads may form part of a cycle route system.

Where downgrading of the existing district distributor roads to local distributor roads is proposed this will depend upon the completion of appropriate new roads or traffic management measures to relieve the district distributor roads of extraneous traffic.

Where roads pass through defined village envelopes, shopping centres or through Conservation Areas, exceptions to this policy may be desirable in order to meet other, more important objectives of this plan. However, these must not prejudice highway safety.

Access and Service Roads

5.30 Access and Service roads occur throughout the developed parts of the plan area. These provide connections between specific areas of development and the remainder of the highway network and include minor residential roads, cul-de-sac and industrial and commercial area service roads.

Cyclists

5.31 Cycling is a healthy, cheap and environmentally friendly means of transport. Cycle sales are consistently higher than for cars, with adult cycle sales outstripping children's by more than 4:1. In addition, cycling is widely accessible to both adults and children, and has great potential as a means of transport.

5.32 Whilst cycling represents only 3% of the total national travel, this proportion is expected to increase as congestion in urban areas and recreational cycling increases. 75% of all cycle journeys are under 8.5 km (5 miles) in length, this short trip length being a particular feature of shopping trips, journeys to school and social visits. Safety is the major barrier to increased cycling and, in countries which have more successfully planned for the bicycle, usage is higher than in the United Kingdom.

5.33 The problems and requirements of cyclists are being considered by the Planning and Highway authorities with the aim of improving facilities for cyclists and identifying suitable cycle routes. The design of road improvements will take cyclists' needs into consideration.

5.34 Development will be expected to provide cycle facilities and to contribute to the promotion of cycling.

Policy 5.7

Provision for Cyclists

In order to encourage cycling and to provide a safer environment for cyclists and pedestrians provision will be made to:

- (i) include cycling and pedestrian facilities in new highway improvements, environmental improvements and traffic management schemes;**
- (ii) provide improved cycle parking facilities at major employment centres, retail centres and recreational centres within the District;**
- (iii) improve direction signing and pedestrian and cycle access at transport interchanges; and**

(iv) identify and promote, together with adjoining authorities, long distance cycle ways linking with neighbouring facilities.

Where circumstances allow, cycle facilities will be provided alongside all new County Primary, County Distributor and District Distributor routes.

Where appropriate, cycle facilities should be incorporated within proposed development, this should allow for the provision of suitable cycleway links with the existing and proposed cycleway network. Residential and non-residential development should include secure cycle parking facilities. Non-residential development should provide 1 cycle parking space for every 5 car parking spaces.

5.35 Several cycle-foot and 'trail' ways have recently been provided in the county, and it is considered that the former railway line running from Blandford to Corfe Mullen could be suitable for a recreational 'trail way'. (See **Policy 4.10**).

Pedestrians

5.36 The majority of road users are pedestrians for one or more stages of every journey. Shorter distance journeys are likely to be made on foot and over 60% of journeys under 1.5km are made solely on foot, but pedestrian journeys rarely exceed 3km for most trip purposes. In urban areas about 30% of all journeys are made on foot.

5.37 The needs of pedestrians, particularly safety and accessibility, will be considered within all highway schemes. Priority will be given to the establishment of safe routes to school.

5.38 To encourage a suitable pattern of movement particular attention will be paid to providing a more continuous system of pedestrian routes, wherever possible closely following pedestrian desire lines, with minimum disruption by vehicular traffic routes. The pedestrian environment may be improved by paving, lighting and street furniture.

5.39 Priority will be given to providing pedestrians with a well-founded sense of security and safety on pedestrian journeys in both towns and villages. Danger to pedestrians can arise where roads are narrow and without adequate footways, and this occurs in the many settlements through which main roads pass. Where these problems have been identified, and within the limitations of the available resources, new footpaths or footways along roads will be provided, to encourage journeys to be made on foot. Specific proposals are included in the 'Local Area Policies' Chapter of this Plan.

Policy 5.8

Provision for Pedestrians

In order to encourage a sustainable pattern of movement for shorter journeys, provision will be made for a safe and attractive pedestrian network in all towns and villages.

In the construction of new roads, development and redevelopment proposals, highway or environmental improvements and traffic management proposals, safe and accessible pedestrian facilities will be provided. These will avoid severance to existing pedestrian routes and new routes will follow pedestrian desire lines as closely as possible.

All new residential, commercial and industrial developments, highway and traffic management schemes must provide for the safe and convenient passage of pedestrians wherever such movements may be expected. The pedestrian environment must be designed to be attractive for pedestrian use.

Development will be expected to make provision for the improvement of facilities for pedestrians, including:

- (i) shared and exclusive footpaths, footways and cycle ways;
- (ii) links with the existing footpath and footway network; and

(iii) extensions to the footpath and footway network.

People with a Mobility Impediment

5.40 Many people during their life cycle are mobility impaired, this includes the elderly and parents with small children. The specific requirements of those with a mobility impediment must be considered in order to provide relatively easy and direct access within residential and employment areas and to shopping, leisure and community facilities. Care must be taken in the layout of pedestrian routes and the choice of paving materials and ramps must be of a suitable gradient and sufficient width. All highway improvements and development proposals must take account of the difficulties experienced by those with a mobility impediment, in negotiating kerbs and steps. Therefore suitable ramps should be provided at crossing points.

Policy 5.9

People with a Mobility Impediment

The improvement of access and provision of facilities to ease the passage of mobility impaired people will be considered as an integral part of highway improvements, environmental improvements, traffic management schemes, and development proposals.

Traffic Management and Pedestrian Priority

Pedestrians

5.41 Pedestrianisation and pedestrian priority schemes will be considered · in town centres · along particular lengths of road that experience high levels of pedestrian activity · where environmental conditions could be substantially improved where pedestrian movement is at present deterred by the intimidatory effects of vehicular traffic and as a result of its absence or regulation, increased pedestrian use could be expected.

5.42 To be successful such schemes require satisfactory provision to be made for local and through traffic, for public transport, servicing and parking, including the needs of those with a mobility impediment, and emergency vehicles.

Policy 5.10

Traffic Management and Pedestrian Priority

In residential areas, villages, town centres, shopping areas and lengths of road that experience high levels of pedestrian activity, or where there are potentially important pedestrian flows, traffic management measures will be introduced in appropriate locations to:

- (i) encourage more pedestrian travel;**
- (ii) reduce accidents;**
- (iii) reduce conflict between pedestrians and vehicles;**
- (iv) assist access for essential vehicular traffic;**
- (v) encourage other traffic to use alternative routes; and**
- (vi) provide environmental benefits; and**
- (vii) minimise trip making by private car.**

Appropriateness of Traffic Management

5.43 Traffic management measures are an integral part of the transport strategy. They can often assist the transport network to provide the maximum benefit if they are designed to support and promote the use of appropriate routes. They will be introduced to encourage extraneous traffic onto the most suitable roads and away from areas where major conflict occurs between motor vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists. They can help to create a better environment and can be tailored specifically to help bus operators.

Policy 5.11

General Traffic Management

Traffic management schemes and direction signing will be designed to reinforce the road network policies and will take account, of the needs of the local community and the areas economy. In particular, schemes will be introduced where it is necessary to remove extraneous traffic, reduce conflict between pedestrians and cyclists and motor vehicles and to improve the environment. Prior to the implementation of safety and environmental enhancement schemes consultation will be undertaken with all interested parties.

5.44 Where there are specific proposals included in this Plan, these appear in the detailed 'Local Area' chapters.

5.45 Localised traffic problems, involving congestion, accidents or excessive speed, may arise during the life of the Local Plan. It is considered prudent for the Plan to acknowledge that the Highway Authority will, from time to time, review the operation and effectiveness of highway junctions and the links between them. Any corrective action thought necessary will be taken through the traffic regulation process if the solution is confined to the utilisation of land wholly within the existing highway.

Traffic Calming

5.46 Traffic calming has a key role to play in ensuring that a safe and equitable balance between the various road users is maintained. Accident reduction will continue to be the first priority for Local Highway Authority funded traffic calming schemes and each proposal will be assessed using the Highway Authorities 'traffic calming criteria', as set out in the Transport Policies and Programme. Consultation with the emergency services will be carried out when traffic calming proposals are being prepared.

Policy 5.12

Traffic Calming

The internal layout of all new residential developments should be designed to achieve traffic calming.

Development which would adversely impact on existing and proposed school sites will only be permitted where it can provide adequate traffic calming measures, whether on or off-site, to counter its impact and to ensure a safer school environment.

Heavy Goods Vehicles

5.47 The operation and efficiency of freight transport must be taken into account when considering policies to help reduce the impact of heavy goods vehicles on the environment. In order to reduce the effects of heavy goods vehicles on other road users, residents and property it is essential that such vehicles are directed on to the roads capable of handling them.

5.48 In gaining access to the Primary Route network, it should be recognised that certain County Distributor Roads will collect substantial flows of heavy goods vehicles from major employment centres in the Plan area. In addition to using these strategic routes heavy goods vehicles will also need to use other roads to gain access to local commercial, industrial and other premises.

Policy 5.13

Restriction on Heavy Goods Vehicles

Schemes to restrict commercial vehicle through traffic in Conservation Areas may be introduced provided that suitable alternative routes exist, and that the additional transport costs are not unreasonable.

Environment and Landscape

5.49 In some places it may be desirable to undertake improvement works on the highway not just to improve traffic conditions but also to enhance the environment.

5.50 The Highway Authority recognises the need for adequate landscaping when carrying out highway improvements in order to mitigate the environmental effect on the surrounding areas and recognises the need to restore adjoining land on completion. In many instances the landscaping will be on land within the scope of the works. However, in certain cases, there may be opportunities to carry out landscaping in advance of the highway schemes so that it is established and matured before construction works commence.

Policy 5.14

Environmental Improvements to Highways

Where environmental improvements are undertaken which affect the highway or traffic flows, consideration will be given to establishing alternative routes for traffic. Environmental improvement works can only be undertaken where they do not unreasonably inhibit the flow of traffic or cause congestion on the highway network, or where an acceptable alternative route for traffic can be provided.

Wherever practicable, landscaping works will be carried out in advance of highway improvements to ensure that the maximum environmental benefits are achieved at the earliest possible date.

Public Transport

5.51 Attractive public transport benefits passengers and can also help to restrain the increase in car traffic. Conventional bus services are the main public transport mode and are important for shopping journeys to town centres and for journeys by school children.

5.52 Deregulation of bus services and limited public funds mean that rural areas are likely to remain highly dependent upon car travel, in the short term.

5.53 Despite the high levels of car ownership many people in the District do not have the use of a private car for all their journeys, and other sections of the community never have access to private transport. For these people it is essential that an adequate, efficient and reliable public transport network is provided. Local Authorities however, have the responsibility to subsidise socially necessary bus services by competitive tendering.

5.54 To encourage the use of bus services to and from major new residential, commercial and industrial areas it is essential that the services are introduced during the early stages of their development. To

encourage operators to provide new bus services or redirect existing services into these areas, it is essential that the principal estate roads are designed to accommodate buses. Where possible, bus services will be encouraged at an early stage in the development of new areas.

Policy 5.15

Bus Services

New residential, commercial and industrial estate roads will be designed to allow for the movement and efficient operation of bus services.

5.55 It is Central Government policy to encourage unconventional forms of public transport to meet the needs of the public. Such services are not confined to rural areas and self help transport schemes are encouraged in all communities. When passenger demand is low more emphasis will be placed on the provision of unconventional transport.

5.56 The Structure Plan encourages community-managed and other innovative public transport services will be encouraged. It is important that community-managed services should not compete with commercial bus services to any significant extent. Care is needed to ensure a complementary role and provision of overall benefits to the community.

5.57 The one remaining railway station in the District at Gillingham is on the London to Exeter line. It offers a valuable service and is significant for longer distance journeys. The present rail network is an under-used resource which must be maintained and enhanced to provide an alternative to road transport. The plan seeks to safeguard land within the confines of Railtrack that may be needed for operational improvements in the future. It is not intended to restrict land that is shown to be operationally redundant, the owners having secured the approval of the office of the Rail Regulator (ORR) for its disposal.

Policy 5.16

Rail Network

Operational land associated and within the existing boundaries of the Railtrack Network will be safeguarded to allow for improvements to infrastructure and services and also to improve interchange facilities for the station at Gillingham.

Parking Standards

5.58 The strategy behind the parking standards policy is to complement both the Government's Sustainable Development Strategy and the strategy in the Local Plan. The main aims are to:

- adopt reduced requirements for parking for locations which have good access to other means of travel than the private car;
- be flexible in the requirements for off-street residential parking space and reduce or waive them where necessary in order to provide quality and affordable high density development in areas of good access to other means of travel;
- ensure parking requirements in general are kept to the operational minimum;
- not require developers to provide more spaces than they themselves wish unless there are significant road safety or traffic management implications; and
- ensure that parking provision at peripheral office, retail and similar developments is not set at high

5.59 The following parking standards policy is therefore aimed at reducing the reliance on the motor car for commuting and leisure purposes. It is also designed to promote alternative forms of transport such as bus services and the provision of footways and cycleways. The provision of any existing car parking on a site will be taken into account when determining the relevant standard to be applied to proposals for redevelopment.

Policy 5.17

Parking Standards

The level of parking to be provided should reflect the need to promote sustainable travel choices and reduce reliance on the car. Parking should not be provided above the maximum figures set out in the guidelines in the table and PPG13. Provision made should generally be the minimum necessary to serve the development and to prevent unacceptable levels of on-street parking.

Development Type	All development Town centres and within 400m of the public transport network. Max	Elsewhere Max
RESIDENTIAL		
Space per dwelling	1	2
EMPLOYMENT		
Space per employee	1	1
Space per visitor	1	1
RETAIL/COMMERCIAL		
Space per customer @ 1 per 10m ² GFA	1	1
Space per staff	1	1
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & LEISURE/RECREATION		
Space per user	1	1
Space per staff	1	1

GFA : Gross Floor Area

Note: For cycle parking standards, see **Policy 5.7**

5.60 The level of vehicle parking to be provided as part of any development needs to be no higher than that which is essential for development to function with the least use of the private car, without impediment to the local environment and the essential users of the highway in the vicinity of the development.

5.61 Consideration must be given to the consequences of not providing adequate space particularly in the context of mixed use high density development where adequate parking provision could result in vehicles parking on adjacent highways where congestion or danger could result. The standard must have due regard for the needs of the users. The demand for vehicle parking at a particular development site will be influenced by its accessibility to modes of transport other than the car and the parking restraints on the adjacent highway network.

5.62 For the purpose of providing further guidance for parking for new developments, the Local Planning Authority has also adopted the "Parking Guidelines Standards" published by Dorset County Council. These guidelines are published separately as Supplementary Planning Guidance and should be used to provide more detailed guidance in relation to the standards above.

5.63 Adequate car parking should be available for the use of the disabled, both on-street and in public and private off-street car parks. Suitable access arrangements need to be provided to and from the parking places allocated for use by the disabled and sufficient width allowed for manoeuvring of wheelchairs next to parked cars.

Policy 5.18

Parking for the Disabled

Car parking facilities will be made available for the disabled, both on- and off-street, and access will be improved where necessary. Provision for accessible disabled persons conveniences will be made in conjunction with new car parks and public buildings.

Servicing

5.64 The loading and unloading of goods across footways in main shopping streets can create traffic problems and can be inconvenient and present a danger to pedestrians. When redevelopment takes place in the commercial centres of towns, rear servicing and parking facilities may be required. It is recognised, however, that in Conservation Areas and areas of environmental sensitivity, this requirement may not be appropriate.

Policy 5.19

Servicing

Outside the Conservation Areas of historic towns and villages, new commercial development including changes of use and substantial extensions should be provided with rear servicing or, if this is not possible, allow for future provision. In Conservation Areas, rear servicing will be required only where this can be provided without detriment to the protection of the historic and architectural qualities of the area. Developments in Conservation Areas which would require servicing from the street will not be permitted if this would result in significant obstruction to vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

Development Obligations

5.65 The effect of new development on the overall transport network is cumulative. It is important that developers of schemes likely to generate significant travel demand adopt policies and practices designed to limit the use of the car. Where new development is likely to materially affect the existing movement of traffic in the vicinity or attract large volumes of additional traffic, the submission of an appropriate traffic impact assessment indicating the highway improvements and/or traffic management measures will be sought. Proposals for development or redevelopment shall incorporate such highway improvements and/or traffic management measures that may be deemed appropriate to deal satisfactorily with the traffic generated by the development.

Policy 5.20

Development Obligations

In order to ensure that development does not disadvantage the public use of existing transport facilities and to make proposals acceptable in land-use planning terms, appropriate provision may be sought for transport infrastructure which is directly related to and necessary for the development to proceed, having regard to type, location, scale and impact of the development proposed.

5.66 Many planning applications are of a size or type that would generate additional levels of trip making on adjoining transport infrastructure. In certain circumstances this additional development may necessitate changes to be made to the highway layout, public transport services or cyclist and pedestrian facilities. In such cases it is considered appropriate that the developer should provide a full

and detailed assessment of how the trips to and from the development might affect the transport network, and the measures that might be taken to provide for, or mitigate the impact of, the development related traffic.

5.67 This Assessment should be carried out according to the 'Guidelines for Traffic Impact Assessment' published by the institution of Highways and Transportation. The assessment should be carried out for the year of opening of the proposed development and for a period of 10 years beyond the opening date or the end of the Local Plan period, whichever is the greater. However, where new or modified highway infrastructure is required then the network should be tested for a period 15 years beyond the construction of that infrastructure.

Major Highway Schemes & Local Plan Improvement Programme

Introduction

5.68 This section meets the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance by providing an indication of the time scales and priorities for proposed transport infrastructure, especially major road schemes. The programme of road schemes is limited to those schemes on which the Highway Authorities intend to commence work within the Local Plan period up to 2011. Schemes which are required as prerequisites to future development are also included, the phasing of these schemes is dependent upon developer time scales and the level of developer funding attracted.

5.69 Also contained in this chapter are proposals for major road schemes, which because of their very nature cover large corridors of land and cannot be contained within the settlement boundary of any one 'Local Area'. In such cases the 'Local Area' chapters contain a cross reference to this chapter. Where it is intended to safeguard land for development this will appear as a 'safeguarded line or corridor' on the proposals map. For the sake of clarity this chapter also lists road schemes which have previously been safeguarded and are now to be abandoned. (See **para. 5.104**).

Major Road Schemes

5.70 The County schemes for the improvement of the A350 are determined at the strategic planning level. The principle of these schemes is neither questioned nor justified in this Plan, although the alignments or the land reservations are included on the Proposals Map.

Policy 5.21

Safeguarding of Land

Land will be safeguarded from development which would prejudice the implementation of the proposed highway improvement schemes indicated on the Proposals Map.

5.71 More local transport matters fall to the District Plan to consider. The approach adopted by the Plan is to propose new roads or road improvements which are necessary to reduce accidents, overcome environmental problems or, in town centres and residential areas, where the safety and freedom of movement of pedestrians, cyclists and others needs to be increased.

5.72 The road proposals in the Plan may also have the effect of easing traffic flow as a necessary part of diverting traffic away from other roads and areas. Highway improvements are proposed to accommodate the traffic likely to arise from the new development and to maintain safety and adequate environmental conditions both in the town and on the routes leading from it.

Trunk Road Programme

5.73 The Department for Transport is responsible for trunk road proposals, which are directly financed by the Government. The primary function of the trunk road network is to facilitate the movement of long distance traffic. A route management study for the A31 Trunk Road was undertaken in 2000. Potential for improvements to the A31/A35 were referred to the South West Regional Assembly for decision. No proposals are included in this Plan.

Major Scheme Proposals

5.74 Unlike many other counties where motorways and large-scale Trunk and County Road improvements have drawn traffic away from the existing network, the primary route network in Dorset has remained and is likely to remain, largely unaltered for many years despite the population growth.

5.75 Where major road schemes are proposed their purpose will support other policies within the plan. Strategic highway proposals will be progressed only where they meet the economic objectives of the plan or to ameliorate unacceptable environmental conditions caused by traffic. Major Schemes will be progressed having regard to appropriate assessment taking into account local and economic benefit and considering any wider environmental impact.

5.76 The strategic road hierarchy is established in the Structure Plan. PPG12 advises at 5.17 "All plans should include an indication of the timescale and priorities for proposed transport developments, especially major road and railway projects, and these should reflect the specific priorities and timescale set out in the local transport plan. Authorities should, however, only include proposals in plans which are firm, with a reasonable degree of certainty of proceeding within the plan period and should be identified as such in the local transport plan".

"A350 Corridor"

5.77 The A350 north-south route from the Port of Poole carries some of the highest volumes of traffic and heavy goods vehicles on the County's non-Trunk strategic highway network. The road links Poole, Blandford and Shaftesbury, and passes through a number of villages. Heavy goods vehicles create hazards and environmental problems in the town and village centres through which they must pass.

5.78 The A350 already forms part of the strategic road hierarchy in Dorset. This is established in the Structure Plan. The strategic highway network is defined as primary and county distributor routes joining towns and centres of activity or forming part of a wider regional need.

5.79 Whilst increasing emphasis is being placed on the management of travel demand this approach does not mean that road building should cease, however it is clear that the existing highway network must be managed as a near finite resource. The emphasis is now required to be on measures which will help to slow down the growth of road traffic, particularly the private car, either by obviating the need for journeys to be made at all, or by providing effective alternatives, among them walking and cycling. The objective is to seek a balanced transport system, which restrains private motoring and promotes the use of alternatives to the private car where feasible.

5.80 The future role of the A350, as a route through the district, has been raised as an issue since the National Roads Review which proposed the de trunking and future role of an alternative north – south route from the M4 to the south coast (A36/A46). The Regional Planning Guidance for the South-West (September 2001) included Table 6 that lists infrastructure improvements that will contribute to the sustainable transport systems within and between Principal Urban Areas. It identified "improvements to north-south transport links from the Bristol/Wiltshire and Bath and North East Somerset area to Southampton/Bournemouth/Poole, which address in particular the World Heritage City status of Bath".

5.81 Regionally various schemes have been completed, approved, or provisionally approved which could potentially impact on the role of the A46/A36 and adjoining routes, particularly the A350. The affected Local Highway Authorities, GOSW, the Highways Agency and English Heritage have decided that a further study is required in order to inform the Regional Assembly of any changes it might need to consider to the Regional Transport Strategy. This Study is to be called "The Bristol/Bath to South Coast Study".

5.82 One of our core objectives of the study therefore remains the review of the role of the A36, A46 and A350. Regional confirmation of the role and purpose of these routes is essential to inform the pending Structure Plan review and its status in this plan. The future case for and standard of any improvements or alterations to the A350 will be dependent on its future role. Whatever the outcome of the North-South roads review as it affects the A350/C13 routes, it is important that relief for settlements from the impact of locally generated traffic is progressed. Examples where relief, (by road improvements) of the impact of local traffic are required would be the villages south of Blandford. (Charlton Marshall/Spetisbury) and also the eastern outskirts of Shaftesbury/Cann.

5.83 It is considered that the safeguarding of land for schemes identified as long term proposals, pending reappraisal of a route strategy within the regional context, remains valid in the context of the government advice. The A350 passes through the centre of Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall, consequently there are problems with congestion, noise pollution, accidents and severance. The regional study will need to

address these issues and suggest means of reducing traffic volumes through the villages to make an alternative to by-pass viable.

5.84 Implementation of a bypass would improve safety and accessibility on the existing road and improve the village environment through reduced severance. Future considerations would necessarily be assessed against other impacts, identified in the plan, including those on the natural environment.

5.85 The A350 Shaftesbury outer Bypass is a safeguarded route under Structure Plan Transportation Policy Y. Although it is not intended to build the route in the Plan Period to 2011, it is however considered useful to safeguard the route, as it is adjacent to the major development area East of Shaftesbury. This safeguarding policy is therefore also endorsed in this Local Plan to keep conformity between Plans.

More details and a more specific policy can also be found in the Shaftesbury Chapter in Part 2 of the Written Statement. Its future role will also be subject to review after the results of the Bristol/Bath to South Coast Study are known.

5.86 While it remains the intention to safeguard the route of a Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall Bypass and Outer Shaftesbury Bypass, proposed improvements between Blandford and Shaftesbury will be on a smaller scale than previously envisaged. Previous proposals were subject to substantial environmental objections. In total, the proposed improvements to the A350 corridor will seek to reduce the adverse traffic impacts on settlements along the corridor, control the rate of traffic growth and improve road safety.

5.87 The study carried out by Ove Arup Consultants, on behalf of Dorset County Council, indicated positive social and transport benefits for both schemes, but confirmed the substantial environmental objections to the Melbury Abbas Bypass element.

5.88 Nevertheless, the A350 between Blandford and Shaftesbury, together with the villages on the adjacent minor roads suffer from traffic related problems. In consideration of the above issues the Structure Plan proposes improvements on the C13/A350 between Blandford and Shaftesbury which seek to reduce the adverse traffic impacts on settlements along the corridor, control the rate of traffic growth and improve road safety.

5.89 Structure Plan Transportation Policy X, therefore states that there will be; "Improvements to the C13 between Blandford and Shaftesbury" and "Associated Traffic Management Measures on the existing A350". On the C13 it is proposed to introduce "variable message" signing at Spread Eagle Hill (i.e. similar to the existing scheme at Cann on the A350). For the A350, it is proposed to introduce electronic speed limit repeater signs in order to calm traffic speeds on this route and make them safer. As these proposals do not at present require the necessity to use land beyond the edge of the adopted highway, there is no longer the need for them to form specific land – use proposals of this Local Plan. However in view of the impact of any proposal on traffic on the A350, **Policy 5.22**, which safeguards land for possible future bypasses, will need to be viewed, as part of a comprehensive package for the A350 corridor through the District. **Policy 5.22** therefore will not be treated in isolation from the monitoring of other A350 traffic management schemes. This safeguarding policy too, will need to be reviewed as soon as further Regional and Structure Plan studies are carried out.

Policy 5.22

The A350 Corridor

Land is identified and will be safeguarded from development which would prejudice the implementation of both a:

- **Spetisbury, Charlton Marshall Bypass and**
- **Shaftesbury Outer Bypass.**

County Distributor Routes

5.90 On many roads the volume of car and lorry traffic acts as a serious deterrent to pedestrians and cyclists. Several of the County Distributor Routes in the District are inadequate, not only in terms of width

and alignment, but also in terms of the environmental traffic problems caused to nearby residents. Of particular concern are the A357 Blandford/ Stalbridge route and the B3092 Sturminster Newton/ Gillingham Route.

Medium / Minor Safety Schemes

5.91 The Highway Authority selects a programme annually of medium / minor road improvements from a comprehensive list of schemes. In addition, new development often necessitates the provision of new sections of highway, or improvements to the existing network.

5.92 The following highway schemes which do not fall within any of the identified settlement areas, are proposed within the Plan period.

(i) A357 **Durweston Cross**

5.93 Visibility at the junction of the A357 with Milton Lane and Water Lane at Durweston is inadequate and will require an improvement to increase highway safety.

Policy 5.23

A357 Durweston Cross

A visibility improvement will be carried out to the junction of the A357 with Milton Lane and Water Lane at Durweston.

(ii) B3092 Primrose Hill/ Hunger Hill, **East Stour**

5.94 To increase highway safety it is proposed to realign the B3092 between Primrose Hill and Hunger Hill, East Stour and to provide a footway.

Policy 5.24

B3092 Primrose Hill/Hunger Hill, East Stour.

A carriageway realignment, including the provision of a footway will be carried out along the B3092 between Primrose Hill and Hunger Hill, East Stour.

(iii) A354/C6 Junction north of **Winterborne Whitechurch**

5.95 To improve the presently inadequate visibility and to increase highway safety a realignment of the A354/ C6 junction, to the north of Winterborne Whitechurch, will be carried out.

Policy 5.25

A354/C6 Junction north of Winterborne Whitechurch

A realignment of the junction of the A354 with the C6 will be carried out.

(iv) A30/C21 Stour Hill Cross Roads

5.96 A visibility improvement is required to increase highway safety at the junction of the A30 with the C21 at Stour Hill.

Policy 5.26**A30/C21 Stour Hill Cross Roads**

A visibility improvement will be carried out at the junction of the A30 with the C21 at Stour Hill.

(v) A350 Blandford by-pass/Mildown Road.

5.97 Visibility improvement and revised traffic management is required to increase highway safety at the junction of the A350 Blandford by-pass and Mildown Road.

Policy 5.27**A350 Blandford by-pass/Mildown Road**

A realignment of the A350 Blandford by-pass/ Mildown Road junction will be carried out through the provision of a roundabout.

(vi) A30/B3092 Cross Road Junction at East Stour.

5.98 Visibility improvement and revised traffic management is required to increase highway safety at the cross road junction of the A30 with the B3092 at East Stour.

Policy 5.28**A30/B3092 Cross Road Junction at East Stour**

A realignment of the A30/B3092 cross road at East Stour will be carried out.

(vii) A354/C78 junction at Thornicombe.

5.99 Visibility improvement and revised traffic management is required to increase highway safety at the junction of the C78 with the A354 at Thornicombe.

Policy 5.29**A354/C78 junction at Thornicombe**

A realignment of the A354/ C78 cross road at Thornicombe will be carried out.

(viii) B3092 Madjeston Bends.

5.100 A visibility improvement is required at the Madjeston Bends on the B3092 to increase highway safety.

Policy 5.30

B3092 Madjeston Bends

A visibility improvement and realignment will be carried out at the Madjeston Bends on the B3092.

(ix) B3092 Stour Provost Crossroads.

5.101 A visibility improvement is required at the Stour Provost Crossroads on the B3092 to increase highway safety.

Policy 5.31

B3092 Stour Provost Crossroads

A visibility improvement and realignment will be carried out at the Stour Provost Crossroads on the B3092.

(x) A357 Poolestown Bends.

5.102 A visibility improvement is required at the Poolestown Bends on the A357 to increase highway safety.

Policy 5.32

A357 Poolestown Bends

A visibility improvement and realignment will be carried out at the Poolestown Bends on the A357.

(xi) B3092 Hinton St Mary – Sturminster Newton

5.103 A new footway and measures to improve safety for pedestrians (particularly school children) and cyclists between Hinton St Mary and Sturminster Newton are needed.

Policy 5.33

B3092 Hinton St Mary – Sturminster Newton Footway/Traffic Management measures.

Provision of a footway link between Hinton St Mary and Sturminster Newton along the B3092 and consideration of measures to improve safety and to assist cyclists and other vulnerable road users.

Deleted Road Schemes

5.104 The following road schemes which appeared as proposals in the Gillingham Local Plan (1986) and the Shaftesbury Town Local Plan (1990) and the North Dorset Local Plan (Deposit Draft) 1996 have been deleted and are no longer proposed.

Policy 5.34

Deleted Road Schemes

The following road schemes are no longer proposed;

- (i) Improvement of the sight line to the east of School Road/ High Street junction, **Gillingham**;
- (ii) Highway control line along Tomlins Lane between Hyde Road and Orchard Road, **Gillingham**;
- (iii) Junction improvement of High Street with Bimport (B3091) and Tout Hill, **Shaftesbury**;
- (iv) Improvement of southern junction of Laneside Road with Grosvenor Road, **Shaftesbury**.
- (v) Bridge crossing of Christys Lane to provide segregated crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and a footway/cycleway linking this facility to Coppice Street, **Shaftesbury**;
- (vi) A highway control line along Wincombe Lane adjacent to Jubilee Cottage, **Shaftesbury**.

All other road schemes requiring planning permission, not included in this Plan or in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan, are withdrawn.

5.105 The District Plan does not concern itself with local traffic management measures (for example, waiting restrictions or speed limits), such matters are dealt with under the relevant road traffic legislation and are not part of the statutory local plan process.

Redundant Railway Routes

5.106 The Structure Plan contains a policy (Transportation Policy Q) specifying that in the future use of redundant railway routes, first priority will be given to their use for transport purposes. It is proposed that the redundant Dorset and Somerset railway line, between Blandford St Mary and the District boundary south of Spetisbury, be reserved for a trailway open to walkers, horseriders and cyclists.

5.107 The conversion of the disused 'Somerset and Dorset' railway line to a long distance trailway is proposed under **Policy 4.11**.

Local Plan Highway Programme

Major Scheme Programme

Scheme	Description	Time-scale
C13/A350 Blandford - Shaftesbury Improvements/ Traffic management	Structure Plan Scheme	2nd priority in major scheme programme
A350 Charlton Marshall/Spetisbury/ Sturminster Marshall by-pass	Structure Plan Scheme	2nd priority in major scheme programme

Medium/ Minor Scheme Programme

Scheme	Description	Time Scale	Reference
A357 Durweston Cross	Visibility Improvement	short-term	5.23
		short-term	5.24

B3092 Primrose Hill/ Hunger Hill, East Stour	Footway provision & carriageway realignment		
B3091 Coppice Street/St. Martins Road/ Salisbury Street, Shaftesbury	Scheme Reassessment	medium-term	p37.6.14
A354/ C6 north of Winterborne Whitechurch	Junction Improvement	medium-term	5.25
A30/ C21 Stour Hill Cross-Roads	Junction visibility improvement	long-term	5.26
A30 Long Cross west of Shaftesbury	Footway provision	long-term	SB16(i)
A30/ B3081 Link Road, Enmore Green	Link Road	long-term	SB17
B3092 Peacemarsh, Gillingham	Footway provision	short-term	GH6
A350 Blandford by-pass/Milldown Road	Junction improvement/roundabout	long-term	5.27
A30/B3092 Cross Road junction at East Stour	Junction improvement	long-term	5.28
A354/C78 junction at Thornicombe	Junction improvement	medium-term	5.29
B3092 Madjeston Bends	Realignment	long-term	5.30
B3092 Stour Provost Crossroads	Realignment	long-term	5.31
A357 Poolestown bends	Realignment	long-term	5.32
B3143 North of Kings Stag Cross	Footway	short-term	KS1
A354 Pimperne – Blandford (Church Road)	Cycletrack/footway	medium-term	PM1
A354 Pimperne	Footway	medium-term	PM2
The Knapp, Shaftesbury	Footway	medium-term	SB16(ii)
B3092 Hinton St Mary – Sturminster Newton	Footway/Traffic Management Measures	medium-term	5.33
C13 Higher Blandford Road	Cycletrack	Short-term	BL9

Medium/ Minor Scheme Programme Development Schemes

Scheme	Description	Development Link	Reference
C13 Shaftesbury Lane, Blandford	Cycle lane	Housing H/2/12 Employment E/2/6	BL10
Eastern Blandford walkway/cycleway	Walkway/Cycleway	Housing H/2/12 Employment E/2/6	BL13
C13 Shaftesbury Lane, Blandford	Carriageway widening, footway provision & junction improvement	Housing H/2/12 Employment E/2/6	BL15
Clump Farm & Blandford Heights Industrial Estate Link Road, Blandford	Link Road	Employment E/2/2	BL16
C99 Okeford Fitzpaine	Access road and improvement to C99	Employment E/34/1	OF1
A30 Christys Lane/ Mampitts Road, Shaftesbury	Road closure of Mampitts Road & new access link to A30 via Pound Lane	Housing H/37/1	SB9
Traffic management & environmental improvements, Sturminster Newton	Speed reduction & environmental enhancement measures	Housing H/47/2 & H/47/3	SN2, and SN11

B3091 - B3092 Station Road to
Bath Road Link, **Sturminster**
Newton

Link road & pedestrian priority
measures

Livestock Market
re-development

SN 7/8

Footnote:

1 1991 Census

PART 2 - LOCAL AREA POLICIES

BLANDFORD FORUM & BLANDFORD ST. MARY

Inset Plan No. 2

2.1. Introduction

Previous Plans for the Town

2.1.1 A non Statutory Plan was prepared during the 1970's and was then reviewed as the Blandford Town Plan Revision in the late 1980's. The various stages reached during the preparation programme were as follows;

Future Policies for Blandford (Consultative Document)	April 1975
Blandford District Plan - non statutory	July 1977
Blandford Town Plan Revision - Draft Project Brief	February 1986
Blandford Town Plan Revision	June 1988



2.1.2 This Plan Inset is based primarily on the previously adopted Town Plan Revision.

Overall Aims for Blandford

General Statement of Planning Policy

2.1.3 Blandford is the largest town in the district. It is located on the River Stour where the river runs through a gap in the Dorset Downs. To the south of the river is the smaller settlement of Blandford St. Mary, where the residential area clusters around the bridge and the Brewery.

2.1.4 The River Stour and its floodplain restricts growth to the west of the town. The surrounding area to the north-east and west falls within the Dorset Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. To the south the land was designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value in the 1958 Development Plan.

2.1.5 Blandford is well placed for development as it is on the A350 and A354 giving links to the S.E. Dorset conurbation, Dorchester and Salisbury. Improvements to the A350 and C13 to Shaftesbury will ease access to the railway station at Gillingham. These locational advantages however need to be considered against the landscape constraints.

2.1.6 Despite these landscape constraints, Blandford has a continuing role to play as a town for controlled housing and economic development and it has therefore been selected under the Local Plan Strategy as a town for major growth on the main integrated transport network. Developments defined as "major" may be permitted within the defined Settlement Boundary.

2.1.7 In order to allow for the expansion of the town, additional provision of community infrastructure is required.

Developers may be asked to contribute financially towards this provision, to enable development to proceed in accordance with advice currently contained in Circular 1/97 Planning Obligations. Additional information is given in Chapter 4 of the Local Plan and in a Planning Advice Note. Costs of improvements which are required to meet the needs of the present population should be borne by the existing managing authorities.

2.1.8 To the east of Blandford is the Army Camp. In the spring of 1993 it was formally announced that Blandford Camp would be enlarged to allow for the amalgamation of Catterick Camp Training School with Blandford Signals Training School. Construction at the camp is underway. This extension of the camp may exert development pressure on the town and the development will be closely monitored to ensure co-ordination with overall development of the Town Plan area.

Policy BL1

(i) All development in **Blandford** should respect the character of the town and the surrounding landscape of the Dorset Downs and the Cranborne Chase.

(ii) In accordance with the overall Local Plan strategy **Blandford** will act as a main centre for co-ordinated population, housing, employment growth and the development of major community services to support this growth.

2.2. The Environment

Environmental Capacity of the Town

2.2.1 Looking ahead towards the end of the Plan period the Local Authority has begun looking at the environmental constraints to the eventual spread of development of Blandford. These constraints are closely linked to the aim of promoting sustainable development and are sometimes described as being the "environmental capacity" of the development of a settlement. Each settlement may have a defined physical limit beyond which major environmental harm may be caused. This is not to say that these constraints should be seen as an absolute for long term planning. However they should be seen as a monitoring device so that if there is a requirement to expand a settlement significantly in the future, it may be done in a way which will minimise environmental impact, reduce the reliance on the motor car and bring social and economic benefits, particularly to town centre community and retail facilities.

2.2.2 The latter issue is an important consideration to be assessed when defining possible limits to the spread of development of Blandford. At present the layout of town centre retailing and community facilities is constrained by a development pattern based on a historic medieval structure. This is a substantial barrier to finding sufficient space for expansion of town centre facilities which are commensurate with the needs of a large increase in population. It is felt that Blandford town centre should be analysed carefully to consider what scope there may be for continued major expansion. The indications are at present that continued major expansion may not be a realistic option beyond 2011, given the assessment factors below;

- The capacity of the highway network through the town to accommodate any further growth in traffic.
- The availability of sufficient land in or close to town centres which will allow for expansion of retailing and community facilities to serve an increase in population.
- The availability of employment land within walking distance of residential areas.
- A distance beyond which people are not likely to walk or cycle into the town centre (assessed to be approximately 1.6km (1 mile), equivalent to a 20/30 minute walk). Thus the use of the motor car is likely to be increased when housing developments are situated beyond this distance.
- The ability of the local road network to prove attractive for the operation of a regular frequency bus link to the town centre.
- The topographical constraints which exist (e.g. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, small gaps with outlying settlements, hill slopes, by-passes etc) which tend to signify a natural limit to development.

2.2.3 The growth of Blandford is naturally restricted by the River Stour. The Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty also impose restrictions on its spread. The bypass to the east and north of the town has been seen as another limit to the growth of the town. In terms of the size of the town it is approximately one mile from the bypass to the town centre. Some land not identified for development but within the bypass, has policies to protect it, for example land north of the Milldown which is in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Conservation Area

2.2.4 In the mid 1960's the Council for British Archaeology listed 51 towns in England, Scotland and Wales which were of such national architectural and historical interest that they proposed planning control for them should be vested in a Government Ministry. One of these towns was Blandford. Although the proposal was never enacted, the Civic Amenities Act (1967) allowed Local Authorities to designate Areas of Architectural or Historic Interest (Conservation Areas). Blandford was automatically one of the first candidates for designation and an area was designated in 1972.

2.2.5 In order to assess the potential for conservation, the then Local Planning Authority, Dorset County Council, authorised the preparation of a special study by Donald W. Insall and Associates. The Insall Report (1970) "Blandford Forum; Conserve and Enhance" has been instrumental in subsequently setting the scene for conservation action in the town.

2.2.6 Since the expansion of the Conservation Area in 1990, into areas which went beyond the study area of the Insall Report, it is now desirable to divide the overall Area into "sub-areas". These sub-areas define specific zones which have a coherent pattern to them, such as the later (post railway) Victorian suburbs and the more spacious

tree-lined area of the Milldown Road. Each sub-area needs specific treatment not only to control development but also to encourage enhancement schemes.

Sub-areas within the Conservation Area

2.2.7 References are made in the following section to the Insall Report by the note (**Insall p-**) relating to the relevant page number.

(i) The Georgian Town Centre

2.2.8 *"Blandford, whose town core was rebuilt in one period 1731 - 1760, is the most complete and cohesive surviving example of a Georgian country town in England"* (**Insall p46**). This sub-area covers all the area affected by the 1731 fire which was subsequently rebuilt in addition to some peripheral areas which survived the fire. Within the area are eight Grade I Listed Buildings and six Grade II* buildings.

2.2.9 The principal building materials are handmade plain clay tiles with stone or slate verges; brickwork, with headers for patterning and colour, for domestic properties and stone for the public buildings; ashlar or rusticated quoins; white painted sash windows. The buildings are designed in architectural styles typical for the period, carefully proportioned and decorated to achieve a particular effect. Many of the principal buildings are attributed to local architects and builders the Bastard Brothers.

2.2.10 The local Civic Society, published a Shopfront Policy Guide in the late 1980's. This illustrates the guiding principles in the design of a new shopfront or alteration of an existing shopfront to respect the traditional character of the Georgian Town Centre.

(ii) The Market Place and Church Environs

2.2.11 *"The Market Place was designed by the Bastard Brothers after the 1731 fire, as Blandford's 'piece-de resistance'".* At the west end of the Market Place is the finest group of street facades in Blandford. The Market Place is a brilliant master piece in which every element has its part" (**Insall p20**) The Market Place and surrounding area contains the greatest concentration of Grade I and Grade II* buildings in the town. The Insall report defined this sub-area as "An Area of National Importance" (**Insall p11**) because of its outstanding architectural and historic qualities.

2.2.12 A Conservation Area Partnership with English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund has been established to allow for the proper preservation and enhancement of the town centre.

2.2.13 The Church, with its cupola and tower, occupies a conspicuous place in the Blandford townscape and was deliberately planned by the Bastard brothers to provide a focal point at the eastern end of the Market Place. All new development throughout the town should respect the prominence of the tower within Blandford's skyline.

(iii) Land South of East Street

2.2.14 The District Council published and approved a design and development brief for this area in 1992. (Central Area/Riverside; Design/Development Brief). This Brief gives guidance on design and uses for new development in the area.

2.2.15 The above guidance is endorsed by this Local Plan Inset.

(iv) Victorian and Edwardian suburbs

2.2.16 This sub-area, characterised by a strong grid pattern of streets, is predominantly to the north and north east of the town centre. It was developed in the main after the coming of the railway in the 1860's. The original development saw a tight-knit pattern emerging with dwellings and business premises built either on or close to the edge of the highway. Later development in Edwardian times followed more spacious standards with dwellings set back from the highway within garden areas.

2.2.17 A greater variety of building styles and materials is apparent here but there is still a constant theme of scale and use of materials. Breaking this scale, but still in keeping, are some deliberately planned areas such as Nordon House, the nearby "estate" cottages, the Barnes Homes and some well designed Local Authority housing in King's Road. The use of slate as a roofing material now predominates and although brick is commonly used there are some interesting examples of light brick band courses and decorative tiling. In such a tight-knit area, it is important to retain as many garden spaces and avenue trees as possible.

(v) The Milldown Road

2.2.18 Containing predominantly low density housing in large plots, two schools with playing fields, the Hospital and the Town Recreation Ground, this sub-area is important in relation to the northern setting of Blandford providing a tree-lined approach to the town. Most development dates from post 1919 and while not outstanding in

architectural terms, is distinguished enough in pleasant sylvan surroundings. The spaciousness of the local environmental character should be respected in future development proposals.

(vi) Blandford St. Mary and Lower Bryanston

2.2.19 "Blandford St. Mary Georgian buildings comprise an area of very high townscape value. Blandford St. Mary was once called "Blandford Parva". The bridge unites Blandford Forum with Blandford St. Mary, an integral part of a larger Blandford Forum". (Insall p46). Blandford St. Mary and Lower Bryanston were affected by the 1731 fire and many of the properties were rebuilt in the same distinctive Blandford/Bastard Georgian style. The village, now bypassed, is relatively quiet and retains a small-scale atmosphere of buildings around a village green. Any new development should respect this character.

(vii) The Brewery and "Stour Park"

2.2.20 This sub-area was one of the additions to the Conservation Area in 1990. The main objective behind the addition was to ensure that the important setting of Blandford was not adversely affected by further unsympathetic development not only on the Brewery site but also within the proposed Stour Park Business Area. (Site C), E/2/5. At the same time, protection was afforded to the remaining C18th/19th buildings between the Bournemouth Road and the Brewery.

2.2.21 It should be stressed that the District Council does not wish to thwart the commercial aspirations of either the Brewery company or of any future company operating from the Stour Park Business area and it is hoped that high standards of building design can be promoted whilst at the same time allowing valuable employment generating development. There is also the possibility that the Brewery company could promote the "heritage" site of their brewing business, by attracting tourists to visit the older buildings dating from the turn of the century. Any new development in this area should respect the open character of the Stour Meadows and also not harm important views of Blandford Church and town centre.

(viii) The River Stour Meadows¹

2.2.22 "The intensely urban quality of the town centre is marvellously enhanced by the rural beauty of Bryanston Park, the River Stour and Bryanston Woods. The river is one of Blandford's greatest but most underplayed assets . . . this is a delightful area full of opportunities for improvement and public enjoyment". (Insall p35)

2.2.23 The District Council has created footpaths/cycleways giving access across and alongside the River Stour. There may also be the possibility of allowing limited public access for low key recreational use to areas such as the Crown Meadows.

(ix) The Cliff (Bryanston Woods)

2.2.24 "Sweeping pastures stretch up from the river beyond (Blandford bridge) from whose far bank rise steeply and gloriously Bryanston Woods. Bryanston Woods are a national heritage which must never be destroyed". (Insall p 17 and 67). These Woods on the steep bank known as The Cliff form a perfect backdrop to the setting of the town, when viewed from the east. Development should not mask important views of this wooded ridge.

Policy BL2

Development will only be approved within the Blandford Forum, Bryanston and Blandford St. Mary Conservation Area if the proposal is in keeping with the intrinsic character of each environmental sub-area.

2.2.25 As a part of the Conservation Area Partnership a traffic management scheme has been agreed which will enhance the aesthetic qualities of the town centre and improve access and safety for pedestrians.

2.3. Housing

Dwelling Unit Allocation

2.3.1 Policy 2.3 allocates about 1,050 dwellings to the town to be built between 1994 and 2011. This amounts to a construction rate of 62 dwellings per annum. It is now over 7 years since the start of the Plan period and a considerable amount of development has taken place or is committed through the grant of planning permission. **Table 2.1** below shows the breakdown of Blandford's housing allocation at 31.03.01

2.3.2 Components of Blandford housing allocation at 31.03.00

Table 2.1 Components of Blandford's Housing Allocation at 31.03.01	Units
Plan Target	1050

Dwellings built 1994 – 2001	537
Dwellings with outstanding permission or under construction*	270
Allocated sites	170 (min)
Infill/windfall allowance	120
Total	1097
Over/under supply	+47

*Figures adjusted to allow for likely take up.

2.3.3 Government policy encourages Local Planning Authorities to manage the release of housing land with the aim of securing the development of previously developed (brownfield) sites before the release of greenfield land. To this end, the Plan period has been divided into three phases of development and sites allocated accordingly.

2.3.4 **Table 2.2** below gives a breakdown of the anticipated level of development in each phase and the expected proportion of brownfield development within Blandford. A relatively high proportion of brownfield development was achieved in the first phase due to a high take-up of previous commitments. The rate is expected to decline during phases 2 and 3 as the allocated sites come on stream, but the situation will be monitored carefully. If towards the end of Phase 2 it is shown that a higher than expected rate of brownfield development has occurred, the release of the last phase of greenfield land off Shaftesbury Lane may need to be reconsidered.

2.3.5 Targets for affordable housing are set out in **Policy 2.4**. These may be varied in the light of the results of any future Housing Needs Survey undertaken during the Plan period. Any variations will be published for consultation in the form of Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Table 2.2	Blandford Phasing programme			
Phase	Dwells built or expected at 31.03.01	Average annual rate	% Brownfield	Average annual rate
1. 1994 - 2000	450	75	41	31
2. 2000 – 2006	425	71	31	22
3. 2006 – 2011	220	44	35	15
1994 – 2011	1095*	64	34	22
Plan aim	About 1050	62	36	22

*This figure represents a 4.3% over-supply on the original planned total of 1050 and should not be seen as the base figure for dwelling supply in the town.

Sites allocated for Development

2.3.6 Policy 2.4 allocates the following sites (of 5 or more dwellings) for development in the Plan period up to 2011:

- (i) Site D Off Langton Road (60 dwellings)
- (ii) Site F Off Shaftesbury Lane (260 dwellings)

2.3.7 Another site (site B) at Blandford St Mary is already under construction and so is no longer allocated in this Plan.

2.3.8 Site D is a relatively small site which is programmed for development during Phase 2. Planning consent has recently been approved in principle for this development.

2.3.9 Part of Site F has recently received outline planning permission for development. The whole of the site is expected to be developed throughout Phases 2 and 3 of the Plan period (i.e. up to 2011). Approval of the later phase will be subject to it being shown that the development is not impeding the development of brownfield sites in the town.

Should brownfield development be maintained at a higher than expected rate during Phase 2, so leading to a situation where the overall dwelling allocation for Blandford may be significantly exceeded, the release of the last phase of Site F may need to be reconsidered.

Site D (H/2/2) Off Langton Road (Area 3.4ha; Dwellings 60)

This site adjoins the bypass and rises to the north east. It was originally examined in Blandford Town Plan Revision 1988. The following requirements should be met through development of this site:

- Footway/cycleway links to the town will be required.
- Langton Road forms part of the North Dorset Cycleway and may be part of Route 25 of the National Cycle Network.
- The impact of the development on the junction of Langton Road/East Street will need to be assessed (See **Policy BL16**).
- In designing the layout, amenity areas and landscaping the proximity of the dwellings on Riverside Road and Stour Road, the bypass and the elevation of the site when viewed from the Stour Meadows need to be considered. (See also **Policy 4.8**)
- The allocation of 60 dwellings on this site reflects the restrictions due to topography, access and its location on the edge of the town and its location in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (see **Policy 1.32** Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty).
- Provision of a proportion of the development as affordable homes (possibly specialised housing for elderly/single people due to proximity to town centre.) (See **Policies 2.4** and **2.13**), low cost market homes.
- Traffic calming on Langton Road will be required, in particular to allow for safe crossing of the road in the vicinity of the existing children's play area.
- Contributions may be sought for the following facilities: Extension of Milldown Middle School and Sports Pitches north of the bypass under **Policy 4.2** and **Policy 4.5**. See also the Council's Planning Guidance Note.

Policy BL3

This site will be released for development for about 60 dwellings subject to:

(i) The design and layout of the properties being such that the resulting noise exposure of any dwelling which may be erected will be less than those specified for Noise Exposure Category A (NEC"A") for road traffic, as defined in Annex 1 of PPG 24. Where the noise exposure of any dwelling is likely to exceed these values, due regard will be taken of the advice given in PPG 24 when determining any application for development.

Site F (H/2/3) Off Shaftesbury Lane and Salisbury Road (Total Area 11.3ha Dwellings 330).

This site is on high ground adjoining the bypass and within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (see **Policy 1.32**). The following requirements should be met through development of this site:

- Landscaping will be required adjoining the bypass to act as a visual screen and as a noise buffer in addition to other amenity and play areas (**Policy 4.8**)
- Access to the site will be off Salisbury Road and Shaftesbury Lane. Cycleways and footways will be required. (See **Policy BL14** and **Policy BL15**)
- Land between H/2/3/ and E/2/6 will be retained as a buffer strip and used for landscaping, informal recreation and cycle paths/footpaths
- Provision of a proportion of the development as affordable homes (possibly specialised housing for elderly/single people due to proximity to town centre.) (See **Policies 2.4** and **2.13**) and low cost market homes.
- Contributions may be sought for the following facilities:
- Extension of Milldown Middle School and Sports Pitches north of the bypass under **Policy 4.2** and **Policy 4.5**. Land is required for a Community building and contributions sought towards this cost under **Policy 4.3**.

Policy BL4

This site will be released for development subject to:

(i) An area being reserved for landscaping adjoining the bypass, to be laid out in a combination of open area, mounding and planting to form a visual and noise barrier.

(ii) The design and layout of properties being such that the resulting noise exposure of any dwelling which may be erected will be less than those specified for Noise Exposure Category A (NEC "A") for road traffic, as defined in Annex 1 of PPG 24. Where the noise exposure of any dwelling is likely to exceed these values, the planning authority will have

due regard to the advice given in PPG 24 when determining any application for development.

(iii) Land between H/2/3 and E/2/6 is allocated for landscaping, informal recreation and footpaths/cyclepaths and will be maintained as such.

Future Population

2.3.10 From the 1991 Census the resident population of the Plan Area is estimated to be 8,990. Average household size throughout the County has been declining for many years and is likely to continue to do so in the future. Projections produced by the County, (based on the proposals of the Structure Plan) indicate that average household size in North Dorset is likely to decline by 0.15 persons per household between 1991 and 2011. In 1991 the average household size in the Plan Area was 2.43. Making allowance for the decline in household size and assuming that the scale of development identified in Policy 2.3 is fully taken up, this could result in a Plan Area population of about 10,930 by 2011.

2.4. Employment and Shopping

Employment

2.4.1 Existing Employment Areas (Policies 3.1-3.3)

Site Ref	Location	Area (ha)	Notes
E/2/1	Sunrise Business Park	5.7	Now fully developed
E/2/2	Blandford Heights & Clump Farm	13.5	2.5ha available for development
E/2/3	Holland Way	7.4	Fully developed
E/2/4	The Brewery, Blandford St. Mary	5.3	No land available
E/2/5	Stour Park, Blandford St. Mary	5.7	1.2ha remaining

Sites Allocated for Development

2.4.2 Under Policy 3.2 the following site is allocated for development within the Plan period up to 2011

Site Ref	Location	Area (ha.)
E/2/6 (Site F)	Shaftesbury Lane	7.5ha

Situated on high land at the north-western approach to the town, this is a prime development site capable of accommodating a mixture of employment land uses. In view of its elevated position a high standard of design will be expected. **Policy 1.32 "Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty"**, **Policy 1.9 "Standard Assessment Criteria"** and **Policy 1.38 "Landscaping of new Development"** apply. Land between E/2/6 and H/2/3 is allocated for landscaping, informal recreation and footpaths/cyclepaths (see **Policy BL4**).

Policy BL5

Land at Shaftesbury Lane is allocated for industrial development and will be released for development subject to:

- (i) business (B1) General Industrial (B2) and Storage/Distribution (B8) uses only being permitted;
- (ii) an area of landscaping adjoining the bypass being provided to act as a visual barrier;
- (iii) access to the site being from Shaftesbury Lane. Improvements to Shaftesbury Lane may also be sought in accordance with the findings of the transport impact assessment required under **Policy BL15**.

Shopping

2.4.3 There are no specific allocations for Blandford. See general policies.

2.5. Community Services and Recreation

Recreation and Sports

2.5.1 Land for playing pitches is allocated under **Policy 4.5 "Provision of Outdoor Sports Pitches and other Recreational Open Space"**. In Blandford recreation land is allocated to the north of the bypass and is shown under Reference R/2/1.

Policy BL6 Land north of the bypass

Land north of the bypass will be developed for recreational use subject to:

- (i) vehicular access being from Sunrise Business Park.
- (ii) pedestrian, cyclists and disabled access being provided by a bridge over the bypass.

2.5.2 It is proposed that land north of the Milldown remains outside the Settlement Boundary to safeguard its open character. It forms an important backdrop to the Milldown public open space. The Crown Meadows also remain outside of the settlement boundary. This is a valuable open area of land, next to the town, initially laid out as parkland by the Portman family of Bryanston House. Both areas of land have potential for opening up public access to allow greater use as informal countryside recreational areas in conjunction with the Milldown.

Policy BL7

The Crown Meadows and land north of the Milldown should remain as open countryside and protected from encroaching development which would jeopardize their use as informal recreational areas.

2.5.3 Land south of the River Stour was given to the District Council and is now used for informal public recreation. ("Stour Park")

Community Halls

2.5.4 There is a requirement for additional small halls and a larger community building. There is now a proposal to improve the Corn Exchange to fulfil this role. Land at Site F will be reserved for a community hall. (**Policy 4.3**).

Library

2.5.5 Dorset County Council have acquired land at West Street for a replacement library. (**Policy 4.3**).

Education

2.5.6 Land is reserved at Black Lane for a replacement school for Archbishop Wake First School. (**Policy 4.2(I)**). The area of land required for this is not yet determined. It is possible that some residential development may be acceptable on the remaining area, subject to all relevant policies of the plan.

Flood Alleviation Scheme

2.5.7 A flood alleviation scheme has been provided for the West Street, Market Place and East Street areas of the town and for part of Blandford St Mary. These areas are shown as "Area Defended by Flood Defence Scheme" on the Proposals Map. **Policy 1.13** applies in such areas.

2.6. Transportation

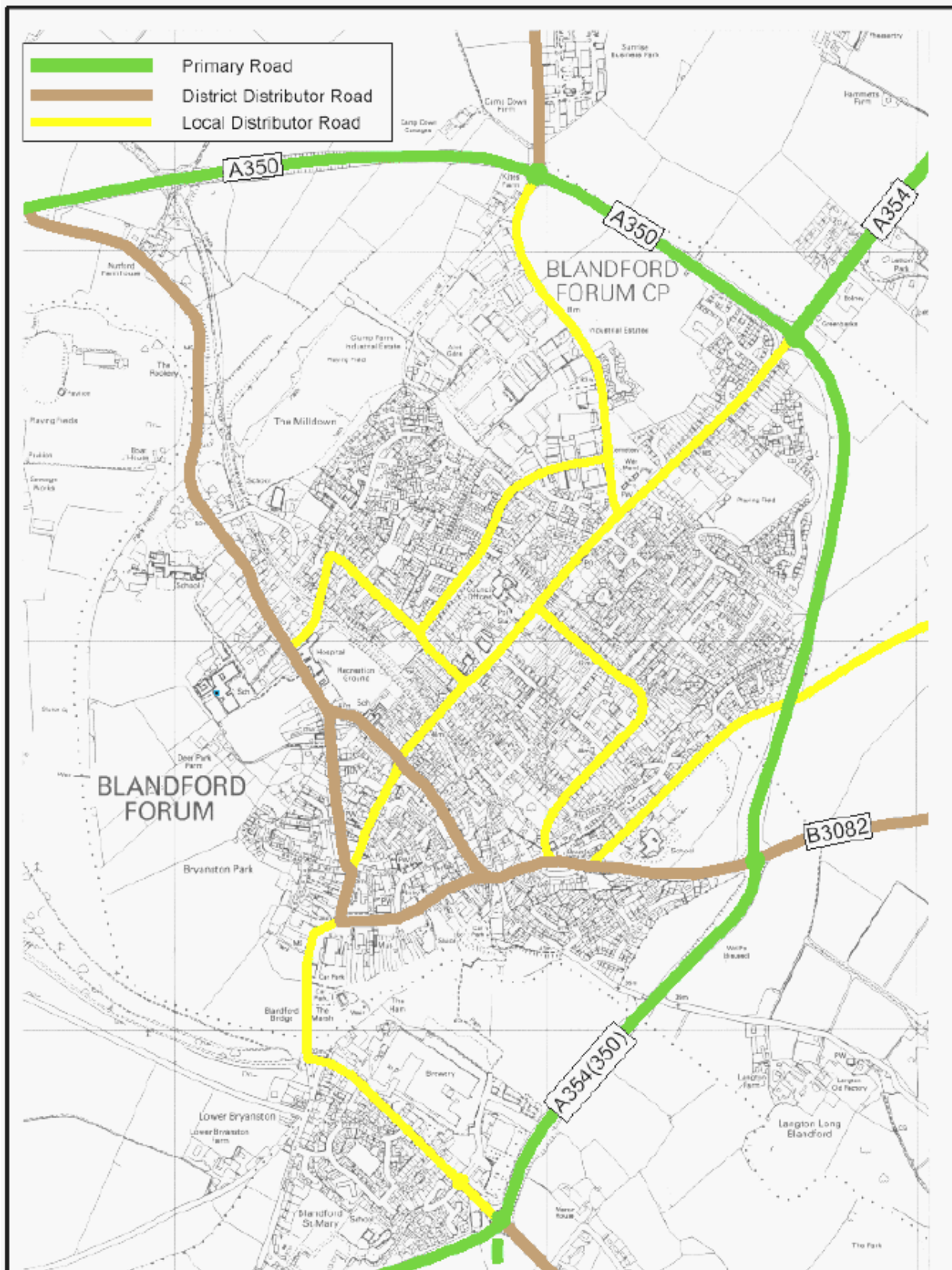
2.6.1 The guiding policies on highways and transportation are found within the general policies contained in **Chapter 5** of the Plan. These guiding policies relate to cyclists, pedestrians, traffic management, heavy goods vehicles, environment and landscape, public transport, parking facilities and servicing. It also includes the definition of the road hierarchy for North Dorset.

2.6.2 **Chapter 5** contains details of the 'Local Plan Road Improvement Programme' and details the major highway schemes, which are proposed for the period up to 2011. This contains specific highway and transportation schemes for Blandford.

Road Hierarchy

2.6.3 The 2011 road hierarchy for Blandford and Blandford St. Mary as defined in **Chapter 5**, is shown in **Figure 7**.

FIGURE 7
BLANDFORD FORUM
2011 ROAD HIERARCHY





Pedestrians and Cyclists

2.6.4 In order to improve the environment of the town centre, environmental enhancement and traffic management measures have been carried out. These measures have improved the environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Further works to complete the scheme will be investigated and will be designed in a manner that is consistent with the Conservation Area Policies. A detailed scheme will be implemented through the traffic management regulations, and will involve a separate consultation.

Policy BL8

Pedestrian priority and environmental enhancement measures will be implemented in Blandford Town Centre. These will include improved facilities to enable safer and more convenient cycling.

Cyclists

2.6.5 The network of minor roads provides satisfactory local routes for cyclists through much of Blandford and Blandford St. Mary. However, problems can occur where pedestrians and cyclists are required to use or cross heavily trafficked roads. The problems and requirements of pedestrians and cyclists are being considered with the aim of improving facilities and identifying suitable pedestrian and cycle routes.

2.6.6 Measures to encourage cycling by making it safer and more attractive will be carried out. Such measures may include separation of cyclists from other road traffic, shared pedestrian/cycle routes, facilities to cross roads carrying a heavy traffic flow, restrictions on parking, and speed control facilities to slow motorists where separation is impossible.

Policy BL9

A cycletrack will be provided as part of the A350/C13 Higher Blandford Road Improvement, between the A350/C13 roundabout and the entrance to the Sunrise Business Park. This will include a crossing facility at the A350/C13 roundabout to allow for cycle movements between Shaftesbury Lane and Sunrise Business Park.

Policy BL10

Cycle lanes are proposed along Shaftesbury Lane between its junction with Salisbury Road and the A350 Blandford By-pass.

2.6.7 These facilities will enable safer cycle access to Blandford's existing and proposed industrial areas

2.6.8 A cycleway/walkway is proposed to enable cyclists and pedestrians to travel between Blandford and Pimperne in a safer and less intimidating environment. Many of the children in Pimperne attend schools in Blandford and this route would provide a much needed and well used facility.

Policy BL11

A combined cycletrack/footway is proposed along the route of the A354 Primary Road between Blandford and Pimperne.

2.6.9 Measures to allow for safer cycling and walking along Black Lane to increase safety outside St. Leonards Middle School and the proposed Archbishop Wake First School are required.

Policy BL12

Measures to facilitate safer cycling and walking will be implemented along Black Lane between its junction with Wimborne Road and Blandford Camp.

Recreational Cycle Ways

2.6.10 A trailway, the Stour Valley Way, open to walkers, cyclists and horse riders is proposed along the line of the disused Somerset/Dorset Railway between Blandford St. Mary and Corfe Mullen. Details of this proposal are contained in **Chapter 5**.

2.6.11 The following cycleway/walkway will connect to the Milldown recreational area and the proposed recreational cycleway/walkways across the Stour Meadows/Stour Park to join the Stour Valley Way.

Policy BL13

Cycleway/walkway facilities will be provided as part of the development of the housing site (H/2/3).

Road Schemes

2.6.12 Two major road schemes are proposed for the area covered by this Chapter of the Plan in the period up to 2011.

These are:

- (i) A350/C13 Blandford/Shafesbury Road Improvement; and
- (ii) A350 Charlton Marshall, Spetisbury and Sturminster Marshall By-pass.

Further information regarding these major schemes is contained in **Chapter 5**. Other road schemes associated with new development are discussed below.

Policy BL14

Access to development at Site D (H/2/2) will be off Langton Road, with cycleway/footpaths into the town required. An assessment of the impact on the junction of Langton Road and East Street will be required. Traffic management measures will be required on Langton Road, in particular to allow for crossing of the road in the vicinity of the children's play area.

Policy BL15

Access to development at Site F (H/2/3) will be from Shaftesbury Lane and Salisbury Road. A transport impact assessment (TIA) will be required to identify appropriate highway measures for the management of traffic, cyclists and pedestrians in the area, in order to reduce conflict between vehicular traffic to and from the existing and proposed industrial estates and the new housing, other through traffic, cyclists and pedestrians. The TIA will need to consider the combined impact of developing Sites F and E/2/6. The measures may include road and junction improvements and traffic management.

2.6.13 Intending developers should discuss these requirements with the Highway Authority at an early stage. The submission of a traffic survey and traffic impact assessment will be required with the planning application.

2.6.14 Tin Pot Lane is a single track, unmade road which is presently used as the access road to the small area of industrial development at Clump Farm. Passing bays have been provided along Tin Pot Lane to facilitate the two way passage of vehicles, but the road remains sub-standard for its present use. Agreement has been reached with developers for the provision of a new access road, through the Town Council allotment gardens, to link Clump Farm to the present highway network at Blandford Heights. This will enable the access from Clump Farm to Tin Pot Lane to be closed and for Tin Pot Lane to revert to its former use as a lightly trafficked road serving the Milldown recreational area.

Policy BL16

A corridor will be reserved across the Town Council's allotment gardens, as shown on the Proposals Map, between the Clump Farm and Blandford Heights Industrial Estates, for the construction of a new road.

Car Parking

2.6.15 A new 300 space long-term car park has now been built on land to the rear of the Brewery, Blandford St. Mary. This is accessed from the adjacent Stour Park business development and connected to Blandford town centre by means of a footbridge across the River Stour, adjacent to the Ham weir. The car park will not only provide a facility for long-term business and tourism use, but will also serve the proposed Stour Park Amenity area of which it will be an integral part.

Footnote:

- 1 The River Stour Meadows are subject to the River Valley Policy which controls development in areas subject to possible flood risk.

Contd

PART 2 - LOCAL AREA POLICIES

BOURTON

Inset Plan No. 3

3.1.1 Bourton is a large, former industrial village and is the northernmost settlement in the District. Formerly on the A303 Trunk Road, the village was by-passed in 1992.

3.1.2 The village settlement pattern is in a dispersed form and there are three separate hamlets or groups of dwellings away from the main body of the village; "Chaffeymoor", "Queens Oak" and the area around the "White Lion" and "Furze-Hill Common" (which is in Silton Parish).

3.1.3 The Stour river valley separates the main village from the White Lion and the Furze-Hill area and is an important broad expanse of river meadows subject to protection of the River Valley Policy. The "Stour Valley Project" (see **para. 1.65**) includes the Bourton section of the river and may well see the official creation of a long-distance footpath and landscape management proposals.

Employment Development; Land south of Lilac Cottage

3.1.4 Land to the south of Lilac Cottage, on the former Gillingham Road has now been enclosed by the by-pass. Traffic noise from the adjacent by-pass makes the site unsuitable for residential development. However the development of a small group of "start-up" workshop units would provide a valuable source of additional employment in this rural area, which lies within the Rural Priority Area.

Policy BN1

(Site reference E/3/2)

0.5 Hectares (1.7acres) of land to the south of Lilac Cottages will be developed for employment purposes subject to the following criteria;

- (i) use of the land shall be restricted to Business Use (Class B1) only
- (ii) the site shall incorporate buffer zone(s) to reduce the impact of noise from the A303 and mitigate the effect of the employment use in this predominantly residential area.

DURWESTON

Inset Plan No. 10

10.1.1 Visibility at the junction of the A357 with Milton Lane and Water Lane is inadequate and will require an improvement to increase highway safety. (See Policy 5.23 contained in the Transportation Chapter).

EAST STOUR

Inset Plan No. 11

11.1.1 To increase highway safety it is proposed to realign the B3092 between Primrose Hill and Hunger Hill and to provide a footway. (see **Policy 5.24** contained in the Transportation Chapter).

11.1.2 The main crossroads in the village (A30/B3092) are currently sub-standard and there are turning movement conflicts. **Policy 5.28** in the transportation chapter relates to the proposed traffic management improvement at this junction.

GILLINGHAM

Inset Plan No. 15

1. Introduction

Previous Plans for the Town

15.1.1 A statutory Town Plan was prepared during the early 1980s. The various stages reached during the preparation programme were as follows;

Draft Local Plan for Consultation	June 1983
Revised Plan - Deposit	July 1984
Public Local Inquiry	February 1985
Adopted by Full Council	February 1986



15.1.2 A Working Party of local councillors was formed in 1991 to look at the review of the Local Plan. This Working Party looked at the future problems Gillingham was likely to face as a result of its previous and expected future expansion. Recommendations were made which have been taken into consideration in this Plan. For details, see the NDDC publication "Future Development in Gillingham; Report of the Working Party" (March 1992).

15.1.3 In 1997, a Regeneration Study of the town was commissioned by the District Council to look at how the economic and social prospects for Gillingham could be improved while the town still continued to receive an ever-expanding population. The study, carried out by Drivers Jonas consultants, reported in February 1998. Some of its findings have resulted in amendments to this Deposit Draft Plan.

Overall Aims for Gillingham

General Statement of Planning Policy

15.1.4 Gillingham is a medium-sized rural town situated on the edge of the Blackmore Vale, with the Rivers Stour, Lodden and the Shreen Water, passing through the town. Located close to the site of the former Gillingham Royal Forest, the site of Kings Court Palace (a former hunting lodge) is a reminder of the town's rich history.

15.1.5 The most northerly of the five towns in the District, Gillingham has experienced the fastest growth rate of all these towns over the past decade. A new town centre relief road has been constructed together with a major supermarket and new library/museum. However, the town's intrinsic rural character has been retained even though development has connected the outlying hamlets of Peacemarsch, Wyke, Bay and Ham, to the main body of the town.

15.1.6 Gillingham is in a key position to attract economic development, being located in the heart of the Blackmore Vale lowlands, with relatively few constraints to future expansion. It is located on the main Salisbury-Exeter rail link and is close to the A303/A350 primary routes. Under the Local Plan Strategy it has therefore been selected as a town for major growth on the main integrated transport network and developments defined as "major" may be permitted within the Settlement Boundary.

15.1.7 The 1991 Census showed the town has a higher than average elderly population. The need to attract and retain younger people and families to the town is evident and the provision of suitable housing, employment and community uses will be encouraged.

15.1.8 In order to allow for the expansion of the town, additional provision of community infrastructure is required. Developers may be asked to contribute financially towards this provision, to enable development to proceed in accordance with advice currently contained in Circular 1/97 Planning Obligations. Additional information is given in Chapter 4 of the Local Plan and in a Planning Advice Note. Costs of improvements which are required to meet the needs of the present population should be borne by the existing managing authorities.

Policy GH1

(i) All development in **Gillingham** should respect the character of the town and the surrounding landscape of the Blackmore Vale.

(ii) In accordance with the overall Local Plan Strategy, **Gillingham** will act as a main centre for co-ordinated population, housing, employment growth and the development of major community services to support this growth.

2. The Environment

Environmental Capacity of the Town

15.2.1 Looking ahead towards the end of the Plan period the Local Authority has begun looking at the environmental constraints to the eventual spread of development of Gillingham. These constraints are closely linked to the aim of promoting sustainable development and are sometimes described as being the "environmental capacity" of the development of a settlement. Each settlement may have a defined physical limit beyond which major environmental harm may be caused. This is not to say that these constraints should be seen as an absolute for long term planning. However they should be seen as a monitoring device so that if there is a requirement to expand a settlement significantly in the future, it may be done in a way which will minimise environmental impact, reduce the reliance on the motor car and bring social and economic benefits, particularly to town centre community and retail facilities.

15.2.2 The latter issue is an important consideration to be assessed when defining possible limits to the spread of development of Gillingham. At present the layout of the town centre retailing and community facilities is often constrained by a development pattern based on an historic medieval structure. This is a substantial barrier to finding sufficient space for expansion of town centre facilities which are commensurate with the needs of a large increase in population. It is felt that Gillingham should be analysed carefully to consider what scope there may be for continued major expansion using the assessment factors below.

- The availability of sufficient land in or close to town centres which will allow for expansion of retailing and community facilities to serve an increase in population.
- A distance beyond which people are not likely to walk or cycle into the town centre or to employment areas, assessed to be approximately 1.6km (1 mile), (equivalent to a 20/30 minute walk). Thus the use of the motor car is likely to be increased when housing developments are situated beyond this distance.
- The ability of the local road network to prove attractive for the operation of a regular frequency bus link to the town centre.
- The topographical constraints which exist (e.g. areas of outstanding natural beauty, small gaps with outlying settlements, hill slopes, by-passes etc.) which tend to signify a natural limit to development.

15.2.3 Areas of particular concern to the Council include the land to the north of the town, between the built up area and the hamlets of Colesbrook and Milton-on-Stour.

15.2.4 The riverside gap between Bay and the town centre, and the land in Ham either side of the Shaftesbury Road that separates proposed employment land from residential areas, are two areas within the town that are also of concern. These three areas were formerly designated as "Buffer Zones" and a policy of restraint applied within them. However, having considered objections to the Buffer Zone policies, the Local Plan Inspector recommended that the policies should be deleted. In relation to the (former) Ham Buffer Zone, he further recommended that the employment allocation at Park Farm (Site L) should be extended to the north, as this will provide flexibility in design and layout which should enable developers to provide an attractive development on the edge of the town. Since he made that recommendation, a new roundabout and distributor road have been constructed, the existence of which may influence future policy for development within this area.

15.2.5 While the Council is prepared to follow the recommendation to delete the Buffer Zone policy areas, it should be recognised that they primarily comprise "greenfield" land. In view of the current healthy situation in terms of the availability of land for development in the town, the Council does not intend to allocate any part of the Buffer Zone areas for development at this stage. A landscape assessment is currently being undertaken of each of the areas. Once this is complete, the council intends to propose new formal statutory policy for the relevant areas, taking into account the Local Plan Inspector's recommendations, and any other material considerations. If necessary, as with any policy, Supplementary Planning Guidance may also be produced to help guide development in these areas.

Gillingham Royal Forest Project

15.2.6 The "Gillingham Royal Forest Project" aims to promote farm diversification towards woodland planting and countryside recreational activities within the bounds of the old "Royal Forest", a former deer park. The boundary of the Project area runs close to the eastern built-up limits of the town and it is proposed that this should form the eventual limits of the town in its expansion in this area. The following policy will also aim to protect the Royal Forest Project by restricting any development which would jeopardise the overall objectives of the Project.

Policy GH2

The eastwards expansion of **Gillingham** will be contained by the boundary of the Gillingham Royal Forest Project. Development will not be permitted within the Project area if it would jeopardise the overall aims and objectives of the Project.

The Conservation Area

15.2.7 In recognition of what is considered to be the important historic centre of the town, a Conservation Area was designated in 1985. This includes the basic original medieval street form around the Church, The Square, (formerly the town's market site,) the 17th century Chantry Cottages and the Victorian Vicarage, (now part of Rawson Court) built in "Arts and Crafts" style.

15.2.8 In the autumn of 1993, a traffic calming and enhancement scheme using a variety of paving and landscaping techniques were implemented in The Square and High Street. It is hoped that further finances will be found for additional enhancement schemes in the Plan period. Any Conservation Area enhancement schemes will be subject to full consultation before implementation.

Areas of Local Character

15.2.9 Other areas of the town, particularly the outlying hamlets, have retained their individual character and still contain traditional properties ranging from simple 18th Century stone cottages to some imposing Victorian "villas". These areas were designated in the 1986 Local Plan as "Areas of Local Character" as they do not meet the full requirements of designation as Conservation Areas.

Policy GH3

The following areas are designated as "Areas of Local Character"

- (i) Bay
- (ii) Colesbrook
- (iii) Eccliffe
- (iv) Kings Court
- (v) Lodbourne
- (vi) Lodden Bridge and New Road
- (vii) Peacemarsh
- (viii) Wavering Lane
- (ix) Wyke

Within these areas, development will only be approved if the proposal respects their individual local character.

3. Housing

Dwelling Unit Allocation

15.3.1 **Policy 2.3** allocates about 1610 dwellings to the town to be built between 1994 and 2011. This amounts to a construction rate of 95 dwellings per annum. However, since the start of the Plan period, several of the large allocated sites have been granted planning permission. In most cases this has been at a higher density than the Plan anticipated. It is now likely that over 200 more dwellings than was anticipated will be built in the town by 2011. **Table 15.1** shows the breakdown of Gillingham's allocation at 31.03.01

15.3.2

Table 15.1 Components of Gillingham's Housing Allocation at 31.03.01	Units
Plan Target	1610

Dwellings built 1994 – 2001	683
Dwellings with outstanding planning permission or under construction*	427
Allocated Sites**	585
Infill and windfall allowance	181
Total	1876
Over/under supply	+266

* Figures adjusted to allow for likely take up ** Figures allow for consent granted since 31.03.01.

15.3.3 Government policy encourages Local Planning Authorities to manage the release of housing land with the aim of securing the development of previously developed (brownfield) sites before the release of greenfield land. To this end, the Plan period has been divided into three phases of development and sites allocated accordingly.

15.3.4 **Table 15.2** below gives the anticipated development rates and proportions of brownfield development for each phase of the Plan period in Gillingham. The town has grown rapidly over the last 20 years, predominantly through expansion onto greenfield land. However there are opportunities for brownfield development within the town centre. Several such sites have been shown to have potential for mixed use development and some of these are now coming on stream. As the rate of brownfield development has been lower than anticipated during the first phase of the Plan period, (despite overall development rates being higher than planned), some positive measures may need to be taken to encourage more brownfield development. A Development Brief has been prepared for the Oakwoods site to facilitate development of this land.

15.3.5 Targets for affordable housing are set out in **Policy 2.4**. These may be varied in the light of the results of any future Housing Needs Survey undertaken during the Plan period. Any variations will be published for consultation in the form of Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Table 15.2 Gillingham Phasing programme				
Phase	Dwells built or expected at 31.03.01	Average annual rate	% Brownfield	Average annual rate
1. 1994 – 2000	620	103	14	14
2. 2000 – 2006	810	135	20	27
3. 2006 – 2011	440	88	25	22
1994 – 2011	1870*	110	19	21
Plan aim	About 1610	95	23	22

*This figure represents a 16% over-supply on the original planned total of 1610 and should not be seen as the base figure for dwelling supply in the town.

Sites Allocated for Development:

15.3.6 **Policy 2.4** allocates the following sites (for 5 or more dwellings) for development in the Plan period up to 2011;

- (i) Site C Barnaby Mead (44 dwellings)*
- (ii) Site E South of the Meadows (90 dwellings)
- (iii) Site F Lodden Bridge Farm (111 dwellings)*
- (iv) Site G Rear of Lockwood Terrace (126 dwellings)*
- (v) Site H West of the Fire Station, Peacemars (245 dwellings)*
- (vi) Site J Adjacent Ham Farm (292 dwellings)*

*Dwelling numbers represent figures likely to be achieved due to permissions granted in full or in principle.

15.3.7 Those sites that were granted planning permission in whole or part before 31.03.01, are no longer identified on the Proposals Map as allocated sites.

15.3.8 Of the two remaining sites, Site J includes a site for a new primary school that will serve the south-eastern part of the town. This is a strategic facility and It is important that it is brought forward as early as possible, so part of the housing development (125 dwellings) should be developed in Phase 2 to enable the provision of the school.

The remainder of the allocation should not be built until the school has been completed or until the beginning of Phase 3 (01.04.06), whichever is the earlier.

15.3.9 The final site, Site E is also in the south-eastern part of the town. Development of this land will not bring forward any facility that is needed outside the site. The site is programmed for development in Phase 3 to ensure that not all the allocated sites are released onto the market at the same time, and to help encourage the development of the brownfield sites in the town centre. The release of this site should be reconsidered towards the end of Phase 2, when a better assessment may be made of overall development progress in the town and in the light of any revisions in Structure Plan policy or the findings of the "Urban Potential Study" currently being undertaken.

Site E (H/15/2) **South of The Meadows**

15.3.10 Forming the final phase of the Addison Close/Meadows housing area. This site is now phased for construction post 2006, to help spread the development of greenfield sites throughout the plan period, to encourage the development of brownfield development and to ensure the commensurate release of supporting community infrastructure. The following requirements may be sought, in order to allow the development to go ahead:

- The construction of adequate measures to avoid possible trespass into the Lodden Lakes area.
- An equipped on-site play facility of about 0.05ha is required to overcome the shortfall in children's play space provision that will result from this development.
- Provision of a proportion of the development as affordable homes (**Policies 2.4 and 2.13**).
- Contributions may be sought for the following facilities: Primary school at Site J, **Policy 4.2**, A central community hall at Chantry Fields (See **GH21**), and expansion of the youth centre at Cemetary Road, **Policy 4.3**, improvements to the Leisure Centre, **Policy 4.7** and Sports pitches at Hardings Lane, **Policy 4.5**.

Policy GH4

3.0 hectares of land south of the Meadows will be developed for a minimum of 90 dwellings, in the period after 2006, subject to the following requirements which may be sought and are necessary to allow the development to go ahead.

- (i) An on-site equipped play area.**
- (ii) The provision of adequate anti-trespass and landscaping measures to protect the Lodden Lakes area.**
- (iii) Vehicular access from both The Meadows and direct from Addison Close. The road layout shall allow for a permeable through route for bus and delivery services, between the two access points.**

Site J (H/15/6) **Land adjacent Ham Farm**

15.3.11 A large site forming the rounding off to development to the south-east of Ham. The following requirements will be sought to allow the development to go ahead:

- A major requirement for this area will be to provide for a new Primary School. Sufficient land for this purpose is allocated to the north of the site (see below; **Policy GH14**).
- Vehicular access can be from opposite Lockwood Terrace and take the form of a roundabout or signal controlled junction.
- The site is large enough to warrant the provision of an equipped children's play area which could be constructed adjacent to the school. (See also **Policy 4.8**)
- Land adjacent to the River Lodden may be subject to flood alleviation works and should be subsequently laid out as public amenity land.
- The development should provide for a new footpath/cycleway and bridge across the River Lodden to provide off-road links to and from the School and the Brickfields employment area, and a further footpath/cycleway link is required to link Bridge Close.
- Additional footways are required in Shaftesbury Road to aid the safety of highway users.
- Provision of a proportion of the development as affordable homes (**Policies 2.4 and 2.13**).
- Contributions may be sought for the following facilities: Primary school at Site J, **Policy 4.2**, A central community hall at Chantry Fields (see **Policy GH 21**) and extensions to the Cemetary Road youth facility,

Policy 4.3, Improvements to the Leisure Centre, **Policy 4.7** and Sports pitches at Hardings Lane, **Policy 4.5**.

Policy GH5

8.8 hectares of land adjacent to Ham Farm will be developed for about 260 dwellings, subject to the following requirements which may be sought to allow the development to go ahead:

- (i) The on-site provision of an equipped children's play area to serve the development.
- (ii) The provision of an access from a new roundabout or signal-controlled junction to be constructed adjacent to the Lockwood Terrace/Shafesbury Road junction.
- (iii) A contribution towards the provision of footways in Shafesbury Road.
- (iv) Designate sufficient land for the construction of a Primary School.
- (v) The construction of a footpath/cycleway and bridge to the River Stour.
- (vi) The construction of a footpath/cycleway to Bridge Close.
- (vii) The provision of any necessary flood alleviation works for the River Lodden.
- (viii) The dedication of river valley area land as public open space.

Future Population

15.3.12 From the 1991 Census, the resident population of the Town Plan area is estimated to be 6,400. Average household size throughout the County has been declining for many years, and is likely to continue to do so in the future.

Projections produced by the County, (based on the proposals of the deposit Structure Plan for Dorset) indicate that average household size in North Dorset is likely to decline by 0.15 persons per household between 1991 and 2011. In 1991 the average household size in the Parish was 2.31. Making allowance for the decline in household size and assuming that the scale of development identified in **Policy 2.2** is fully taken up, this could result in a Plan Area population of about 9,860 by 2011.

4. Employment and Shopping

Employment

15.4.1 Existing Employment Areas (**Policies 3.1-3.3**)

Site Ref.	Location	Area (ha)	Notes
E/15/1	Station Road Industrial Estate	2.7	Developed with the advent of the railway in the mid C19th. Now virtually fully developed.
E/15/2	Brickfields Business Park	10.5	Re-use of the old brickworks site for continued development since the late 1980s. 3.7a. available for development. This site is subject to the provision of satisfactory surface water and foul drainage measures.
E/15/3	Tomlins Lane	0.25	Small workshop area developed by English Estates.
E/15/4	Shafesbury Road	0.7	Former haulage depot and store (Gillbury)

Proposed Employment Land Allocations

Site I (E/15/5) Peacemarsh

15.4.2 This site is in a key strategic location, being the closest in Gillingham to the A303 Trunk Road. It will also provide employment opportunities for the Peacemarsh area which is further away from existing and proposed employment areas. However it is in a sensitive area, close to the village of Milton on Stour and adjacent to future residential areas. In order to define a firm boundary between the site and the countryside, a woodland planting

area should be provided. A footpath/cycleway link should be implemented through the woodland to link to the B3092. The site is suitable for a single large user which will be restricted to "clean" Business (B1) or Storage/Distribution (B8) uses only. The aim is to avoid piecemeal construction on the site which could lead to areas being left unused and unkempt. Access should come from the roundabout on the B3092 via the access road to housing site. There will also be a need to provide a bus lay-by on the B3092 to encourage public transport use. A community health use would also prove suitable for development on the site.

Policy GH6

2.5 hectares of land at Peacemarch will be developed for Business/Storage/Distribution/ Community Health uses, subject to the following obligations which may be sought to allow the development to go ahead;

- (i) Business/storage/distribution uses to be restricted to one single user.**
- (ii) The provision of a woodland planting area to the north and west of the site and dedication as public open space.**
- (iii) The provision of a footpath/cycleway link through the woodland planting area.**
- (iv) The provision of access via Housing Site H to the south.**
- (v) The provision of a bus lay-by and shelter on the B3092.**
- (vi) The provision of surface water attenuation measures.**

Policy GH7

A woodland planting zone will be established to reinforce the northern and western boundaries of Housing Site H and Employment Site I.

Site L (E/15/6) Park Farm

15.4.3 This site is required to provide additional employment to the Ham area of the town and to provide an alternative site to the Brickfields for businesses to relocate. Park Farm itself is a listed building and so sensitive development is required, not only in architectural terms, but also adjacent is the Royal Forest Project area for which uses need to be compatible. Access will come from a new roundabout on the B3081 which will also serve Site K opposite. A bus lay-by and shelter on the B3081 are required to encourage public transport use. An additional footway is required to link to the existing footway along Shaftesbury Road (north side). The Environment Agency will require satisfactory water attenuation before the site can be developed using Best Management Practice for surface water disposal.

Policy GH8

4.5 hectares of land at Park Farm will be developed for Industrial/Business/Storage/ Distribution uses, subject to;

- (i) The provision of a roundabout access on the B3081.**
- (ii) The provision of a bus lay-by and shelter on the B3081.**
- (iii) The provision of an additional footway along the B3081 (north side).**
- (iv) The development should be compatible with both the setting of the listed Park Farmhouse and the character of the adjacent land within the Royal Forest Project area.**
- (v) The provision of satisfactory surface water run-off and pollution attenuation measures.**

Site K Higher Ham Farm

15.4.4 This site, adjacent to the former "Gilbury" Depot will add additional land to the depot to allow for comprehensive commercial development. The area has been specifically highlighted in the Regeneration Study for a site for the relocation of some town centre uses which need to relocate to more suitable premises. The requirements of the site are similar to Park Farm in respect of access, provision of a bus lay-by and shelter and the provision of additional footways for the Shaftesbury Road. Higher Ham Farmhouse is of local architectural interest and could be retained for use as offices.

Policy GH9

1.5 hectares of land will be developed at Higher Ham Farm for Industrial/Business/Storage/ Distribution uses, subject to;

- (i) The provision of a roundabout access on the B3081**
- (ii) The provision of a bus lay-by and shelter on the B3081**
- (iii) The provision of an additional footway along the B3081 (south side)**
- (iv) The retention of Higher Farm Farmhouse and its setting.**

Town Centre Redevelopment

Land Rear of Red Lion

15.4.5 The site is in a central location abutting the High Street with two access points which are both small lanes. Present uses of this area are mainly low key activities including private car parking. At the confluence between the River Stour and Shreen Water, the site is within an 'Area Liable to Flood'. A Flood Risk Assessment is therefore required before approval of any planning application, so that the 'functional flood plain' (or in other words, land that frequently floods) can be established. There shall be no built development within the functional flood plain, and there will need to be flood risk mitigation and compensation measures for development within the remainder of the flood plain.

15.4.6 The scheme would offer scope for developing a new footpath link from Town Bridge, along the northern river bank and joining the new footbridge at Waitrose.

15.4.7 The site offers potential for a commercial/retail development which may include a residential element. The nature of the site lends itself to a high quality courtyard style development. The size of the units would be suitable for use by national retailers. As a guideline the maximum floorspace figures or dwelling units, capable of being accommodated on the site is as follows: (Note that these guidelines do not permit the whole of the site to be developed for housing use. The site will play an important part in the regeneration of the town centre and the opportunity for economic development as well as housing should not be lost).

LAND USE TYPE	MAX FLOOR SPACE OR DWG UNITS		COMMENTS
RETAIL/OFFICES	600m ²	1,000m ² *	Situated at east end of site with High Street frontage. One largish store with 4/5 smaller units. 2/3 storey with offices/residential over.
HOUSING	20		West end of site. 1/2/3 bed units in town house/flat development with courtyard/street-type frontage leading to Red Lion. 2/3 story.

* if whole site developed for that use.

15.4.8 As the site is located within the Town Conservation Area, buildings should be constructed to a high standard using traditional local materials.

Policy GH10

Land to the rear of the Red Lion may be developed for a mixture of retail/commercial/ and/ or housing, providing that the development preserves or enhances the Conservation Area. A Flood Risk Assessment is required to ensure that there is no built development within the 'functional' flood plain

and that any potential flood risk effects are ameliorated. Mixed use development on this site will be important for the successful economic regeneration of the town and applications which are wholly or predominately for residential use, will not be permitted.

Land between School Lane and Newbury

15.4.9 In the event of the successful relocation of the existing industries on this town centre site the land would be released for redevelopment. The proximity to the town centre may call for a retail function to be retained in this area, however, a mixed use including residential development would be acceptable. The retail element would be located on the frontage with Newbury. The site may also be a suitable location for the new Community Hall. As a guideline the maximum floorspace figures or dwelling units, capable of being accommodated on the site is as follows: (Note that these guidelines do not permit the whole of the site to be developed for housing use. The site will play an important part in the regeneration of the town centre and the opportunity for economic development as well as housing should not be lost).

RETAIL/OFFICES	800m ² 1500m ² *	To occupy frontage to Newbury. One largish store or 3/4 smaller units. 2/3 storey with offices/residential over.
HOUSING	30/40	1/2/3 bed units in town house/flat development with courtyard/street-type frontage leading between School Lane and Newbury. 2/4 storey.
CENTRAL COMMUNITY HALL	1000m ²	Could replace either of the above. Joint use with Gillingham School and/or car park.

* if whole site developed for that use.

Policy GH11

Land between School Lane and Newbury may be redeveloped for a mixture of retail/commercial/housing and community uses. Mixed use development on this site will be important for the successful economic regeneration of the town and application, which are wholly or predominately for residential use will not be permitted.

Land between Buckingham Road and Station Road (North)

15.4.10 This land (0.14ha) on the corner of Station Road/Buckingham Road is remaining part of a much larger 1.5ha site, now redeveloped as a DIY retail warehouse. There is potential here for the existing commercial garage on the site to be redeveloped in the long term by approximately 20 units if built as 1/2/3 bed units in a town house/flat development.

Policy GH12

Land on the southern corner of Buckingham Road/Station Road north may be redeveloped for residential purposes.

Land West of Station Road South ("Oakwoods")

15.4.11 This area of land represents an ideal opportunity for sustainable development being the re-use of land adjacent to Gillingham Railway Station. The central part of the site was former meat processing factory ("Oakwoods"), which has now been demolished and the site left vacant for the best part of ten years. Redevelopment of this large area (2.6ha) will go a long way to aiding the economic prospects of the town. The redevelopment area also includes land to the north and south which is currently being actively used for mixed commercial uses. Obviously any new housing should not be to the detriment of existing commercial uses and vice-versa.

15.4.12 The site may also be suitable for the proposed new Gillingham Central Community Hall. There is also an outstanding planning permission on the central part of the site for mixed business and non-food retail which commits land uses for that part of the site. The only purpose of this policy therefore is to guide any subsequent applications which may be made on the committed area of land or any surrounding piece of land which may be subject to development proposals. The land is immediately adjacent to the River Stour and any development here will have to be carefully assimilated with the river's regime.

15.4.13 As a guideline, the maximum floorspace figures or dwelling units, capable of being accommodated on the site is as follows: (Note that these guidelines do not permit the whole of the site to be developed for housing use. The site will play an important part in the regeneration of the town centre and the opportunity for economic development as well as housing should not be lost).

15.4.14 A Draft Development Brief for this area was published in Nov. 2001. Following public consultation, the document has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. All planning proposals on the site are therefore expected to follow the principles laid out in the Guidance.

RETAIL/OFFICES/ BUSINESS	1000m ² 6000m ² *	To occupy street frontage? One largish store or 3/4 smaller units. Retail use limited to non-food only as site is beyond central shopping area on wrong side of relief road. 2/3 storey with offices/residential over? NOTE: Planning permission 96/167 relates to middle part of site for B1/B2/B8 uses and >50% non-food retail (approx. 1000m ²).
HOUSING	80/120	1/2/3 bed units in town house/flat development with courtyard/street-type frontage with through link between river bridge and the station. 3/5 storeys. Could have river frontage? Compatibility with adjoining industrial users needs to be carefully considered.
CENTRAL COMMUNITY HALL	1000m ²	Could replace either of the above. Joint use car park with station? Possible offices or residential over?

* if whole site developed for that use

Policy GH13

Land west of Station Road South ("Oakwoods" etc.) may be redeveloped for a mixture of retail/commercial/housing or community uses. Mixed use development on this site will be important for the successful economic regeneration of the town and applications which are wholly or predominately for residential use will not be permitted.

5. Community Services and Recreation

Ham Primary School

15.5.1 The large-scale housing developments in the Ham area of the town will require the provision of an additional Primary School. A proposed site is located on Housing Site "J" at Ham Farm, behind Bridge Close (to be connected by a cycleway). If development of this site should for any reason not be feasible, then the Education Authority will seek an alternative on one of the other housing sites in the area (as shown on the Proposals Map). Housing developers in Gillingham will be expected to contribute towards the provision of this school through the Community Facilities Development Fund as (apart from retirement housing) additional demand for primary schooling will come from new development throughout the town.

Policy GH14

A Primary School is proposed on land at housing site "J", Ham Farm, adjacent to Bridge Close. A footpath/cycleway will connect the school with Bridge Close.

Recreation and Sports

15.5.2 The recreation ground provides outdoor sports facilities for football and in the summer for cricket. Demand for further provision has been identified. The most suitable site for this is adjacent to the Town football ground and the existing recreation field. This would also allow use of the nearby Leisure Centre facilities.

15.5.3 Recreation facilities, supplemented by the North Dorset Leisure Centre in conjunction with the High School, provide a range of facilities for both school and general community use. Both indoor courts and a swimming pool are provided. The District Council will support proposals for sports which are not already provided for and for which a need has been established. A major refurbishment and provision of improved facilities is required in the near future. (See **Policy 4.7**).

15.5.4 To enable further provision of sports pitches in Gillingham it is proposed that the existing football ground be extended northwards. This would allow the existing pitch to be rearranged enabling the provision of more pitches on the site.

15.5.5 The provision of additional sports and leisure facilities is required partly because of the future demand coming from new residential development in the town. Therefore it is proposed that a proportion of the costs of providing additional facilities should be borne by developers. The proposed charge would be directly related to the resulting population from the new development and the pro-rata and proportional costs of provision.

Policy GH15

Additional sports pitches are proposed on land adjacent to the Town Football Club.

15.5.6 The land within the 400m. sewage treatment works protection area at Chantry Fields is not suitable for future development. However, this land may be acceptable for low key recreational uses, such as an improvement to the public rights of way that cross the area.

Policy GH16

The area to the south of Chantry Fields is proposed as an informal recreational area with tree planting and landscaping to improve the visual aspects of the land.

15.5.7 Additional land for recreational purposes is required for use by the Youth Centre. In the previous Town Plan for Gillingham, the land to the west of the Youth Centre was earmarked for such a use, Dorset County Council being the most likely purchasers of the land. Although this proposal has not been brought forward, the established need remains and therefore the proposal shall be re-emphasised.

Policy GH17

Land adjacent to the Youth Centre is proposed for ancillary recreational purposes.

Riverside Amenity Areas; footpath/cycleway links

15.5.8 The Rivers Lodden, Stour and Shreen Water are important, attractive natural features of the town. The potential recreational asset inherent in their character is not being fully exploited. Although short stretches of riverside walks exist, scope for longer stretches, with associated recreational areas, is evident. The Policies and Proposals Map indicates possible extensions to the existing footpath network in a diagrammatic form. Although the line of possible future footpaths is only illustrative, the District Council will encourage the future provision of such facilities. Further footpath/cycleway links associated with rivers are proposed between Lodden Bridge and Kings Court Palace and between Lodden View and the proposed Ham primary school. As new residential development will place additional demands upon the need for these links, contributions may be sought from developers where indicated in the relevant policies.

15.5.9 There is also the possibility of providing a footpath/bridleway link with Milton on Stour along the River Stour in association with the provision of riverside amenity/recreational areas and residential development at Peacemarsh. Eventually this could form part of a major new Trail "The Stour Valley Way" between Christchurch and Stourhead. A further part of this Trail should be provided as part of the development of the Sigma-Aldrich premises on the Brickfields Business Park. This proposal would form a link with the hamlet of Eccliffe. Development adjacent to the River Stour will affect the general amenity of the river valley and as a consequence it is considered that developers should contribute towards environmental schemes along the river banks.

Policy GH18

Land alongside The River Stour is proposed as amenity/recreational areas together with provision of additional footpath/cycleway links, to form part of the proposed long-distance Stour Valley Way.

Policy GH19

A riverside footpath/cycleway link is proposed to connect the Shaftesbury Road at Lodden Bridge, with Kings Court Palace, via a new bridge over the River Lodden.

Policy GH20

A river bridge is proposed over the river Lodden to allow for a footpath/cycleway link between Lodden View and the proposed Ham Primary School.

Health Care Services

15.5.10 The Local Health Authority have stated that the provision of a community hospital for Gillingham is a long-term possibility should funds be forthcoming. Land to the north-west of Peacemarsh has been proposed as a possible site but it is premature at this stage however to designate a site.

Community Hall/Leisure Facilities

15.5.11 The town community requires the provision of a central large-scale community building for the staging of major functions. Several sites have been under investigation and there are now three favoured options:

- (i) Land at Chantry Fields.
- (ii) To extend the North Dorset Leisure Centre at Hardings Lane and provide the community hall by converting the existing sports hall. This would be provided as part of an upgrade to the Leisure Centre.
- (iii) At redevelopment site **GH13**, "Oakwoods" Station Road South. Surface water attenuation facilities will be required on any site in the town.

15.5.12 The provision of this community hall and upgrade of the Leisure Centre is required partly to meet the future requirements of residents of new housing in the town. In order to make proposals acceptable in land-use planning terms, appropriate provision may be sought for this facility which is directly related to and necessary for the development to proceed.

Policy GH21

Three alternative option sites for a Central Community Hall for Gillingham will be safeguarded:

- (i) Land at Chantry Field,
- (ii) Land adj. Gillingham Leisure Centre or
- (iii) At redevelopment site **GH13**, "Oakwoods" Station Road South.

Surface water attenuation facilities will be required on any site in the town.

Cemetery Provision

15.5.13 The Town Council have indicated that the existing cemetery in the town is almost fully developed, therefore an additional site is required. A possible location for future expansion would be in the Common Mead area. The land here is subject to development restrictions due to the proximity of the sewage works. However, a low-key use such as a cemetery could be acceptable.

Policy GH22

Land off Stour Meadows is proposed for possible use as an additional town cemetery. Additional tree planting/landscaping will be required to the south of the site to act as a screen to the Sewage Treatment Works.

Drainage and Sewerage

15.5.14 The proposed increase in the number of dwellings in Gillingham may require an extension to the Sewage Treatment Works operated by the Wessex Water Company. The Company therefore requests that an area of land to the north-east of the existing sewage treatment works should be safeguarded to allow for future extensions. The

Water Company will be asked to keep the impact of any new development to a minimum. The District Council will require a landscaping area around the edge of the sewage treatment works if they are extended.

Policy GH23

Land adjoining the sewage treatment works off Common Mead Lane will be safeguarded for possible extensions to the works. Additional landscaping schemes are required to be carried out on the perimeters of the site.

Flood Alleviation Schemes

15.5.15 A Flood alleviation scheme has now been implemented for the Town Bridge area of the town centre. This area is shown as an 'Area Defended by Flood Defence Scheme' on the Proposals Map. **Policy 1.13** applies in such areas.

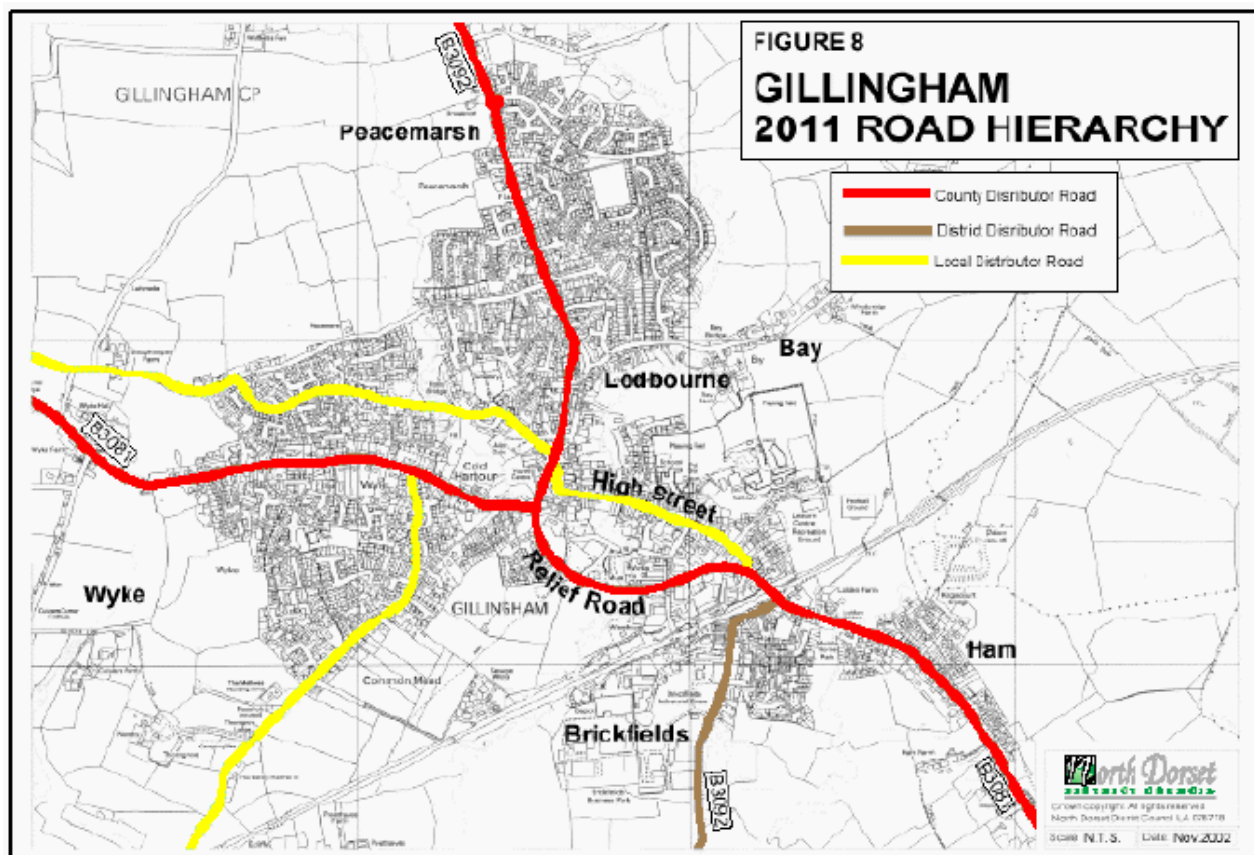
6. Transportation

15.6.1 The guiding policies on highways and transportation are found within the general policies contained in **Chapter 5** of the Plan. These guiding policies relate to cyclists, pedestrians, traffic management, heavy goods vehicles, environment and landscape, public transport, parking facilities and servicing. It also includes the definition of the road hierarchy for North Dorset.

15.6.2 **Chapter 5** contains details of the 'Local Plan Road Improvement Programme' and details the major highway schemes, which are proposed for the period up to 2011. This contains specific highway and transportation schemes for Gillingham.

Road Hierarchy

15.6.3 The 2011 road hierarchy for Gillingham as defined in **Chapter 5**, is shown in **Figure 8**.



Pedestrians - B3092 Peacemarch

15.6.4 Many children in northern Gillingham fall within the catchment area of the Primary School at Milton-on-Stour. A footway is therefore proposed on the eastern side of the B3092 between the Dolphin Inn Public House

and the Primary School at Milton-on-Stour. This will increase pedestrian safety and will improve accessibility between Gillingham and Milton-on-Stour. If possible, the improvement should allow for use by cyclists.

Policy GH24

A segregated footway and cycleway should be provided on the eastern side of the B3092 between the Dolphin Inn Public House and the Primary School at Milton-on-Stour

15.6.5 On the eastern side of the B3092 south of its junction with Wavering Lane there is a lack of footway of about 30m which results in a potentially hazardous situation for pedestrians. Due to an existing property that is located immediately adjacent to the carriageway a new footway will have to be constructed as part of a road narrowing.

Policy GH25

It is proposed to provide a footway on the B3092 south of the junction with Wavering Lane as part of a carriageway narrowing.

B3081 Shaftesbury Road

15.6.6 This road will take increased traffic volumes as a result of additional development in the area. It is essential therefore to improve pedestrian safety by introducing additional footways, and to introduce traffic management through the provision of two new access roundabouts/controlled junctions which will assist in calming traffic speed. The Highway Authority will seek contributions from developers in the area as additional demands will be placed on the need to provide these improvements.

15.6.7 The signal light controlled junction at Rookery Close, has now been constructed and so this part of the proposal is deleted from the Plan.

Policy GH26

In connection with the residential development of site J, at Ham Farm, it is proposed to construct a new controlled junction on the B3081 Shaftesbury Road, which will form the primary means of access to the site.

Policy GH27

It is proposed to provide additional footways along the B3081 Shaftesbury Road in connection with associated residential and commercial development.

Cyclists

15.6.8 The network of minor roads provides satisfactory local routes for cyclists through much of Gillingham. However, problems can occur where pedestrians and cyclists are required to use or to cross heavily trafficked roads. The problems and requirements of pedestrians and cyclists are being considered with the aim of improving facilities and identifying suitable pedestrian and cycle routes.

15.6.9 Measures to encourage cycling by making it safer and more attractive will be carried out. Such measures may include separation of cyclists from other road traffic, shared pedestrian/cycle routes, facilities to cross roads carrying a heavy traffic flow, restrictions on parking, and speed control facilities to slow motorists where separation is impossible.

15.6.10 Part of the North Dorset cycleway and also part of the proposed National Cycleway Network passes through the town. The improvements below will be linked with these cycleways. The Regeneration Study highlighted the need to improve pedestrian and cycling facilities through The Square to improve vitality in that area.

15.6.11 As future residential development will place additional demands upon the need to provide these improvements, contributions will be sought from developers.

Policy GH28

Measures to make cycling safer and more attractive will be encouraged along the following routes:

- (i) B3092 Peacemarsh, Le Neuborg Way, Newbury, New Road**
- ii) B3081 Wyke Road, Shaftesbury Road**
- (iii) Cemetery Road/Rolls Bridge Way**
- (iv) C74 Bay Road (west of Shreen Way)**
- (v) High Street/The Square/Wyke Road Junction**

Railtrack

15.6.12 Gillingham Station is the only such facility in the District and as a result has a key part to play in the development of an integrated transport network.

Policy GH29

Gillingham Railway Station will be developed as an integrated transport interchange, with improved facilities for users of train and bus services.

GILLINGHAM ROYAL FOREST

15A.1.1 Gillingham Royal Forest was established as a royal hunting area in the early 13th century. King John is alleged to have constructed the fortified hunting lodge at Gillingham, the remains of which are still evident today as extensive earthworks known as Kings Court Palace. The Forest bounds extended to an area between Gillingham, Dunccliffe Wood, Shaftesbury and the County boundary with Wiltshire. The majority of the area was deforested in the 17th century.

15A.1.2 The Gillingham Royal Forest Project applies to that area of the former forest which lies between Gillingham, Motcombe and the County boundary. The main aim of the project is to encourage partial diversification of the local farming industry towards woodland planting and countryside recreational activities. It is not the intention to convert the area back to a complete forest.

15A.1.3 Other objectives which can be achieved through this Project are · an aid to the economic development of the area · the fostering of interest in the history of the Royal Forest · a firm edge controlling the eastwards expansion of Gillingham · an enhancement of the landscape quality of the area

15A.1.4 It is intended that an enhancement grant scheme will operate within the Project Area to encourage woodland planting. The grant scheme will be funded from a number of national and local sources. Additional funding may also become available for sensitive low-key countryside recreation and tourism projects related to the Forest Project (e.g. establishment of riding/walking/cycling trails, provision of accommodation and interpretation facilities) Implementation of the Project will be through a joint working group of local authorities/public agencies who will prepare a Management Strategy for the area.

Policy GRF1

Within the Gillingham Royal Forest Project Area it is proposed to;

- (i) enhance the landscape and aid the diversification of agriculture through the provision of additional woodland planting**
- (ii) provide and co-ordinate additional countryside recreational facilities**

(iii) provide interpretative/tourism/educational material and facilities Development will be approved in the area if the above objectives are met and the proposal is in keeping with the character of the area.

Contd

PART 2 - LOCAL AREA POLICIES

HAZELBURY BRYAN

Inset Plan No.
17

17.1.1 Hazelbury Bryan is a large parish which lies to the south of the Blackmore Vale. It comprises six separate hamlets namely, Droop, Kingston, Parkgate, Pidney, Wonston and Woodrow, and local services and facilities are spread among them. Three of the hamlets have been given Settlement Boundaries, (namely Kingston, Pidney and Wonston). It is important however, that the separate identity of all the hamlets is retained and as such, development which would result in their coalescence will not be permitted.

Policy HB1

Any development which would lead to the coalescence of the separate hamlets of Hazelbury Bryan will not be permitted.

KINGS STAG

Inset Plan No.
23

23.1.1 Dorset County Council's "Rural Footway Programme" includes a proposal to provide a footway alongside the B3143 north of Kings Stag Crossroad to Kings Stag Garage.

Policy KS1

It is proposed to provide a footway alongside the B3143, north of Kings Stag Crossroad.

MILTON ABBAS

Inset Plan No.
31

31.1.1 The village of Milton Abbas is one of the most attractive in the County and is a very early example of estate planning. Within the parish of Milton Abbas half a mile from the existing settlement, was the original site of the village, now deserted, but protected as an Ancient Monument. It is also the home of Milton Abbey and Milton Abbey House, both magnificent Grade1 Listed Buildings. The whole village including Milton Abbey and House is a designated Conservation Area of outstanding interest.

31.1.2 In 1996 the village produced a "Village Appraisal" which not only examined the history and social life of the village, but highlighted areas for future action. In particular it noted that, because of its historic and architectural importance, the village attracts numerous visitors throughout the year, for whom car parking and toilet facilities were needed. This proposal has not been pursued. A Parish Plan is now to be produced, linked with a Conservation Area Appraisal.

MILTON ON STOUR

Inset Plan No.
32

32.1.1 This predominantly stone-built village has a loose-knit character with several important open or wooded areas interspersed with groups of buildings. In view of this special architectural and historic interest, the village was designated as a Conservation Area (Jan. 1995).

32.1.2 Recent development of Gillingham northwards has renewed the countryside gap between the town and Milton-on-Stour. This area was formerly designated a "Buffer Zone", and a policy of restraint applied within it. However, having considered objections to the "Buffer Zone" policy the Local Plan Inspector recommended its deletion.

32.1.3 The Council has accepted this recommendation, but has also commissioned a Landscape Assessment of the former Buffer Zone and other areas around the town. Once this is complete, the Council intends to review this part of the Plan, and if necessary publish Supplementary Planning Guidance for the area.

32.1.4 The village is without mains drainage, and on the local heavy clay soils there have been problems of effluent pollution as septic tanks, with a few exceptions, do not operate satisfactorily.

Policy MS1

Development will not be permitted in the village unless satisfactory foul drainage facilities can be provided.

32.1.5 There is also the possibility of providing a footpath/bridleway link with Gillingham along the River Stour. Eventually this could form part of a major new Trail; "The Stour Valley Way" between Christchurch and Stourhead.

Policy MS2

The provision of a footpath/bridleway is proposed alongside The River Stour to link with Gillingham.

32.1.6 A footway along the B3092 is proposed to link the northern housing areas of Gillingham with Milton-on-Stour School (see **Gillingham Policy GH24**).

MOTCOMBE

Inset Plan No. 33

33.1.1 Improvements to the foul drainage infrastructure within the village were completed in the early 90's and a flood alleviation scheme to reduce risks of surface water flooding from the system was completed in autumn 1997.

33.1.2 Despite these improvements the village may experience flooding again, although the severity and frequency should be reduced. The following policy has therefore been introduced for the village to ensure that the potential for flooding is kept under control.

Policy MC1

Satisfactory drainage arrangements will be necessary for all future development, in order to safeguard against potential flooding problems.

OKEFORD FITZPAINE

Inset Plan No. 34

34.1.1 Okeford Fitzpaine is a picturesque village on the northern slopes of the Dorset Downs. The older part of the village was designated a Conservation Area in 1974. Its charm lies not only in the merit of the individual buildings but in their relationship to one another.

34.1.2 Faccenda Ltd. is situated on a compact site in the centre of the village. The company (which processes chickens) generates a considerable amount of heavy goods vehicle traffic to and from the site, which has to traverse unsuitable, narrow streets and lanes. Furthermore the processing use has given rise in the past to unpleasant smells and noise, to the detriment of the amenity of nearby residential property.

34.1.3 The processing factory has expanded over the years and further development of buildings or expansion of operations will be difficult to achieve within the site. It is proposed therefore that, should there be a need for the company to expand their Okeford Fitzpaine site, the company should be encouraged to relocate their factory premises onto an alternative site in Shillingstone Lane. This site is in the company's ownership and is currently partially used as a staff car park and also for poultry rearing units.

34.1.4 There would be a need for this new employment site to be served by a new access road off Castle Lane to ensure that service traffic will not have to pass either through the village or along Shillingstone Lane. It must be stressed that the District Council wish to retain this valuable source of employment in the locality and the above proposal is put forward as a possible long term solution to the present problems caused on the Higher Street site.

Policy OF1 (Employment Development Site E/34/1)

2.1 Hectares (5.2 acres) of land at Shillingstone Lane will be developed for employment use, specifically for the relocation of the existing employment site off Higher Street, subject to the following criteria;

- (i) the satisfactory relocation of the existing poultry rearing unit,**
- (ii) the site shall be served by a new access road off Castle Lane,**
- (iii) the existing vehicular access off Shillingstone Lane shall be closed,**
- (iv) where necessary improvements shall be made to Castle Lane northwards from the new access road to the junction with the A357.**

PIMPERNE

Inset Plan No. 35

35.1.1 A combined cycletrack/footway along the A354 from Blandford to Pimperne is proposed to enable cyclists and pedestrians to travel between Blandford and Pimperne in a safer and less intimidating environment. Many of the children in Pimperne attend schools in Blandford and this route would provide a much needed and well used facility. The extent of the cycletrack/footway will be determined when detailed design work is carried out.

Policy PM1

A combined cycletrack/footway is proposed along the route of the A354 Primary Road between Blandford and Pimperne.

35.1.2 An improvement is also required to provide an additional length of footway alongside the A354, south of Church Road.

Policy PM2

A footway improvement is proposed on the A354

SHAFTESBURY

Inset Plan No. 37

1 Introduction

Previous Plans for the Town

37.1.1 A statutory Town Local Plan was prepared during the 1980s and adopted in 1990. The various stages reached during the preparation programme were as follows;

Draft Shaftesbury Town Local Plan	August 1985
Deposit Draft Shaftesbury Town Local Plan	May 1987
Public Inquiry	February 1989
Proposed Modifications	June 1989
Formal Adoption	May 1990



37.1.2 This Plan Inset is based primarily on the previous adopted Local Plan.

Overall Aims for Shaftesbury

General Statement of Planning Policy

37.1.3 Shaftesbury is one of the oldest recorded towns in England and standing 700 feet above sea level, it is also one of the highest. The commanding views over the Blackmore Vale and the defensive position of the town help to explain why the settlement of Shaftesbury has a history reaching back to 800AD.

37.1.4 This hilltop location has severely restricted growth of the town except to the east where recent development has taken place on flat plateau land. Despite this modern expansion, Shaftesbury still retains much of the charm and character associated with a Medieval town.

37.1.5 A further constraint on future development of the town is the landscape designation "The Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty" designated by the Countryside Commission in 1983.

37.1.6 Despite these constraints, Shaftesbury is in a key position to attract economic development being at the crossroads of the A30 and A350. The flat plateau land to the east offers further potential development land. Under the Local Plan Strategy, Shaftesbury has therefore, been selected as a town for major growth on the main integrated transport network and developments defined as "major" may be permitted within the defined Settlement Boundary.

37.1.7 In order to retain this unique hilltop character, the following overall planning policy for the town aims to safeguard the open wooded slopes from further development and concentrate a phased and co-ordinated area for development on the flat plateau land to the east (see also the following section on the environmental capacity of the town).

37.1.8 The A350 passing through the town along Christys Lane and out towards Warminster is already heavily used by both long distance and local traffic. The proposed outer by-pass, to be built following improvements along the A350 further south, is intended to help alleviate this problem. This is a long term proposal and a reservation of land has been safeguarded for eventual construction to take place.

37.1.9 In order to allow for the expansion of the town, additional provision of community infrastructure is required. Developers may be asked to contribute financially towards this provision, to enable development to proceed in accordance with advice currently contained in Circular 1/97 Planning Obligations. Additional information is given in Chapter 4 of the Local Plan and in a Planning Advice Note. Costs of improvements which are required to meet the needs of the present population should be borne by the existing managing authorities.

Policy SB1

(i) All development in Shaftesbury should respect the historic character of the town and its surroundings. In particular, the hill-top character of the town will be conserved by retaining all remaining open or wooded areas around the slopes.

(ii) Major development and expansion of the town will only be permitted on flat plateau land to the east.

(iii) In accordance with the Local Plan Strategy **Shaftesbury will act as a main centre for co-ordinated population, housing and employment growth. The development of major community services to support this growth is supported.**

37.1.10 Since the publication of the Deposit Plan and scrutiny through the Local Plan Inquiry, new Regional Planning Guidance has been prepared and approved by the Government (RPG 10). In relation to the smaller towns in the region, such as Shaftesbury, which lie outside of the "Principal Urban Areas (PUAs)", policies SS 6 and SS 7 apply. These policies aim to generally avoid significant growth in towns within easy commuting distance of PUAs, and where housing could exceed employment growth. They also state that growth in such towns should primarily be to support local needs and to make services available to wider rural areas.

37.1.11 At first sight, the large-scale housing proposals for Shaftesbury may tend to be viewed as contrary to the above aims. However, there has been a long-term obligation not only under previous approved Development Plans dating back to the 1960's, but also under the Local Plan Strategy of concentrating major development in the towns, to provide for significant levels of growth on the eastern side of the town. The relatively constraint free plateau area here has also tended to endorse and support this legacy. (The whole of this area was proposed under the Town Development Act in the 1960's for a London overspill scheme.) Furthermore, as recognised by the Panel for the examination in Public into the existing Structure Plan (see Panel Report para. 2.34), the town is sufficiently remote from any of the principal urban areas, so as not to promote major out-commuting flows. The proposals for this area are now for an urban village-type mixed-use development, incorporating employment and community use, which will also help to promote a degree of self-containment.

37.1.12 In addition, work done for this Plan, on identifying previously used land for housing development and subsequently analysed in the initial Urban Potential Study of 1999, shows there to be a significant lack of brownfield opportunity in the town. Therefore the predominant means of providing for the strategic housing target, has been through the proposed release of a major urban extension onto greenfield land on the eastern side. However in order to ensure a managed and co-ordinated release of housing land, a phasing policy has been introduced. Furthermore, annual monitoring of development, will also help ensure that the development pattern here will keep step with the overall strategy of the Local Plan and with the requirements of PPG 3 on Housing, as outlined in **Chapter 2** of this Plan.

2. The Environment

Environmental Capacity of the Town

37.2.1 Looking ahead towards the end of the Plan period the Local Authority has begun looking at the environmental constraints to the eventual spread of development of Shaftesbury. These constraints are closely linked to the aim of promoting sustainable development and are sometimes described as being the "environmental capacity" of the development of the settlement. Each settlement may have a defined physical limit beyond which major environmental harm may be caused. This is not to say that these constraints should be seen as an absolute for long term planning. However they should be seen as a monitoring device so that if there is a requirement to expand a settlement significantly in the future, it may be done in a way which will minimise environmental impact, reduce the reliance on the motor car and bring social and economic benefits, particularly to town centre community and retail facilities.

37.2.2 The latter issue is an important consideration to be assessed when defining possible limits to the spread of development of Shaftesbury. At present the layout of the town centre retailing and community facilities is often constrained by a development pattern based on a historic medieval structure. This is a substantial barrier to finding sufficient space for expansion of town centre facilities which are commensurate with the needs of a large increase in population. It is felt that Shaftesbury should be analysed carefully to consider what scope there may be for continued major expansion using the assessment factors below;

- The availability of sufficient land in or close to town centres which will allow for expansion of retailing and community facilities to serve an increase in population.
- A distance beyond which people are not likely to walk or cycle into the town (assessed to be approximately 1.6km/1 mile, equivalent to a 20/30 min walk.) Thus the use of the motor car is likely to be increased when housing or employment developments are situated beyond this distance.
- The ability of the local road network to prove attractive for the operation of a regular frequency bus link to the town centre.
- The constraint of the proposed outer A350 by-pass and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the east of the town.
- The topographical constraints of the hillslopes.

37.2.3 As stated above, it is proposed that the continuing growth of the town should be accommodated to the east of the town, within the confines of the proposed outer by-pass. Once the development of this land is complete

however, Shaftesbury may have reached a natural environmental capacity based on the above factors. Any further expansion may also be detrimental to the landscape setting of the town, due to the proximity of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or would be too far away from the town centre to encourage walking or cycling. If there is a need for further long-term development in the Shaftesbury area, it may have to take place outside the Inset Plan area in other related settlements defined in the Development Plan which are situated on the integrated transport network.

The Conservation Area

37.2.4 In recognition of its special architectural and historic qualities, the Town Centre was designated a Conservation Area in 1970. It was subsequently extended in 1979 to include Enmore Green and the site of the former Abbey Fishponds. A further extension in 1989 included land at Breach Lane. The overall Conservation Area was divided into the following five distinct environmental areas in the publication; "Shaftesbury: Conservation Policy and Proposals" (1982).

(i) The Town Centre

37.2.5 The town centre is essentially inward looking with a network of narrow lanes linking the three principal streets: High Street, Bell Street and Bleke Street. The tightly developed street frontages create a strong sense of enclosure offering only occasional glimpses of the surrounding countryside.

37.2.6 High Street starts as a narrow lane at the junction with Angel Square and winds towards the Town Hall and St. Peters Church where it opens out considerably. From here, a sharp turn northwards leads to The Commons and an impressive view down Tout Hill. This is the main commercial area in the town.

37.2.7 Bell Street, in contrast, is primarily residential. The range of two and three storey terraces and the mix of traditional materials and designs form an attractive and largely unspoilt street scene.

Policy SB2

Future development in the town centre must respect the compact, unbroken line of facades and the existing pattern of narrow streets. Further erosion of this pattern will destroy the essential character of the town centre.

(ii) The Slopes

37.2.8 The Slopes consist of four main areas, each with their own individual character and sense of place. In addition to being visible from a number of places within the town, the Slopes are also the dominant feature in views of Shaftesbury from the surrounding countryside. Attention is drawn to Policy SB1 which states that all remaining open or wooded areas around the Slopes should be conserved.

37.2.9 The District Council has acquired a large area of open land on the Castle Hill slopes. It is intended to improve the informal recreational facilities in this area through scrub clearance and tree planting as well as the provision of additional footpaths and signposting. The Council is also considering the possible making of a declaration that the site be created a Nature Reserve.

Policy SB3

(i) Development which would reduce or urbanise the distinct rural character of the Slopes will not be permitted. Development will only be allowed if it can be shown that the proposal is in keeping with the character of the area and will not adversely affect views from higher and lower ground.

(ii) It is proposed to improve the informal recreational facilities on the Castle Hill slopes.

(iii) Settlements At The Foot Of The Slopes (Enmore Green and St. James)

37.2.10 Limited modern residential development at Enmore Green and St. James has not unduly spoilt the historic character of these two settlements. Architecturally, St. James is still one of the finest streets in Shaftesbury and this is reflected in the high concentration of Listed Buildings.

Policy SB4

New development will only be permitted where the design and location of the proposal strengthens local character. Development which masks the dramatic effect of the topography or adversely affects views from higher or lower ground will not be permitted.

(iv) The Western End of the Spur

37.2.11 The busy street of Bimport links the rural environment to the south west of Shaftesbury with the town centre. The mix of development contains many important features including the former Church of the Holy Trinity, now a mixed use social and commercial centre. From Bimport several pathways give access to the northern slopes, Castle Hill and the site of the former Abbey.

Policy SB5

Development which adversely affects the importance of the public open space, historic sites and the views from the Western End of the Spur will not be permitted.

(v) Gold Hill

37.2.12 The cottages on the east side, generally built of stone and with a variety of roofing styles, are typical of Shaftesbury. The massive Abbey walls on the west side of Gold Hill are some of the few remains of the former Abbey. The view of Gold Hill from the Town Hall is of national fame and importance.

Policy SB6

Any development which adversely affects the outstanding character of Gold Hill will not be permitted.

The High Street, Market Place, Angel Square and The Commons

37.2.13 This area forms the main shopping and commercial area of the town. An enhancement scheme is required to introduce additional segregated paved areas for pedestrians and parking. Any scheme will be the subject of consultation with the Town Council and the local population.

Policy SB7

An Environmental Enhancement Scheme is proposed for the High Street, The Market Place, Angel Square and The Commons

3. Housing

Dwelling Unit Allocation

37.3.1 **Policy 2.3** allocates about 1170 dwellings to the town to be built between 1994 and 2011. This amounts to a construction rate of about 69 dwellings per annum. Since the start of the Plan period a considerable amount of development has taken place or is committed through planning permission. **Table 37.1** below gives a breakdown of Shaftesbury's housing allocation at 31.03.01.

Table 37.1 Components of Shaftesbury Housing Allocation at 31.03.01	Units
Plan Target	1170
Dwellings built 1994-2001	301
Dwellings with outstanding planning permission or under construction*	122
Allocated Sites	680 (min)
Infill and windfall allowance	72
Total	1175
Over/under supply	+5

*Figures adjusted to allow for likely take up.

37.3.2 Government policy encourages Local Planning Authorities to manage the release of housing land with the aim of securing the development of previously developed (brownfield) sites before the release of greenfield land. To this end, the Plan period has been divided into three phases of development and sites allocated accordingly.

37.3.3 **Table 37.2** below gives the anticipated development rates and proportions of brownfield development for each phase of the Plan period in Shaftesbury. It can be seen that development rates were not as high as planned during the first phase of development. This is primarily due to the fact that most development will come forward on the major allocation to the East of the town. It has taken time for the principles for this strategic site to be drawn up in consultation with the community. Despite the lower overall development rate, brownfield development has come forward at just above the required rate. Around another 155 dwellings are expected to come forward on brownfield sites during Phases 2 and 3, of which over 80 already have planning consent. The release of the land to the East of the town will undoubtedly have an effect on the housing market and may slow down the rate of brownfield development. Care will be needed in monitoring the situation and if necessary the programme for release may be reconsidered towards the end of Phase 2. Consideration will also need to be given to any future changes in policy arising from a review of the Structure Plan or the findings of the "Urban Potential Study" currently being undertaken.

37.3.4 Targets for affordable housing are set out in **Policy 2.4**. These may be varied in the light of the results of any future Housing Needs Survey undertaken during the Plan period. Any variations will be published for consultation in the form of Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Table 37.2 Shaftesbury Phasing programme

Phase	Dwells built or expected at 31.03.01	Average annual rate	% Brownfield	Average annual rate
1. 1994 – 2000	240	40	39	16
2. 2000 – 2006	555	93	18	17
3. 2006 – 2011	380	76	13	10
1994 – 2011	1175	69	20	14
Plan aim	About 1170	69	19	13

Sites Allocated for Development

37.3.5 Policy 2.4 allocates the following sites (of 5 or more dwellings) for development in the Plan period up to 2011:

- 1) Land on the eastern side of Shaftesbury (680 dwellings minimum)

This is a major site of some 23.0 hectares which is to be developed comprehensively with a mix of uses of which housing will form the dominant element. This site is of strategic importance to the development of the town, offering the opportunity to provide a new school and other community facilities as well as significant drainage infrastructure needed in the town. It is proposed that the development of the site should be spread over Phases 2 and 3 of the Plan period, with up to 400 dwellings released in Phase 1. (This includes up to 75 dwellings north of Mampitts Lane.) This amount of development is needed to help offset the heavy infrastructure requirements within the first phase. Infrastructure payments will need to be programmed to ensure that provision can be made at the appropriate time and is not dependent on the entire site being developed. The detailed requirements are set out in Policies SB10 and SB11 and in the Development Brief for the site.

Comprehensive Development Area Land to the East of Shaftesbury

Mix of Uses

37.3.6 In order to draw up modified policies for this area, following the recommendations of the Inspector, an "Enquiry by Design" process has been followed. Full details can be found in the accompanying Supplementary Planning Guidance published as a Development Brief.

37.3.7 This policy seeks to take forward the "Enquiry by Design" principles nos. 1, 3 and 6 regarding mix of uses, tenures and piecemeal development respectively (see Development Brief). It represents a distinct movement away from the Deposit version of the Local Plan which rigidly defined single use zones. The revised policy is designed to ensure that a range of uses are provided throughout the site in conjunction with the residential development. This will include commercial (e.g. small businesses, offices and local shops), community (e.g. allotment and cemetery) as well as educational (provision for a new first school).

37.3.8 The policy is complimentary to a number of policies that apply on a District Wide basis. Together these will ensure that a mix of uses e.g. housing with commensurate children's play space and tenures (i.e. affordable housing for rent in conjunction with open market housing) are provided.

37.3.9 It is expected that each landowner/developer will only submit a planning application covering the land that they control. It is important therefore that these individual planning applications are not viewed in isolation from the rest of the allocation. To ensure that this is the case the policy stipulates that individual development proposals will be assessed against the provisions of this development brief and an agreed masterplan. In terms of the latter document the Council does not intend at this stage to formally adopt just one masterplan. Instead intending developers as well as other groups may choose to produce such a document in accordance with the guidance and policies in the development brief. These must show how the proposals for the development of individual parcels of land will relate to the broader development, particularly in terms of vehicular, pedestrian and cycleway linkages. It is then expected that the Council will consider all of these documents before adopting a single preferred option which may utilise parts of many of the submitted masterplans. This will be published in conjunction with the adopted development brief.

37.3.10 This principle that individual development proposals should not be viewed in isolation from the rest of the allocation also applies to the provision of associated community infrastructure. Individual development proposals will be expected to contribute towards the achievement of targets for certain items of community infrastructure e.g. affordable housing/childrens play space, on a pro-rata basis.

Policy SB8

Land on the Eastern Side of **Shaftesbury**

Approximately 23 hectares of land on the eastern side of **Shaftesbury extending between the A30 in the south to Wincombe Lane in the north will be developed comprehensively for a mix of predominantly residential as well as commercial, education and community uses in two phases. Individual development proposals will be assessed against the provisions of an adopted development brief and an agreed masterplan.**

Movement Network/Access

37.3.11 The aim of this policy is to encourage the creation of a coherent and legible pattern of streets, squares and connections to promote ease of movement, especially by non-car modes. This will allow a permeable movement framework to be designed which provides safe connections through and beyond the site based on natural movements in order to provide good integration with the existing neighbourhood. Importantly this must connect the A30, Mampitts Lane and Wincombe Lane and serve all areas in order to prevent piecemeal development. Some of the streets and spaces will be designed so as to facilitate a viable bus route through the development. Contributions may be sought towards the initial diversion of existing bus services to serve the development on a 'pump-priming' basis. Initial consultations with the bus operators indicates that this will be a viable option and will secure the long term provision of a bus route to serve the development. Consideration also needs to be given to the protection of the existing rights of way network through the site.

37.3.12 The signal controlled junctions on the A30 will allow two points of access to the development area to the north of the A30, one to the east and one to the west of the Greenacres property. The aim is to create a gateway entrance to Shaftesbury. This can be achieved through the use of landmark buildings in this location as well as careful landscaping. Gateways will reinforce the identity of the area and distinctive features, such as public art, and landmark buildings can punctuate important vistas. This is also an ideal location for small scale commercial/retail proposals which will not only serve the proposed development but will also benefit from passing trade. Speed restrictions on the A30 and the treatment of the dual carriageway section of the road further to the west (running up to the Royal Chase roundabout), perhaps through the creation of right and left turning lanes on to and from the B3081, will be important considerations in the implementation of this junction arrangement.

Policy SB9

Access requirements for land on the eastern side of **Shaftesbury**

Proposals for development on the eastern side of **Shaftesbury, in accordance with policies SB8 and SB12, must promote a comprehensive and permeable movement network which provides for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular linkages to all areas. This will include;**

- (i) Two signal controlled junctions from the A30 which provide two points of access to the mixed use development area to the north, one to the east and one to the west of the property Greenacres, and which collectively create a gateway to the town.**
- (ii) Access to the employment allocation to the south of the A30.**
- (iii) A road network which links the A30, Mampitts Lane and Wincombe Lane.**

(iv) Enhanced pedestrian and cycleway linkages with the existing development on the eastern side of the town including the provision of footpath and cycleway links along Wincombe Lane and Mampitts Lane as well as links to join the development with the Wincombe Recreation Ground.

(v) Enhanced pedestrian and cycleway crossing facilities across Christy's Lane to link the eastern side of the town with the town centre (see [paragraph 37.6.15](#)).

(vi) Developer contributions towards the diversion of existing bus routes to serve the new development may be sought.

37.3.13 A phased programme of development will ensure that the provision of community infrastructure is co-ordinated with the release of land for housing. Equally it will ensure that the necessary transport infrastructure is provided to facilitate easy linkages between the site and the town centre as well to promote a choice of modes of transport.

37.3.14 The phasing policy will ensure that the release of land for development accords with the 'Plan, Monitor and Manage' approach of PPG3 'Housing'. In particular the 'Planning to Deliver – The Managed Release of Housing Sites' document encourages phasing policies to specifically allocate the development of a site or part of a site to a particular time frame in the plan period. In the case of the land on the eastern side of Shaftesbury there will be relatively high initial costs in terms of servicing the site and providing the necessary infrastructure, for instance in terms of drainage and highways requirements. Developers need certainty to ensure that the costs and potential revenue from the development can properly be accounted for. This must be balanced against the need to ensure that the services and infrastructure of the town are not swamped by all the development coming on stream at the same time.

37.3.15 **Policy SB11** seeks to ensure the balanced development of the site taking into account all of these factors. It will also address the fact that when the site was first identified for development it was considered that on average it would achieve a density of 30 dwellings to the hectare (gross). Subsequent government guidance indicated that higher densities should be sought (in the range 30 to 50 to the hectare). The plan was amended to indicate that the 30 figure should be viewed as a minimum and that higher densities would not be discouraged. The phasing policy will ensure that if such higher densities are achieved the future release of land for development can be properly managed to ensure that the strategic housing target for the District is not dramatically exceeded. Equally it will ensure that a constant check can be kept upon the balance between the level of development, and associated increases in population, and the provision of community infrastructure.

37.3.16 It is acknowledged that many of the more capital intensive infrastructure projects are required within the first phase of the development. This includes the signal controlled junctions from the A30 and drainage infrastructure. The badgers are also known to be concentrated in this part of the site which may also create additional development costs.

37.3.17 In order to offset this initial investment in infrastructure the phasing policy does not seek to split the development site in half at Mampitts Lane but it also allows the development of an additional 75 houses to the north of Mampitts Lane in the first phase. These will be accessed via Pound Lane and the 75 figure represents the spare capacity along this road from the point where it becomes in effect a cul-de-sac with the junction with Ten Acres.

37.3.18 This additional 75 dwellings will also offset the provision of a new First School on the site. With the potential for an increased number of houses to be achieved on the site ongoing negotiations with the County Education Department have revealed that the on site provision of a new school will be warranted and a land swap involving the existing Shaftesbury First School and a new site within the development will need to be arranged. If this is to be provided in association with the relocation of the existing First School on Mampitts Lane then a site area of approximately 1.9 hectares will be required. Should a new school not be necessary, but extended facilities at the existing school to serve new development needs to take place on school playing fields then replacement playing field facilities will need to be provided close to the school. If however the new school is to be provided in addition to the existing First School then a site area of approximately 1.4 hectares will be required.

Policy SB10

Phasing of Development, Land on the Eastern Side of **Shaftesbury**

Land on the eastern side of **Shaftesbury** extending between the A30 in the south and Wincombe Lane to the north will be developed in two phases. In the period 2001 to 2006 the following land/dwellings will be developed;

(i) Land extending between the A30 in the south to Mampitts Lane in the north.

- (ii) Some 75 dwellings to the north of Mampitts Lane to initially be accessed via Pound Lane.

The remainder of the site will be reserved for development post 2006. The following facilities will be provided in conjunction with the first phase of development;

- (i) * Two signal controlled junctions with the A30.
- (ii) * A through vehicular link from the signal controlled junctions to Mampitts Lane and to serve the additional 75 dwellings to the north of Mampitts Lane.
- (iii) Improved pedestrian and cycleway crossing facilities across Christy's Lane.
- (iv) On site provision of a neighbourhood hall and/or a financial contribution towards an off site community hall to serve the town as a whole
- (v) * On or off site drainage infrastructure
- (vi) On site provision of;
 - * Public open space and childrens' play areas
 - Additional/replacement allotment land
 - ** A new First School to support a development of 800 dwellings. Should the development be for a significantly lower amount, a financial contribution towards extended school facilities off site will be required. Replacement playing fields may be required if existing playing fields are required for extended school buildings
 - * A shop

(NB The obligations marked * are additional to obligations listed in the Planning Guidance Note. Obligations marked ** may be extra depending on the outcome of consultation on education re-organisation).

Community Infrastructure

37.3.19 Fundamentally this policy seeks to balance the increased level of population arising from the development on the eastern side of the town with increased provision of community facilities through developer contributions. It can be seen from the associated list, together with policy references where applicable, that these facilities are wide ranging. In order to assist the application of these policies the Council has produced a Planning Guidance Note entitled 'Planning Obligations for the Provision of Community Infrastructure' which is available on request.

37.3.20 The provision of a community hall was discussed through the Enquiry by Design process where three options emerged. The first was to provide a neighbourhood hall on site to serve the new community. If a new First School needs to be built on site, the neighbourhood hall could be incorporated into that building, provided that appropriate security, management and availability can be agreed with the Education Authority. The second option was to require a contribution from developers towards a larger community building at the existing Youth Club site in Coppice Street, which would serve the town as a whole. It was felt that this would foster better links between existing and new communities in line with the Enquiry by Design principles but would leave the new development area without a local facility. The third option was a combination of the other two, namely a small neighbourhood hall as well as a larger community facility. A study to assess the feasibility of a larger facility and suggest a suitable site will need to be undertaken before a final decision can be taken.

Policy SB11

Provision of Community Infrastructure

In order to ensure the commensurate increase in the provision of community infrastructure in conjunction with additional development on the eastern side of **Shaftesbury**, contributions towards the necessary provision of the following Community Facilities may be sought;

- (i) First and Middle School Improvements. **Policy 4.2**
- (ii) On site provision of a Neighbourhood Hall and/or a financial contribution towards an off-site community hall which may serve the Town as a whole. **Policy 4.3**
- (iii) Improvements to sports pitches. **Policy 4.5**
- (iv) Improvements to Barton Hill Recreation Ground.
- (v) Informal recreation at Castle Hill Slopes. **Policy SB3**

(vi) High Street Area Enhancement Scheme. Policy SB7

(vii) Networked improvements to cycleways. Policy SB15

(viii) Additional/replacement allotment land.

Landscaping

37.3.21 Perhaps the main determinants of the landscape character of the undeveloped site are the existing trees and hedgerows. Whilst many of the mature trees are the subject of tree preservation orders, and therefore are protected from development, the issue remains as to how to treat the hedgerows. There are two schools of thought on this matter. One suggests that the hedgerows would be an alien feature in an otherwise urban environment which would artificially constrain the layout and design of the development. The other school of thought is that the hedgerows are an ecological and historical as well as an aesthetic component of the site. Certainly it is known that there are badgers on the site and that there is a strong correlation between their location and the line of the hedgerows. The hedgerows therefore act as important wildlife corridors. Equally many of the trees which are the subject of preservation orders are also located within the lines of existing hedgerows.

37.3.22 In reality the correct solution lies somewhere between these two extremes. This is why the policy stipulates that the protection of existing landscape features must be the subject of an overall design strategy for the development. To ensure that this is the case an Arboricultural Impact Assessment should be submitted with each individual development proposal. This will include a tree survey based on an accurate land survey. It will detail the tree/hedgerows to be retained as well as the measures for their protection during the development. It will also serve to categorise the trees and hedgerows according to their importance.

37.3.23 There is the opportunity to provide various forms of landscape design including street tree planting, urban woodland, parks, play areas, allotments and large scale woodland planting to the edge of the outer bypass reservation corridor. There are also opportunities to combine the retention of these facilities. For instance the incidence of badger setts may demand the retention of a particular stretch of hedgerow. This can then be used as the hub for the provision of additional public open space as well as perhaps the location for drainage measures such as a balancing pond. In this way an attractive feature of the development can be created which also preserves and perhaps even enhances the ecological value of the area. Existing hedgerows can also be used as potential conduits for the provision of pedestrian and cycleway linkages. Experience suggests that their incorporation into the boundaries of domestic properties fails to ensure consistent and effective management in the long term.

37.3.24 The eastern boundary of the development area is formed by the reservation corridor for the future outer bypass. There is however no physical representation of this on the ground in that it does not follow the line of existing hedgerows. It was one of the agreed principles arising from the Enquiry by Design process that the edge will need very careful and logical treatment because of this and indeed it was the spur for introducing this bespoke policy. Subsequently the treatment of the eastern boundary will be an important consideration in terms of the consideration of future planning applications. This should be consistent with policy SB18 (see below) which is a reservation policy for the future bypass.

37.3.25 There is the opportunity in this location to introduce both hard and soft landscaping measures. In terms of the latter there is the potential to compliment existing landscape features through the provision of additional planting, open space, green wedges and wildlife corridors. It was also agreed at the Enquiry by Design workshop that a carefully designed and distinct edge to the built environment, which incorporates hard landscaping features, may also be appropriate. This could incorporate a high quality built form which fronts out from the development.

37.3.26 Existing hedgerows and trees will be preserved as far as is practicable as part of an overall design strategy for the development. A comprehensive hard and soft landscaping scheme will form an integral part of any development proposals. This will include the treatment of the eastern boundary of the site which is formed by the reservation corridor for the proposed outer bypass. Provision will be made for additional landscaping measures in this location whilst ensuring that the future implementation of the bypass project is not compromised.

Future Population

37.3.27 From the 1991 Census the resident population of the Parish is estimated to be 6300. Average household size throughout the County has been declining for many years and it is likely to continue to do so in the future. Projections produced by the County, (based on the proposals of the Draft Structure Plan for Dorset) indicate that average household size in North Dorset is likely to decline by 0.15 persons per household between 1991 and 2011. In 1991 the average household size in the Parish of Shaftesbury was 2.34. Making allowances for the decline in household size and assuming that the scale of development identified in Policy 2.3 is fully taken up, this could result in a population of some 8,500 by 2011.

4. Employment and Shopping

Employment

37.4.1 Existing Employment Areas (**Policies 3.1 - 3.3**)

Site Ref.	Location	Area (ha.)	Notes
E/37/1	Longmead Industrial Estate	18.9	Developed in three phases since the mid-1970's. Virtually fully developed. 0.1ha. available for development.
E/37/2	Wincombe Business Park	6.3	Granted outline permission in 1975, 0.3ha. available for development.
E/37/3	C. B. Morgan Yard	1.6	Haulage depot adjacent to A350. No land available for development.
E/37/5	Blackmore Creamery	0.9	Existing creamery.

Proposed Employment Land Allocation Site E/37/4; Land south of Salisbury Road

Employment Land

37.4.2 Although it was another principle arising from the Enquiry by Design process that the employment allocation to the south of the A30 should be deleted, this conflicts with a specific recommendation of the Local Plan Inspector. He stated that the allocation should instead be extended to the south and west. It is considered that there will be an ongoing need to accommodate larger industrial type developments (class B2), which could not be satisfactorily included within the development to the north of the A30. Therefore in accordance with the Inspector's recommendation, the allocation has been extended further to the south to ensure a sufficient land supply, although land to the west remains outside of the settlement boundary in order to protect the long range views to Melbury Beacon. Extensive landscaping on the western and south boundaries of the development will also ensure that this remains the case. The A30 frontage to the employment site should be designed to complement the proposed residential development on the north side and provide an attractive gateway into the town. Therefore mixed use, such as commercial with flats over and parking and servicing to the rear, will be encouraged on the A30 frontage, provided that the use of the rest of the site for industrial purposes is not prejudiced.

37.4.3 The employment allocation falls within the Boyne Hollow Public Water Supply Groundwater Source Protection Area, and the western most part of the allocation is situated in Zone 2 (the middle most sensitive zone). A drainage assessment will be required for most applications on this employment land. This assessment must aim to select the best environmental option for the protection of quality and quantity of water reaching the borehole, from alternatives which include: (i) drainage to a watercourse (with either interceptors or a Sustainable Drainage System) outside the GSPA or downstream of the borehole (ii) connection to a surface water sewer (with either interceptors or Sustainable Drainage System) which outfalls outside of the GSPA (iii) a sustainable drainage system involving pollution attenuation and then infiltration.

Policy SB12

Employment Land Allocation, Land South of Salisbury Road

Approximately 7 hectares of land to the south of the A30 will be developed for business, industrial and warehousing purposes subject to;

- (i) Provision of a vehicular access from a signal controlled junction on the A30 (see policy SB9).**
- (ii) Provision of a bus stop with shelter.**
- (iii) Extensive landscaping on the western and southern boundaries of the site.**
- (iv) Mixed use development on the frontage to the A30 may include commercial uses with flats over.**

Shopping

Promotion of the Town Centre

37.4.4 Attempts to establish smaller shops or enlarge existing shops within the town centre will be encouraged. The disused S.E.B. yard adjacent to Mustons Lane is suitable for such small scale retail development.

Policy SB13

The development of Mustons Yard for small scale retail and commercial uses will be approved. The overall development of the site should include provision for a pedestrian link between Bell Street and High Street.

5. Community Services and Recreation

Recreation and Sports

37.5.1 An additional 2.8ha of recreation land was allocated to the south of Wincombe Lane in the Shaftesbury Town Plan (1990). Discussions on the type of recreational facilities which will be provided are taking place. The option under consideration is for the creation of a grassed area suitable for casual football, cricket etc. A sports wall and some children's play equipment has been provided. Further requirements are being investigated. Under **Policy 4.8** the Local Planning Authority may seek developer contributions where new residential schemes exacerbate an existing or future deficiency in recreational provision.

Policy SB14

(Recreation Development Site R/37/1)

Land at Wincombe Lane will be developed for general recreational purposes.

37.5.2 Major additional indoor and outdoor sports provision is now being formulated at Shaftesbury School as part of a "Sports College" proposal. These enhanced facilities will also be for the use of the general community (as is the case with the existing Leisure Centre at the school). As planning is at an early stage it is premature to include a land use policy in this plan.

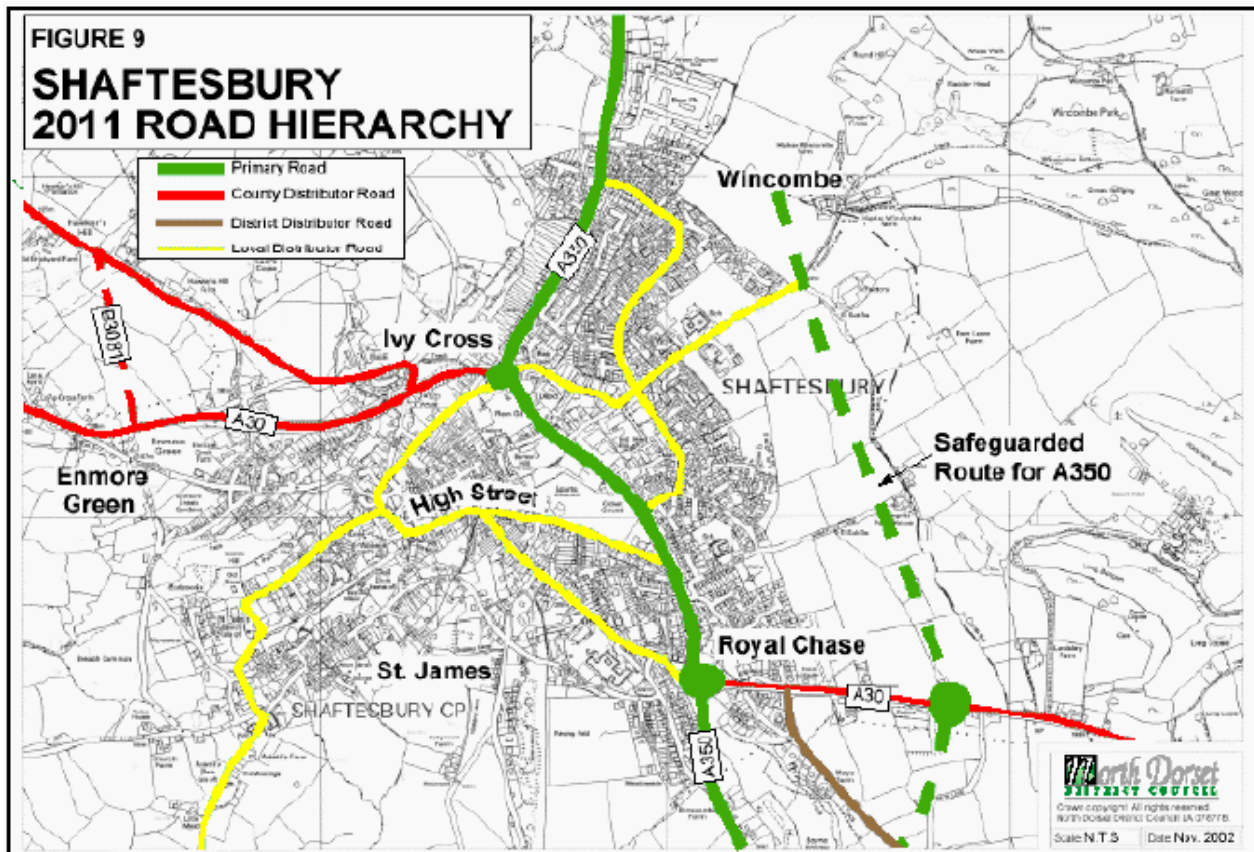
6. Transportation

37.6.1 The guiding policies on highways and transportation are found within the general policies contained in **Chapter 5** of the Plan. These guiding policies relate to cyclists, pedestrians, traffic management, heavy goods vehicles, environment and landscape, public transport, parking facilities and servicing. It also includes the definition of the road hierarchy for North Dorset.

37.6.2 **Chapter 5** contains details of the 'Local Plan Road Improvement Programme' and details the major highway schemes, which are proposed for the period up to 2011. This contains specific highway and transportation schemes for Shaftesbury.

Road Hierarchy

37.6.3 The 2011 road hierarchy for Shaftesbury as defined in **Chapter 5** is shown in **Figure 9**.



Pedestrians

37.6.4 In association with the proposed Environmental Enhancement Scheme for the High Street, The Market Place, Angel Square and The Commons, the need for accident remedial and traffic management measures will be examined.

Cyclists

37.6.5 The network of minor roads provides satisfactory local routes for cyclists through much of Shaftesbury. However, problems can occur where pedestrians and cyclists are required to use or to cross heavily trafficked roads. The problems and requirements of pedestrians and cyclists are being considered with the aim of improving facilities and identifying suitable pedestrian and cycle routes.

37.6.6 Measures to encourage cycling by making it safer and more attractive will be carried out. Such measures may include separation of cyclists from other road traffic, shared pedestrian/cycle routes, facilities to cross roads carrying a heavy traffic flow, restrictions on parking and speed control facilities to slow motorists where separation is impossible.

Policy SB15

Measures to make cycling safer and more attractive will be encouraged along the following routes;

- (i) A30 Christy's Lane
- (ii) A350 Grosvenor Road
- (iii) Wincombe Lane

Major Road Schemes

37.6.7 One major road scheme is proposed for this area of the Plan in the period up to 2011. This is the A350/C13 Higher Blandford Road Improvement. Further information regarding this major scheme is contained in **Chapter 5**.

Medium/Minor Safety Schemes

A30 Long Cross

37.6.8 The A30 County Distributor Road passes through the settlement of Long Cross to the west of Shaftesbury which presently lacks a footway.

The Knapp.

37.6.9 The former A30 which passes through The Knapp presently lacks a footway on the southern side between the junctions with Horseponds and Breach Lane.

Policy SB16

In order to increase road safety and to provide a less intimidating environment for pedestrians it is proposed to;

- (i) provide a footway along the A30 through the settlement on Long Cross as shown on the proposals map.**
- (ii) provide a footway along the southern side of The Knapp between the junctions with Horseponds and Breach Lane**

A30 and B3081 Link Road to Enmore Green

37.6.10 Through traffic presently wishing to gain access to the B3081 Gillingham Road from the A30 or A350 has to travel through a residential area of Shaftesbury. A link road between the A30 and B3081 would allow this traffic to use the A30 Shaftesbury By-pass and would increase road safety and amenity for local residents. It would also allow a rearrangement of the priorities at the junction of Bleke Street with The Beeches to give precedence to the traffic on Bleke Street.

Policy SB17

A link road will be constructed between the B3081 and the A30. This will reduce the volume of through traffic using The Beeches and will allow a rearrangement of junction priorities to remove conflicts of turning movements.

A350 Outer By-Pass

37.6.11 The A350 Shaftesbury outer bypass is a proposal of the County Structure Plan and is reserved for construction beyond the end date of the Plan i.e. post 2011. **Policy SB18** seeks to ensure that in the interim period no development takes place which would compromise the future implementation of the bypass. A reservation corridor has been defined on the proposals map to highlight the extent of the application of this policy. The Local Plan Inspector considered objections relating to this corridor. He recommended that the justification for and the alignment of the bypass be re-examined with a view to shifting it further to the east to maximise the amount of available land for development. The Local Plan must show a reservation corridor in order to remain in conformity with the adopted County Structure Plan, and therefore it cannot revisit the justification for this project. The recommendation of the inspector was rejected in this respect. The most appropriate time to re-examine the principle of the outer bypass is in conjunction with the next Structure Plan review. If the principle is reaffirmed it can then go on to re-examine the alignment of the bypass.

37.6.12 The County Council did commission a study to look again at the actual corridor defined on the proposal map. This revealed that a bypass was capable of being developed within the confines of this corridor although there was perhaps the scope to move its western boundary further to the east with a resultant narrowing effect. The Inspector stated in his report that if the most environmentally acceptable route for a bypass left a significant gap between it and the housing allocation, then that area should be regarded as open countryside to which rural restraint policies apply.

37.6.13 In recognition of this there has been no attempt to shift the settlement boundary further to the east in the southern part of the site. However there may be infrastructure associated with the development (e.g. drainage swales and balancing ponds) which would result in the opportunity to increase net densities within the allocated site and therefore make the most efficient use of land. Such infrastructure development will only be permitted where it can be shown that the development will not be prejudicial to the future implementation of the proposed A350 outer bypass.

Policy SB18

A350 Outer Bypass

A reservation corridor, as defined on the proposal map inset, will be safeguarded from any development proposals which would prejudice the future implementation of the proposed A350 outer bypass.

Linkages with the Town Centre/Role of Christy's Lane

37.6.14 The Enquiry by Design process (agreed principles 7, 8 and 9) sought to promote links from the development site right through to the town centre as well as to transform the role of Christy's Lane from a "road" to a "street". Pedestrian and cyclist provision will therefore be improved along the length of Coppice Street. This will include the closure of Coppice Street to through traffic and a new cycleway/footway between St Martins Road and Salisbury Street. Development proposals arising within the corridor should contribute to creating a street scene and sense of enclosure. This will encourage pedestrian movements to and from the town.

37.6.15 With regard to Christy's Lane, this was originally constructed as the external relief road for the town and is still referred to locally as the "bypass". However it now has development both to the east and to the west and is acting as a distinct barrier to movement between the two parts of the town. The role of Christy's Lane will be transformed from a road to a street. Therefore, development proposals arising within the corridor as defined on the proposal map inset should contribute to creating a street scene and sense of enclosure. Additional traffic management measures including the provision of improved pedestrian and cycleway crossings will be implemented to facilitate linkages between the town centre and the existing and proposed developments to the east of Christy's Lane. The role that windfall development arising within the defined zone can make, in terms of creating a sense of enclosure, is also recognised.

Contd.

PART 2 - LOCAL AREA POLICIES

SHILLINGSTONE

Inset Plan No. 38

38.1.1 The A357 Shillingstone Bypass was included in the deposit County Structure Plan under Transportation Policy H, as a long term reservation. However, under the adopted plan, the scheme is proposed to be deleted from the Plan. The County Council do not anticipate having funds available to build the road in the foreseeable future.

38.1.2 The bypass was to have followed the route of the former Somerset/Dorset railway line, which is owned by Dorset County Council. It is not under threat from development. It accords with both Structure Plan and Local Plan policy to promote the development of the railway route for "other transport" purposes (ie walking, cycling and horse riding). Investigations are currently being undertaken into the possible use of the former railway line as a "Trailway".

STALBRIDGE

Inset Plan No. 40

1. Introduction

Previous Plans for the Town

40.1.1 A non-statutory Development Appraisal was produced in 1989 following an extensive consultation exercise. Work on a District Wide Local Plan began in early 1990. A Consultative Draft Plan to 2001 for Stalbridge was published in 1994.

40.1.2 At this stage four different options for the growth of Stalbridge were put forward for discussion. Two of these options (Options 2 and 3) proposed fairly major growth of the town to help fund a by-pass. (Option 2 was based on the proposals of the Stalbridge Development Appraisal). The other two options were based on restricted growth. Option 4 (proposed by the Town Council) suggested more modest road proposals, while Option 1 recommended waiting for the County Council to fund a by-pass from their funds alone.

40.1.3 Analysis of the public's response showed a clear majority in favour of restrained growth and in addition, the restrictions placed on road building made it unlikely that a by-pass could be adequately funded by the County Council. Consequently, only very modest proposals for new development were contained in the deposit plan to 2001. The revised plan to 2011 takes a similar approach, with Stalbridge classified as a "town for limited growth".

40.1.4 The strategy for Stalbridge also takes into account developments across the County boundary in South Somerset, where several villages along the A357 have already implemented traffic management schemes. Proposals for a major employment allocation on Henstridge Airfield in the Draft South Somerset District Plan have also been considered, and were objected to by this Council on the basis of the approach now adopted in Stalbridge.

Overall Aims for Stalbridge

General Statement of Planning Policy

40.1.5 Stalbridge is a small town situated in the heart of the Blackmore Vale. It has many important historic features including a fine market cross dating from the late 15th Century. The central environs of the town contain a considerable number of traditional limestone built properties which give a pleasing, almost "Cotswold" character to the town. In recognition of this fact, most of Stalbridge has been designated a Conservation Area. New development in the town will be expected to respect its historic character.



40.1.6 The town has a number of shops and community facilities which serve its own population and that of surrounding villages. Residents look to other towns for secondary education, additional sports facilities etc. In the future, links with Sturminster Newton may be strengthened through the development of some joint community facilities where costs rule out provision in both small towns.

40.1.7 Stalbridge suffers from the intrusion of traffic, particularly heavy goods vehicles which traverse the town centre on the A357. A by pass was planned for the A357 through Stalbridge, and two possible lines were indicated in the Stalbridge Development Appraisal in 1989. However, the proposed road has now been deleted from not only this plan, but also the County Structure Plan which looks at the period up to 2011.

40.1.8 The town already suffers from serious problems of congestion on an inadequate highway network. Traffic management measures are therefore proposed to calm traffic moving through the town. Any proposals outside the District which may add significantly to traffic levels on the A357 through Stalbridge, will be opposed.

40.1.9 In view of the inadequacies of the local highway network, Stalbridge is defined in the Local Plan Strategy as a town for "limited growth" only and developments defined as 'major' will not be permitted.

40.1.10 The following policy sets out the framework for the town's future development.

Policy ST1

(i) Development in Stalbridge should respect the historic character of the town and its surroundings.

(ii) In accordance with the overall Local Plan Strategy, Stalbridge will act as a local centre and will receive limited housing and employment growth together with the development of local community services.

(iii) Development will be constrained by the capacity of the highway network through the town to accommodate further traffic growth.

2. The Environment

40.2.1 Stalbridge lies on the edge of the limestone ridge, overlooking the Blackmore Vale. There are fine views out from the west of the town which stands on rising ground. Tree cover is important to the setting of this part of the town. To the south and east, the land is flatter, as the town spreads onto the clay vale.

The Conservation Area

40.2.2 In recognition of its special architectural and historic qualities, much of the town and grounds of Stalbridge Park to the north west were designated a Conservation Area in 1976. There are also many fine 'Listed Buildings' in the town as well as the Market Cross which is a scheduled Ancient Monument.

40.2.3 To assist in the implementation of development control and enhancement schemes, the overall Conservation Area has been divided into the following environmental zones:

(i) The Town Centre

40.2.4 This encompasses the main historic core of the town, from the Church of St. Mary in the north, to the Methodist Chapel and 17th century cottages opposite, in the south. The area is characterised by close knit development in a wide range of traditional styles and materials.

40.2.5 Any new development/extensions etc. should pay due regard to the local vernacular style. Views out to the countryside beyond (from the High Street for instance) offer a contrast to the tightly enclosed environment of the narrow streets. Gaps between buildings will thus need careful protection, to maintain these views.

40.2.6 The 15th century Market Cross which abuts the A357 by the Old Rectory is a major feature of the town centre. It is currently protected from vehicle damage by heavy wooden bollards, however if in the future, traffic management measures are introduced in the town, it may be possible to 'soften' the treatment of the Market Cross and other parts of the High Street and Church Hill by use of different surface treatment and pavement widening.

(ii) The Southern Approaches (The Estate Cottages)

40.2.7 This area lies to the south of the town centre but is of a looser, more open character. It encompasses two groups of estate cottages, the listed Anglesey Cottages fronting Lower Road and Westminster Cottages and Buildings off Thornhill Road. The green at the junction of Lower Road and Thornhill Road provides an attractive

open space. This contrasts with the more enclosed atmosphere which arises as the roads merge into one in Ring Street.

40.2.8 The relatively open, but clearly defined pattern of semi-detached properties in fairly large gardens in this area, should be respected. Infilling or backland development would harm the character of this area and should be avoided. The former pound fronting Ring Street has been designated an Important Open/Wooded Area.

(iii) The Town's Setting

40.2.9 The Conservation Area, contains large open areas to the north, east and west of the town which contribute to the setting of the historic core.

40.2.10 To the north and north-west are the grounds of Stalbridge Park. The site of the main house (destroyed by fire in 1822) as well as the grounds, which once supported a deer park, are recognised as sites of "Archaeological Importance". Great lengths of the stone walls around the Park still exist. They contribute greatly to the character of this part of the Conservation Area and are important, not only for their historic and scenic qualities, but also for their nature conservation interest. The walls along Church Walk support the rare polypody fern as well as other species. It is essential therefore, that development is restricted in this area and that the maintenance of the Park walls should be of high priority.

40.2.11 To the west of the town centre is an area of open, rising ground backing on to the development at Grosvenor Road. This forms an important green backdrop to the town.

40.2.12 To the east of the town centre, the land drops away offering views out across the Blackmore Vale. Land south of the primary school (fronting Station Road) has consent for development, however the foreground of the high stone wall on the western boundary is to be protected. Open spaces to the north of this site should also be protected from development so ensuring that important views are maintained.

Policy ST2

Development will only be approved within the Stalbridge Conservation Area if the proposal is in keeping with the intrinsic character of each environmental sub-area.

3. Housing

Dwelling Unit Allocation

40.3.1 **Policy 2.3** allocates about 170 dwellings to the town to be built between 1994 and 2011. This amounts to a construction rate of about 10 dwellings per annum. Since the start of the Plan period a considerable amount of development has taken place or is committed through planning permission. **Table 40.1** below gives a breakdown of Stalbridge's housing allocation at 31.03.01.

Table 40.1 Components of Stalbridge's Housing Allocation at 31.03.01	Units
Plan Target	170
Dwellings built 1994-2001	115
Dwellings with outstanding planning permission or under construction*	30
Allocated Sites	10(min)
Infill and windfall allowance	28
Total	183
Over/under supply	+13

*Figures adjusted to allow for likely take up.

40.3.2 Government policy encourages Local Planning Authorities to manage the release of housing land with the aim of securing the development of previously developed (brownfield) sites before the greenfield land. To this end, the Plan period has been divided into three phases of development and sites allocated accordingly.

40.3.3 Table 40.2 below gives a breakdown of the anticipated level of development in each phase and the expected proportion of brownfield development within Stalbridge. During the first phase, a slightly higher rate of development occurred than had been anticipated, due to the take up of outstanding commitments. This is likely to continue into the early years of Phase 2 while the sites off Station Road and Lower Road are built out. Thereafter, development rates are likely to slow considerably. Around 39% of the total is expected to come forward on brownfield sites at an average annual rate of about 4 dwellings per annum.

40.3.4 Targets for affordable housing are set out in **Policy 2.4**. These may be varied in the light of the results of any future Housing Needs Survey undertaken during the Plan period. Any variations will be published for consultation in the form of Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Table 40.2 Stalbridge Phasing programme

Phase	Dwells built or expected at 31.03.01	Average annual rate	% Brownfield	Average annual rate
1. 1994 – 2000	75	13	22	3
2. 2000 – 2006	85	14	38	5
3. 2006 – 2011	23	5	74	4
1994 – 2011	183*	11	36	4
Plan aim	170	10	39	4

*This figure represents a 7.6% over-supply on the original planned total of 170 and should not be seen as the base figure for dwelling supply in the town.

Sites allocated for Development

40.3.5 **Policy 2.4** allocates the following sites (of 5 or more dwellings) for development in the Plan period up to 2011:

(i) Site C Land rear of Dikes Supermarket (10 dwellings)

40.3.6 The development of Site C is subject to the agreement over highway improvements at the junction of Barrow Hill and the High Street. A traffic management scheme is being discussed and should be implemented shortly. Subject to this going ahead, Site C could be released during Phase 2.

40.3.7 The following requirements should be met through the development of this land:

- The development of this site should not proceed until the traffic implications of both this and the proposed development at "Barrowlea", Barrow Hill on the Barrow Hill/High Street junction are clear, and agreement has been reached on the funding of any necessary improvements. (The "Barrowlea" development has outstanding permission, subject to a legal obligation to fund improvements to the Barrow Hill/High Street junction).
- The density of development should be limited by the capacity of the Barrow Hill/High Street junction. Even when improved, the Barrow Hill/High Street junction may impose limitations on the amount of development that can be achieved on this site.
- Financial contributions towards infrastructure and community facilities which are proposed in this Plan or are shown to be needed in the town or locality, may also be sought from the developer. Any contributions sought should be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development.
- Affordable or low cost market housing may not be achievable on this site in view of the limitations on density imposed by the Barrow Hill/High Street junction. A contribution towards an alternative site in the town may be sought, subject to local need.

Policy ST3

Approximately 1.0 Ha of land to the south-west of Dikes former bakery will be released for development of about 10 dwellings subject to the following specific requirements:

- (i) The land will not be released until the traffic implications of the development at "Barrowlea" and the proposed development have been assessed and agreement reached on the funding of any necessary improvements.**
- (ii) The density of the development will be limited by the capacity of the Barrow Hill/High Street junction.**

Future Population

40.3.8 From the 1991 Census, the resident population of the Town Plan area is estimated to be 2,074 Average household size throughout the County has been declining for many years, and is likely to continue to do so in the future. Projections produced by the County, (based on the proposals of the deposit Structure Plan) indicate that

average household size in North Dorset is likely to decline by 0.15 persons per household between 1991 and 2011. In 1991 the average household size in the Parish of Stalbridge was 2.55. Making allowance for the decline in household size and assuming that the scale of development identified in **Policy 2.3** is fully taken up, this could result in a population of some 2410 by 2011.

4. Employment and Shopping

Employment

40.4.1 In view of the problems caused by heavy goods vehicles traversing the narrow streets through Stalbridge, it is considered necessary to restrict future employment uses to development or re-development within the existing areas only, simply to allow for the expansion and development of local businesses. Thus no major new employment allocations are made in this Plan.

40.4.2 There are two existing employment areas in Stalbridge Parish. The Station Road area lies within the town, while the Gibbs Marsh Trading Estate lies some two miles to the north-east, abutting the larger Henstridge Airfield industrial estate in Somerset. (The Gibbs Marsh estate is covered by Plan No 41).

40.4.3 Developments within the Station Road employment area will be subject to the general Employment Policies set out in Part 1 of this Plan. A new development of workshop units funded by the District Council and Rural Development Commission has recently been completed here. Another 0.5 Ha of land remains available for development. This should help cater for local needs during the plan period. There are also many small employment uses dotted around the town, which help towards the local economy. Stalbridge lies within the Rural Priority Area, and as opportunity arises, further funds may be directed to the town to help promote its economy.

Shopping

40.4.4 Although not as large as the other shopping centres in the towns of North Dorset, Stalbridge offers a good range of retail and commercial services which should be protected. **Policy 3.18** in the Economy chapter of this Plan which relates specifically to Stalbridge and Marnhull, aims to do this by discouraging the change of use of existing retail and service outlets.

40.4.5 Stalbridge has one supermarket, 'Dikes' of Ring Street (approx. 350m² net retail floorspace). This caters primarily for the town's population although shoppers from Henstridge, Marnhull and Stourton Caundle also use the store. Whilst providing an important local service 'Dikes' suffers from a poor vehicular access off Ring Street and a sloping site which makes it difficult to extend the premises. However, the more recently created access off Barrow Hill provides smaller service vehicles easier access to the rear of the premises. If the store is to expand or reorganise its operation in the future, improvements to ease the movement of the vehicles to and from the premises will be sought as part of the development.

Policy ST4

Any future proposals to extend or redevelop the supermarket premises off Ring Street should incorporate improved vehicular access facilities.

5. Community Services and Recreation

40.5.1 In view of the restraints on the future growth of Stalbridge, it is not envisaged that there will be significant demand in the town for major new community facilities. It is anticipated that the town may co-operate with Sturminster Newton on the provision of any major new facilities required in the future. For instance, the Sturminster Newton Sports Centre, which has now been built in Sturminster, will help meet the needs of both towns and the wider rural area. Financial contributions towards this facility may therefore be sought from new developments in Stalbridge. (See **Policy 4.7** in the Community Facilities chapter).

40.5.2 Several problems with existing facilities became apparent during earlier public consultation and are discussed below:

St. Mary's C.E. Primary School

40.5.3 St. Mary's C.E. Primary School, which became 'Grant Maintained' on April 1st 1995, caters for children aged 5-11. Secondary schooling is provided at Sturminster Newton.

40.5.4 The Primary school is accessed via a cul-de-sac (Duck Lane), which has a poor junction with the High Street and where there is minimal space for parents to collect or drop off children by car. This has created conflict with people living in Duck Street. Increasing the pupil intake will only exacerbate this problem, and it should

therefore be addressed if an application is made for additional permanent classroom(s). Some additional land may need to be acquired by the school to help resolve this situation. If this is so, financial contributions may be sought from new residential developments which add to the pressure for improved facilities at the school. Alternatively, in line with the approach being adopted by the Local Agenda 21 group who are active in the town, it may be possible to encourage more children to walk or cycle to school, so easing the congestion in Duck Lane.

Policy ST5

Any application for the development of additional permanent classroom(s) at St. Mary's C.E. Primary School will only be considered if it is accompanied by proposals to help relieve the parking problem and reduce the number of car-borne trips to and from the school.

Outdoor Recreation

40.5.5 During the preparation of this Plan it has become evident that there are difficulties with the use of the existing recreation ground at Stalbridge Park. It is shared by several different sports clubs, and there are problems with overlapping pitches and inadequate space for youth teams.

40.5.6 The Town Council has now acquired additional land adjacent to the recreation ground on which to expand sports facilities.

Footpaths

40.5.7 The lack of a direct footpath link between the Jarvis Way area and the town centre means that pedestrians have to take a long detour via Station Road or Lower Road to reach the shops. Outline planning approval has been granted in the past for residential development of land at the rear of Laburnham House, Ring Street and to the south of the Station Road Car Park. The opportunity to provide a footpath link from Robinson Heights to either Ring Street or Station Road will be sought through future negotiations on these development sites.

Policy ST6

Footpath links are needed between the Jarvis Way housing area and the town centre. Where opportunity arises, the provision of a footpath will be sought as part of any new development between Robinson Heights and either Ring Street or Station Road.

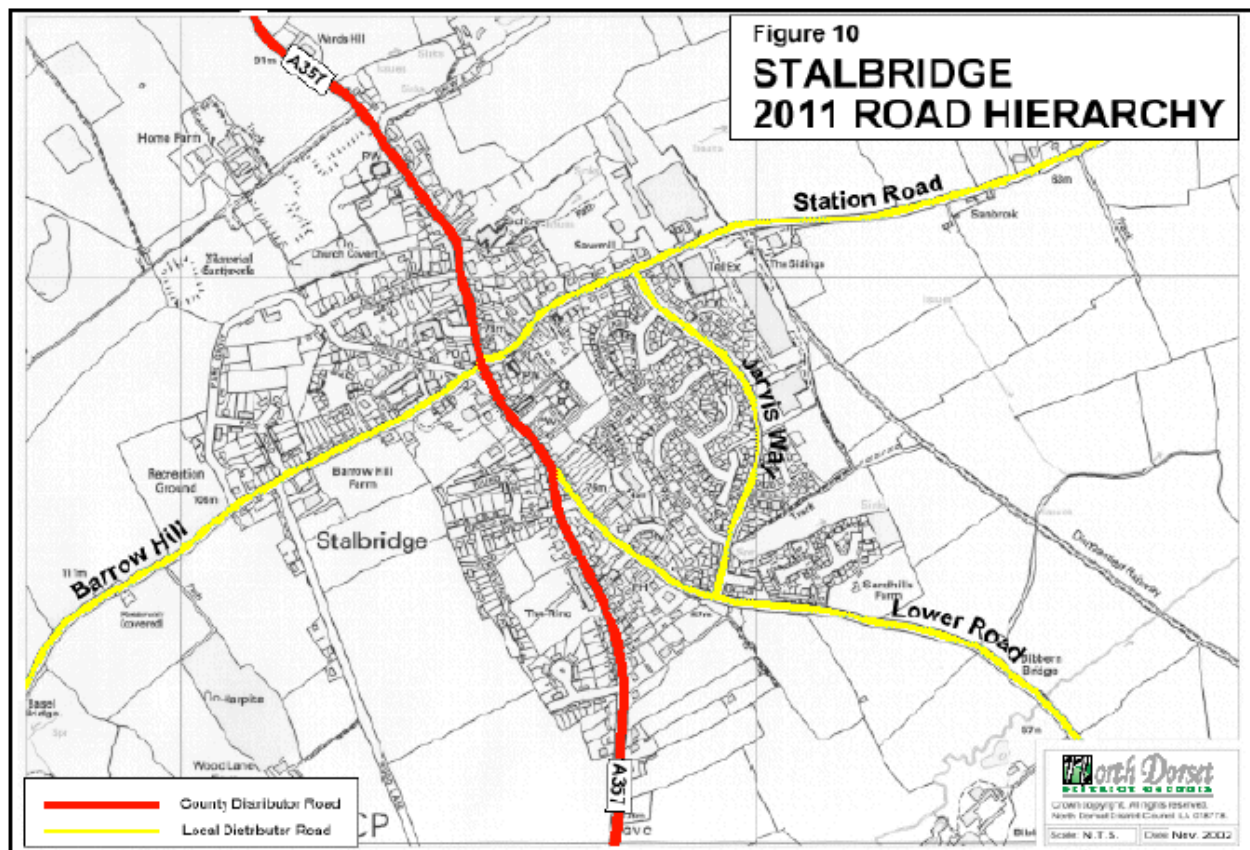
6. Transportation

40.6.1 The guiding policies on highways and transportation are found within the general policies contained in **Chapter 5** of the Plan. These guiding policies relate to cyclists, pedestrians, traffic management, heavy goods vehicles, environment and landscape, public transport, parking facilities and servicing. It also includes the definition of the road hierarchy for North Dorset.

40.6.2 **Chapter 5** contains details of the 'Local Plan Road Improvement Programme' and the major highway schemes which are proposed for the period up to 2011. This section contains specific highway and transportation schemes for Stalbridge.

Road Hierarchy

40.6.3 The 2011 road hierarchy for Stalbridge as defined in **Chapter 5** is shown in **Figure 10**.



Major Road Schemes

40.6.4 The limitations placed on the County Highways spending budget and comparisons with other heavily trafficked roads in the County means that the Highway Authority will not be able to fund a Stalbridge By-pass within the period to 2011. Additionally, in view of the constrained growth that is proposed for the town there is no likelihood of development contributions bringing this scheme forward before 2011. This Plan does not therefore contain a proposal to progress this scheme.

Development

40.6.5 Only a limited level of growth is proposed for Stalbridge. Development that has taken place in recent years has been tied to the provision of traffic management and environmental improvements. It is recognised that whilst these measures may reduce the speed of traffic and give rise to short term environmental improvements, they will not provide any traffic relief as traffic volumes through the town will continue to rise.

40.6.6 However, in view of the impracticality of providing a by-pass for the town, future development that would generate more traffic on the presently substandard highway network and further degrade the environment will be resisted.

Provision for Cyclists

40.6.7 In order to improve facilities for both recreational and general cycling use, opportunities to open the redundant railway line to cyclists, (both to the north and south of Stalbridge) and to improve links both within the town and between Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton for cycle use, will be promoted. (See **Policies 4.10 and 4.11** in **Chapter 4** of the Plan.)

STOUR PROVOST

Inset Plan No. 43

43.1.1 The village is without mains drainage, and on the local heavy clay soils there have been problems of effluent pollution as septic tanks, with a few exceptions, do not operate satisfactorily

Policy SP1

Development will not be permitted in the village unless satisfactory foul drainage facilities can be provided.

43.1.2 The main road crossroads (B3092) are currently sub-standard and there are turning movement conflicts. **Policy 5.31** in the transportation chapter relates to the proposed traffic management improvements at this junction.

STOUR ROW**Inset Plan No.
44**

44.1.1 The village is without mains drainage, and on the local heavy clay soils there have been problems of effluent pollution as septic tanks, with a few exceptions, do not operate satisfactorily

Policy SR1

Development will not be permitted in the village unless satisfactory foul drainage facilities can be provided.

STOURPAINE**Inset Plan No.
45**

45.1.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to obtain specialist advice concerning some types of development, or development in particular areas. Under the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995, the waste regulation authority (Dorset County Council) must be consulted on applications for development which are within 250m of land which has been used for the deposit of refuse or waste. Further guidance on the type of development to be referred is contained within **Planning Policy Guidance Note 23**, Planning and Pollution Control. In view of the topography of the area a wider zone around the former waste disposal site is shown in which consultations will take place.

Policy SE1

Planning permission will only be granted in this zone if development will not be adversely affected by the former waste disposal site.

STURMINSTER NEWTON**Inset Plan No.
47****1. Introduction****Previous Plans for the Town**

47.1.1 A statutory Town Plan was prepared during the 1980s and early 1990s. The various stages reached during the preparation programme were as follows;

"Sturminster Newton Planning Study" (Consultative Document)

Spring 1985

Draft Sturminster Newton Town Local Plan

Summer
1989



Deposit Draft Sturminster Newton Town Local Plan	Spring 1990
Public Inquiry	January 1991
Modifications Proposed	October 1991
Informal Adoption	May 1992

47.1.2 The Town Local Plan however was not formally adopted because significant objections were made at the Modifications stage to new proposals for the Livestock Market site and the relief road. Rather than hold a further Public Inquiry it was decided to proceed by re-formulating the old Local Plan into this District Wide Local Plan.

47.1.3 This Plan Inset is based primarily on the previous Local Plan.

Overall Aims for Sturminster Newton

General Statement of Planning Policy

47.1.4 Sturminster Newton is the most centrally sited of the five towns in North Dorset. The two main parts of the town are situated either side of the River Stour and are linked by a fine medieval six-arched bridge.

47.1.5 Both settlements of "Sturminster" and "Newton" are of historic and architectural interest, and are contained within a Conservation Area. Most recent developments have been to the north of the town centre, spreading out between Bath Road and Manston Road.

47.1.6 Sturminster Newton suffers from the intrusion of traffic, particularly heavy goods vehicles which traverse the historic town centre Conservation Area on the B3091 and the B3092. The B3092 is a particularly tortuous road, very narrow in places and has limited pedestrian footways. There are also a considerable number of residential, retail and commercial properties in close proximity to the road, many of them of "listed" status. The Plan proposes new development in the town of around 640 new dwellings which will increase the existing dwelling stock by about 50%. Traffic generated from these new homes will exacerbate the problems in the town. Environmental and traffic management measures will therefore be pursued in the historic town centre, where the constrained highway, although having a partial 'calming' effect on traffic, places an unnecessary risk upon pedestrians and property.

47.1.7 Sturminster Newton acts as the main centre for shopping, business and community life in the Sturminster Newton/Marnhull and Stalbridge areas and this role is endorsed in the overall Local Plan Strategy.

47.1.8 The recent closure of the livestock market, which had been in existence for over 700 years, has been a major blow for the town. The market provided an economic and social focus which will be very hard to replace, but which the policies of this Plan must address.

47.1.9 In view of the inadequacies of the local highway network, Sturminster Newton is defined in the Local Plan Strategy as a town for "moderate" growth only and developments defined as "major" will only be permitted in a limited number of cases. It will also be important to introduce additional traffic management measures along the B3091 and B3092 which should be co-ordinated with the growth of the town.

47.1.10 In order to allow for the expansion of the town, additional provision of community infrastructure is required. Developers may be asked to contribute financially towards this provision, to enable development to proceed in accordance with advice currently contained in Circular 1/97 Planning Obligations. Additional information is given in Chapter 4 of the Local Plan and in a Planning Advice Note. Costs of improvements which are required to meet the needs of the present population should be borne by the existing managing authorities.

Policy SN1

(i) All development in **Sturminster Newton** should respect the historic character of the town and its surroundings.

(ii) In accordance with the overall Local Plan Strategy, **Sturminster Newton** will act as the main centre for the Stalbridge/Sturminster Newton area and will receive the majority of population, housing and employment growth and the development of major community facilities.

(iii) In the period up to 2011 "moderate" levels of development will be permitted within the settlement boundary of the town. This will include the development of a limited number of sites defined as "major".

2. The Environment

Environmental Capacity of the Town

47.2.1 Looking ahead to the end of the Plan period the Local Authority has begun considering the environmental constraints on the eventual spread of development at Sturminster Newton.

47.2.2 These constraints are closely linked to the aim of promoting sustainable development and are sometimes described as being the "environmental capacity" of the development of a settlement. These constraints should not be seen as absolute for long term planning. However they should be seen as a monitoring device so that if there is a requirement to expand a settlement significantly in the future, it may be done in a way which will minimise environmental impact, reduce the reliance on the motor car and bring social and economic benefits, particularly to town centre, community and retail facilities.

47.2.3 In considering proposals for future expansion in Sturminster the following factors will be borne in mind;

- The capacity of the highway network through the town to accommodate any further growth.
- The availability of sufficient land in or close to the town centre which will allow for expansion of retailing and community facilities to serve an increase in population.
- A distance beyond which people are not likely to walk or cycle into the town (assessed to be approximately 1.6 km (1 mile), equivalent to a 20/30 minute walk). Thus the use of the motor car is likely to be increased when housing or employment developments are situated beyond this distance.
- The availability of employment development land within walking distance of residential areas.
- The ability of the local road network to prove attractive for the operation of a regular frequency bus link to the town centre.
- The topographical constraints which exist (e.g. small gaps with outlying settlements, hill slopes, river valleys etc) which tend to signify a natural limit to development.

47.2.4 In the case of Sturminster Newton, the potential for future growth is severely restricted by the inadequacies of the existing road network through the town. In view of current public sector spending restrictions, the "Relief Road" once planned for the B3091/2 is no longer included in the County Structure Plan. It is therefore unlikely that the town will be able to sustain more development in the future unless traffic growth can be curtailed or the highway network improved.

The Conservation Area

47.2.5 In recognition of its special architectural and historic qualities, the Town Centre and Newton Village and the River Stour Meadows were designated a Conservation Area in 1976. In order to control development more effectively and to aid the implementation of enhancement schemes, the overall Conservation Area has been divided into the following environmental sub-areas.

(i) The Town Centre

47.2.6 Historic development has centred around the Market Place and to a lesser extent, St. Mary's Church, situated to the south-east overlooking the Stour. A wide range of traditional styles and materials have been used in the buildings which adds considerably to the character of the area. The Market Place and Cross, Church Street and Church Lane have a tight-knit enclosed appearance. To the west and east are the more loosely knit residential areas of West End and Gotts Corner with several properties still retaining large garden plots.

(ii) The Market Place Environs

47.2.7 An enhancement scheme has recently been introduced in the Church Street Car Park "Square", improving the environment and safety for pedestrians. Discussions are still taking place over a potential scheme for the Market Place. If improvements are carried out here it will be particularly important to retain the Street Market. Improvements to the shopping area at the western end of Station Road will be carried out in conjunction with the construction of the new Station Road to Bath Road link (See **Policy SN8**). Details of any enhancement schemes will be published and made available for public consultation prior to implementation.

Policy SN2

Environmental enhancements will be carried out to public highways/car parking areas at The Market Place and Station Road.

(iii) The River Stour

47.2.8 The River Stour and its meadows form a central green "spinal cord" running between "Sturminster" and "Newton" and are an essential ingredient in the composition of the town's character. Sturminster Mill which

straddles the river to the west of The Bridge, acts a focal point in views of the area. The Mill is now operated by The Mill and Museum Society and is a well-known tourist attraction, open in the summer months. A car park and amenity area provided by the District Council to the east of the Bridge also increase the opportunity for public access to this area, and serve as an educational resource.

47.2.9 This part of the town has strong historic literary connections; Thomas Hardy lived at "Riverside" from 1876-78 and wrote "The Return of the Native" here. The Dorset poet Robert Young (Rabin Hill) also lived nearby. He was a friend of fellow poet William Barnes, who worked in the town for some years as a solicitor's clerk.

(iv) Newton Village and The Bridge

47.2.10 Newton Village retains several stone rendered half-timbered and thatched cottages which are amongst the oldest in the town.

47.2.11 Dominating "The Bridge" area is Sturminster Newton Castle "Promontory". The grounds of this fortified Manor House, now in ruins, are a scheduled Ancient Monument. Land either side is protected as an "Important Open and Wooded Area" gap between the two tightly-knit developed areas of Newton to the west and The Bridge to the east. Major works of repair are now required for the Castle.

Policy SN3

Development will only be approved within the Sturminster Newton Conservation Area if the proposal is in keeping with the intrinsic character of each environmental sub-area.

3. Housing

Dwelling Unit Allocation

47.3.1 **Policy 2.3** allocates about 640 dwellings to the town to be built between 1994 and 2011. This amounts to a construction rate of 38 dwellings per annum. Since the start of the Plan period a considerable amount of development has taken place or is committed through planning permission. **Table 47.1** below gives a breakdown of Sturminster's housing allocation at 31.03.01. The granting of permission for 180 dwellings on the site between Honeymead Lane and Manston Road, (30 more than originally planned) helps to explain the potential over-supply of 50 dwellings.

Table 47.1 Components of Sturminster's Housing Allocation at 31.03.01	Units
Plan Target	640
Dwellings built 1994 – 2001	218
Dwellings with outstanding planning permission or under construction*	196
Allocated Sites	135 (min)
Infill and windfall allowance	141
Total	690
Over/under supply	+50

*Figures adjusted to allow for likely take up.

47.3.2 Government policy encourages Local Planning Authorities to manage the release of housing land with the aim of securing the development of previously developed (brownfield) sites before the development of greenfield land. 47.3.3 **Table 47.2** below gives a breakdown of the anticipated level of development in each phase and the expected proportion of brownfield development in Sturminster. During Phase 1 a slightly lower rate of development occurred than had been anticipated. However development rates have picked up now that the large site between Honeymead Lane and Manston Road is under construction. Brownfield development occurred at the anticipated rate during Phase 1. The development of the former Livestock Market site in the centre of the town will help contribute to the brownfield target.

47.3.3 Targets for affordable housing are set out in **Policy 2.4**. These may be varied in the light of the results of any future Housing Needs Survey undertaken during the Plan period. Any variations will be published for consultation in the form of Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Table 47.2 Sturminster Newton Phasing programme

Phase	Dwells built or expected at 31.03.01	Average annual rate	% Brownfield	Average annual rate
1. 1994 – 2000	206	34	47	16

2. 2000 – 2006	330	55	27	15
3. 2006 – 2011	154	31	56	17
1994 – 2011	690*	41	39	16
Plan aim	640	38	42	16

*This figure represents a 7.8% over-supply on the original planned total of 640 and should not be seen as the base figure for dwelling supply in the town.

Sites allocated for Development

47.3.5 Policy 2.4 allocates the following sites (of 5 or more dwellings) for development in the Plan period up to 2011:

- (i) Site C Land North of the Livestock Market (90 dwellings)
- (ii) Site D Land at Honeymead (45 dwellings)

47.3.6 A requirement of both Sites C and D is that the Honeymead Lane – Manston Road link must be in place before development commences. The former livestock market site is a major brownfield site in the town on which mixed use development is proposed in order to help re-vitalise the town centre. It is necessary to phase the release of the two remaining allocated sites so that development of the market is not impeded. Site C, being closer to the town centre is expected to be developed during Phase 2 while Site D is proposed to follow on in Phase 3. However the release of Site D is also tied up with the development of the Butts Pond Fields for amenity purposes. If it proves necessary to release Site D during Phase 2, Site C (which is in the same ownership) should be re-assigned to Phase 3.

Site C (H/47/2)

Land to the north of the Livestock Market.

(Total Site Area: 4.8 Ha: Residential Development Area: 3.5 Ha. Potential dwellings: 90)

47.3.7 The following requirements should be met through the development of this site:

- The land should not be released until the Honeymead Lane - Manston Road link road required under Pl. Ap. 2/97/390 (54) has been completed.
- Access via Rabin Hill/Badgers Way, subject to a traffic assessment of the impact of the development on the junction of Bath Road/Rabin Hill. (Rabin Hill is steep and relatively narrow and the effect of additional traffic on the junction needs to be assessed even though the Honeymead Lane link will help redistribute traffic.)
- Provision to be made for the accommodation or relocation of badgers currently evident on site. Discussions to be held with Dorset Badger Group and English Nature.
- Retention of the hedgerows together with associated land within the site to be used as part of an amenity corridor for pedestrian access.
- Provision of a substantial landscaping/buffer zone to the east of the site, to incorporate cycleway/footway provision. This will help to ameliorate the effects of the adjacent industrial estate, as well as provide alternative links with the town centre, from the residential areas to the north. Cycleway/footway links to the west (Bath Road) and south (Livestock Market site/Station Road) will be required.
- Provision of childrens' play areas and amenity open space in accordance with **Policy 4.8**.
- Provision of a proportion of the development as affordable homes (possibly specialised housing for elderly/single people due to proximity to town centre.) (See **Policies 2.4** and **2.13**), and mobility standard dwellings (**Policy 1.8**).
- Contributions may be sought for the following facilities: Extension of William Barnes Primary School, (**Policy 4.2**). Informal recreation on land at Butts Pond (**Policy SN9**), cycleways within the town (**Policy SN10**), Environmental enhancement of the town centre (**Policies SN2 & SN11**). See also paragraph **47.1.10**.
- This site is scheduled to be developed in Phase 2 of the Plan period, however, if development of Site D (land at Honeymead) is approved in Phase 2, development of Site C should not be considered until Phase 3 (post 2006).

Policy SN4

Approximately 3.5 Ha of land to the north of the Livestock Market will be released for residential development of about 90 dwellings, subject to the following requirements:

- (i) The land will not be released for development until the link road required under Pl. Ap. 2/97/390(54) has been completed.
- (ii) A traffic assessment of the impact of the development on the junction of Bath Road/Rabin Hill will be required.
- (iii) Provision of a landscaping/buffer zone to the east of the site to incorporate footway/cycleway provision.
- (iv) Footway/cycleway provision through to Bath Road and the former Livestock Market Site to the south will also be sought.
- (v) Provision for the accommodation or relocation of badgers on the site must be made.
- (vi) Hedgerows together with associated land within the site should be retained and used as an amenity corridor for pedestrian access.

Site D. (H/47/3) Land at Honeymead.

(Area: 1.5 Ha. Potential dwellings: 45)

47.3.8 The following requirements should be met through the development of this land

- Provision of vehicular access off the Honeymead Lane - Manston Road extension, via the south-east corner of the site. (To avoid disruption to the "green lane".)
- Provision of a substantial, landscaped buffer zone adjacent to the "green lane", to protect it from development.
- Provision of east - west footpath cycleway links through the site, to give access to the site of the proposed Sports Centre. (**Policy SN10**).
- Provision of a proportion of the development as affordable homes (**Policies 2.4** and **2.13**).
- Provision of childrens' play areas and amenity open space in accordance with **Policy 4.8**.
- Contributions may be sought for the following facilities: Extension of William Barnes Primary School (**Policy 4.2**); Informal recreation on land at Butts Pond (**Policy SN9**); Cycleways within the town (**Policy SN10**); Environmental enhancement of the town centre (**Policies SN3 & SN11**). See also **paragraph 47.1.10**.

Policy SN5

Approximately 1.5 Ha of land at Honeymead will be released for development of about 45 dwellings subject to the following requirements;

- (i) Vehicular access to be via the south-east corner of the site.
- (ii) Provision of a landscaped buffer zone to the east of the site.
- (iii) Provision of footpath/cycleway links through the site.

Future Population

47.3.9 From the 1991 Census resident population of the Town Plan area was estimated to be 2,455. Average household size throughout the County has been declining for many years, and is likely to continue to do so in the future. Projections produced by the County, (based on the proposals of the Deposit Structure Plan) indicate that average household size in North Dorset is likely to decline by 0.15 persons per household between 1991 and 2011. In 1991 the average household size in the Parish of Sturminster Newton was 2.25. Making allowance for the decline in household size and assuming that the scale of development identified in **Policy 2.3** is fully taken up, this could result in a Plan Area population of some 3,720 by 2011.

4. Employment and Shopping

47.4.1 Existing Employment Areas (**Policies 3.1- 3.4**)

Site ref.	Location	Area (ha)	Notes
E/47/1		6.5	

	Butts Pond Industrial Estate		Industrial Estate developed between mid 60's onwards, in three phases.
E/47/2	Rolls Mill Business Park	6.6	Granted outline planning permission, in advance of Local Plan preparation in 1989 (Applic. 88/1041(54))
E/47/3	The Creamery	1.5	Former long established cheese production business.
E/47/4	Manston Road Warehouse	1.0	Haulage firm warehouse

Rolls Mill Business Park

47.4.2 As Butts Pond Industrial Estate is virtually complete, this new business Park is now required to cater for demand up to 2011. The following policies set out important conditions that will need to be met by any application for full planning permission or for the approval of reserved matters relating to the land.

Policy SN6 (Employment Development Site E/47/2)

Applications for full planning permission or the approval of reserved matters, relating to land with outline planning permission for development for business use (B1), General Industrial use (B2) and Warehousing (B8), at Rolls Mill, Newton will only be permitted subject to the following conditions;

- (i) The provision of a right-hand turning lane for the access point from the A357.**
- (ii) Land zoned as "Area A" will be restricted to use class B1 (Business Use) or Class B8 (Warehousing) with conditions restricting working hours, the use of machinery and also requiring a high level of noise insulation and landscaping.**
- (iii) As the development site is close to the public sewer system, the Local Planning Authority will expect a connection to be made to this system and will not encourage the provision of an independent sewerage system, draining to the River Divilish.**

The Creamery

47.4.3 The settlement boundary around The Creamery lies on two Inset Plans (47 and 47A). The boundary is not contiguous and so the status of the field immediately to the east of the Creamery is unclear. It has not been possible to resolve this issue before adoption of the Plan, however the Council will undertake to review this issue.

The Livestock Market

47.4.4 On 30th June 1997, the Livestock Market which had operated in the town for over 700 years, closed. The remaining market stalls closed at the end of December. The owners of the site are known to wish to redevelop for alternative uses.

47.4.5 The closure of the market coincided with the publication of the Consultative Draft Local Plan. The District Council also published a draft Development Brief for the Livestock Market site and made both documents widely available for an extended public consultation period from July to the end of October 1997.

47.4.6 In drawing up proposals for the livestock market site, the District Council has also drawn on the conclusions of several different surveys and consultation exercises undertaken in the town. In particular, the Sturminster Newton Action Group (SNAG), Sturminster Newton 2000 and Beyond and Dorset Ecology Centre's concerns about the site have been taken into consideration. The District Council also commissioned an independent report into the future viability of marketing in the District, and in Sturminster Newton in particular, the conclusions of which have also been taken into consideration.

47.4.7 Several common features have been drawn from the results of consultations undertaken by the different interest groups:

- Concern that the site should still provide an economic focus for the town in the way that the livestock market did in the past.
- Concern that any new development should reinforce the existing historic town centre by linking to it, not creating a separate focal point.
- Concern that the site should provide for a mixture of uses which complement those currently existing in the town.
- Concern to retain some form of marketing/auction facility on the site, to draw people back to the town and respect the history of the site.

- Opposition to any wholesale development for residential purposes, due to the availability of other sites in the town.
- Concern that if part of the site is to be developed as a supermarket, this should provide a better quality service than exists at present, and that it should not increase the total amount of supermarket floorspace in the town to such an extent as to detract from town centre shops.
- Concern to use the opportunity for redevelopment to benefit community facilities in the town (e.g. to provide a better community hall).
- Concern to achieve a high quality development, with opportunities for public access through the site, and with plentiful landscaping/open space provision.

47.4.8 Two other factors should be considered:

- a) The viability of re-establishing a livestock market on the site.

47.4.9 Despite "overwhelming support" from the SNAG surveys for the re-introduction of a livestock market in the town, the independent survey commissioned by the District Council into the viability of livestock marketing in the District, concluded that it would be impracticable to try and refurbish on the existing site. The report recommended that "the establishment of a new market on a greenfield site would be the best means of securing the future needs of the agricultural sector".

47.4.10 Whilst the District Council does not rule out the possibility that livestock marketing might return to Sturminster, the Local Plan should also make provision for the development of a new greenfield site. A separate policy to this effect is included in the "Employment" chapter of the Plan.

- b) The Bath Road - Station Road link

47.4.11 A new link road across the site to join Bath Road and Station Road with a new signal controlled junction on Bath Road should be constructed as part of the development. This is needed to serve the development since trip making from the development of the whole site will cause significant difficulties at the junction of Bath Road and Station Road and through the "Narrows". As the construction of the new access road is solely to facilitate development, 100% of funding costs will need to be met by the developer. The basis of this requirement is contained within a Traffic Impact Assessment undertaken by Dorset Engineering Consultancy in December 1998 to assess the impact on the adjoining network of proposals put forward by Dayeh Commercial Projects for the site.

47.4.12 A road link should enable:

- Appropriate standard of junctions to accommodate the additional traffic generated by the development,
- Safe pedestrian crossing facilities to allow access to the town centre.
- Satisfactory conditions for pedestrians in the Market Place, by ensuring that traffic will not queue back from the new junction into the Narrows.

47.4.13 The road should be designed to a width of about 6.7m. Traffic lights will be required at the junction with Bath Road, with a second access to the Market site off Station Road. The new road should also make provision for access to Reddeman House. Details should be discussed with Dorset County Council as the local highway authority.

47.4.14 Bearing in mind the common concerns identified above, it is proposed that the site should be developed with a mixture of land uses. As such, proposals for wholesale development of any single or dual uses will not be acceptable. Any redevelopment proposals should encompass the whole site. It should not be dealt with in a piecemeal fashion.

47.4.15 The following land uses will be acceptable on the site:

- Facilities, including some covered space, to accommodate market stalls and/or auction activities.
- Retail uses, (Classes A1-A3 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987). (This may include a supermarket as well as smaller retail outlets. Proposals including a supermarket should be accompanied by retail and traffic impact surveys. Further details will be given in the revised Development Brief).
- Business use, subject to a restriction to 'B1' uses, (acceptable within a residential area) only.
- Community uses - for instance a community hall, museum and/or information/visitor centre. (The existing community hall off Brinsley Close is in urgent need of refurbishment which may have to proceed in advance of the development of the market site. However replacement on the market site would provide a better location for the hall and offer the opportunity for redevelopment of the existing site for residential purposes).
- Residential use. In view of the strong local reaction against residential development on this site and the availability of other sites in the town, only a limited amount is proposed (i.e. 25 dwellings or 0.75 Ha). This should include provision for affordable housing (**Policy 2.13**) subject to local need.
- Associated car/cycle parking and provision for public transport to serve the site.
- Public open space/footpath/cycleway network to link north-south through the site to the Railway Gardens/Station Road area.

(Further details on matters such as infrastructure and services required on the site are given in the Development Brief.)

Policy SN7

Proposals to redevelop the former Livestock Market off Station Road should meet the following criteria:

- (i) The site should be developed comprehensively.**
- (ii) The site should be developed with a mixture of land uses. Proposals for wholesale development for any single or dual use will not be acceptable.**
- (iii) The following land uses will be considered acceptable on the site;**
 - **market stall/auction facilities,**
 - **retail, (including a supermarket and small retail units),**
 - **business (subject to 'B1' use only),**
 - **community uses (such as a replacement or additional community hall, museum and/or information/visitor centre),**
 - **residential (up to 25 dwelling units or 0.75 ha of the site), to include affordable or special needs housing subject to local need,**
 - **associated parking and public transport facilities,**
 - **public open space.**
- (iv) Development proposals should be accompanied by retail and traffic impact assessments, as necessary.**
- (v) The development should provide access for pedestrians and cyclists from the land to the north through to Station Road.**

Policy SN8

The development of the Livestock Market site must make provision for a new road link between Station Road and Bath Road, including adequate and safe pedestrian crossing facilities.

Shopping

47.4.16 Sturminster Newton provides a variety of shops and services which serve a wide rural hinterland as well as the town's own population. **Policies 3.15-3.17** of the Economy chapter provide guidance on the form of new shopping developments and changes of use within the town centre, which will be acceptable.

5. Community Services and Recreation

Recreation and Sports

47.5.1 Recently a new football pitch has been constructed for the town football club, on land adjacent to The High School playing field. This pitch, together with the continued use of the nearby (privately owned) Hinton St. Mary sports field, means that outdoor sports pitch provision should be adequate to meet current needs.

47.5.2 The two paddocks between Hinton View and Rivers Mead are allocated for informal recreation use. They provide habitats for the great crested newt and badgers (both of which are protected species). Measures will be taken to protect the habitats but the fields may also be used for educational and informal recreation purposes. Footpath/cycleway links through the site are required to provide a safe route from the residential areas to the north towards the town centre.

Policy SN9

The two paddocks between Hinton View and Rivers Mead will be developed as informal public open space. Measures will be taken to protect the habitats of great crested newts and badgers on the site. Footpath and cycleway links will be provided through the site.

Indoor Sports Hall

47.5.3 Indoor sports and leisure facilities were generally inadequate for the town and surrounding hinterland, particularly in view of the limited facilities available at the High School for community use. As a result of a proposal in earlier versions of this Plan, a new sports centre has now been built on land to the east of the High School. Although the development is complete, financial contributions may still be sought from any residential developments in Sturminster, Stalbridge and the surrounding catchment area which may add to the need for this development (see **Policy 4.7** in the Community Facilities Chapter).

Education

William Barnes Primary School

47.5.4 The William Barnes Primary School is situated off Bridge Street. The site has been extended to allow better access and car parking facilities. It was proposed to relocate the school onto land at the High School, Honeyhead Lane but in view of the recent improvements to the existing site a move should not now be necessary. Some further expansion on the existing site will be necessary to cope with the proposed levels of population growth in the town. The County Council is working with the school to decide the best means of achieving this. If the growth of school age population exceeds expectations and the capacity of the site, the County Council has the option of building a new school on land that it owns at the High School. Where new development creates a need for an expansion of the school's facilities, contributions may be sought from the development. (See **Policy 4.2 Land required for Educational Use**).

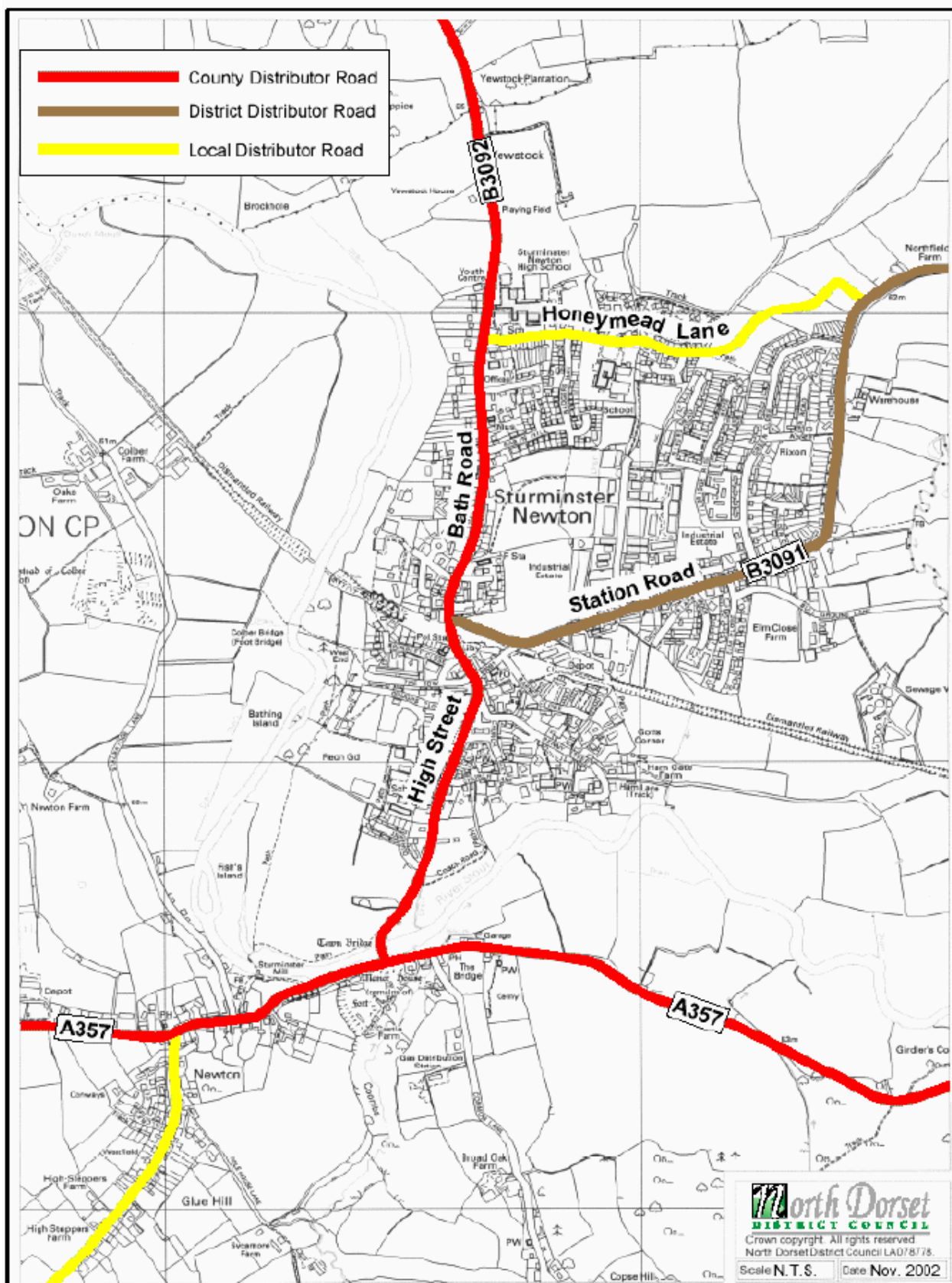
6. Transportation

47.6.1 The guiding policies on highways and transportation are found within the general policies contained in **Chapter 5** of the Plan. These guiding policies relate to cyclists, pedestrians, traffic management, heavy goods vehicles, environment and landscape, public transport, parking facilities and servicing. It also includes the definition of the road hierarchy for North Dorset.

47.6.2 **Chapter 5** contains details of the 'Local Plan Road Improvement Programme' and details the major highway schemes, which are proposed for the period up to 2011. This Chapter contains specific highway and transportation schemes for Sturminster Newton.

Road Hierarchy

47.6.3 The 2011 road hierarchy for Sturminster Newton, as defined in **Chapter 5**, is shown in **Figure 11**.



Pedestrians

47.6.4 In order to improve the environment of the town centre, environmental enhancement measures are proposed in The Market Place. These measures will improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and will be designed in a manner that is consistent with the Conservation Area policies.

Cyclists

47.6.5 The network of minor roads provides satisfactory local routes for cyclists through much of Sturminster Newton. However, problems can occur where pedestrians and cyclists are required to use or to cross heavily trafficked roads. The problems and requirements of pedestrians and cyclists are being considered with the aim of improving facilities and identifying suitable pedestrian and cycle routes.

47.6.6 Measures to encourage cycling by making it safer and more attractive will be carried out. Such measures may include separation of cyclists from other road traffic, shared pedestrian/cycle routes, facilities to cross roads carrying a heavy traffic flow, restrictions on parking, and speed control facilities to slow motorists where separation is impossible.

Policy SN10

Measures to make cycling safer and more attractive will be encouraged along the following routes;

- (i) East - west link. Sturminster High School - Rixon estate via the proposed housing developments to the north of the town (sites 'D' and 'B');**
- (ii) North - south link. Honeymead Lane - Station Road via the proposed informal open space, residential development (site 'C') and former Livestock Market site.**

Major Road Schemes

47.6.7 The limitations placed on the County Highways spending budget and comparisons with other heavily trafficked roads in the County means that the Highway Authority will not be able to fund a B3092 Sturminster Newton Relief Road within the period to 2011. This plan does not therefore contain a proposal for such a scheme.

Development

47.6.8 Redevelopment of the Livestock Market site will allow for the construction of a new link road between the B3092 Bath Road and the B3091 Station Road as outlined in Policy SN8. This will improve road access to the site and to the town centre. Development of land to the north-west of Rixon for residential purposes makes provision for the Honeymead Lane - Manston Road link road, which will help to ease traffic movements in the north of the town.

47.6.9 The new residential development proposed in Sturminster Newton will further exacerbate conditions in the town centre by adding to traffic generation. Traffic management measures are proposed for the town centre.

Policy SN11

Environmental and traffic management measures are proposed in **Sturminster Newton to improve safety and assist pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.**

47.6.10 Details of these medium term environmental and traffic management measures will be subject to further consultation nearer to the date of implementation. It is recognised that whilst these measures may reduce the speed of traffic and give rise to medium term environmental improvement, they will not provide any traffic relief as traffic volumes through the town will continue to increase.

**WINTERBORNE
KINGSTON**

**Inset Plan No.
57**

57.1.1 Land south of Broad Close was allocated for residential purposes in the 1988 Village Plan. Due to the site's proximity to the adjacent sewage biodisc plant, proposed dwellings need to be located fronting Broad Close. i.e.

well away from the sewage biodisc plant. An allocation was included in the deposit version of this Plan and has now been developed.

57.1.2 The facility for the playgroup in the village will become unavailable and a request has been made for assistance in finding an alternative site. Two sites have been investigated, land at Broad Close and land at the village recreation field.

WINTERBORNE WHITECHURCH

Inset Plan No. 59

59.1.1 The "Lady Bailey" Caravan site has been established for over thirty years on the south-western end of the village. The site has been included within the Village Settlement boundary, as the character of the area has changed from open countryside and is now considered to be "part and parcel" of the village. The site provides a valuable source of low-cost accommodation in the form of mobile homes. The policy of the Local Planning Authority will be to restrict the site to its current use and not to grant planning permission for permanent housing.

Policy WW1

Planning permission will not be granted for permanent housing within the Lady Bailey Caravan Site

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Close

Glossary of Terms

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

A Affordable Housing: Housing for people in local housing need who cannot afford to occupy houses generally available on the open market.

↑ Includes both subsidised and low cost market housing.

Agricultural Land Classification: Former Ministry of Agriculture classification of land into five grades according to the degree to which its inherent physical characteristics impose long-term limitations on agricultural use. Grades I, II and IIIA comprise top quality farmland and the best and most versatile farmland is found in these categories.

Article 4 Direction: Withdraws permitted development rights for a particular area, and makes it necessary to apply to the Local Planning Authority for permission.

AONB: An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is an area designated by the Countryside Commission under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act for its particularly attractive landscape and unspoilt character, which should be protected and enhanced as part of the national heritage.

Average Household Size: The number of persons resident in households divided by the number of households.

B Biodiversity Action Plan: An action plan for conserving and enhancing the range of plant and animal species (biodiversity) in the UK for a 20 year period. A local Biodiversity Action Plan for Dorset is being developed to deliver the strategy at the local level.

↑

Brownfield Sites: Sites which have been previously developed. This may include sites in the countryside which have been developed for industrial or other purposes, but does not include buildings or land used for agricultural purposes.

Bulky Goods: Household goods such as carpets, furniture, large electrical and bulky DIY items.

Business Use: Business use (Class B1) was established by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and comprises:

- (a) offices other than use within Class A2 (financial and professional services);
- (b) research and development of products and processes; or
- (c) any industrial process, being a use which can be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust and grit.

C Circulars: These are formal expressions of Government policy on selected subjects. Although advisory a Council will need strong justifiable grounds to ignore them. Circulars also need to be read in conjunction with Regulations, Development Control Policy Notes and Planning Policy Guidance Notes.



Concealed Households: Those living within an existing household, but in need of accommodation of their own.

Conservation Areas: Section 69 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act empowers local planning authorities to designate Conservation Areas, being areas of "special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". The local planning authority has also to keep these areas under review and prepare schemes of enhancement.

County Distributor Routes: A network of roads, mainly A class, which link towns and other major activity centres to each other and to the primary route network. County distributors form the second level of Dorset's strategic highway network.

D Development: Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 defines development as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land".

Development Brief: A document which gives guidelines for new development on a particular site. Often included in the Brief are density, land use, building form, access, pedestrian routes, car parking and landscaping requirements.

Development Plan: The statutorily approved Structure and/or Local Plan(s) covering a particular area.

Dwelling: A building or part of a building which provides structurally separate living quarters.

E Enhancement: Environmental improvement stemming from an Enhancement Scheme under section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Area) Act 1990.

Environmental Improvements: Environmental works, including landscaping, tree planting, surfacing, repairs to buildings and other work designed to enhance the environmental quality of an area.

ESA: An area of special landscape, wildlife or historic interest designated an Environmentally Sensitive Area under the Agriculture Act 1986. In an ESA special measures and programmes can be applied to protect or enhance the area by supporting specific agricultural policies.

Examination in Public: A public discussion of issues involved in the Structure Plan, conducted by an independent Chairman appointed by the Secretary of State together with one or two other experts, to form a panel.

F Flood Plain: Usually land beside a river, stream or other watercourse over which the water flows in time of flood, or would flow if there were no flood defences. The area considered to be so much at risk from flooding that it should not be used for buildings is generally that which, on average, is flooded once in every 100 years, or more often. Washlands form part of the flood plain where water is stored in time of flood.

G Greenfield Site: Land on which no development has previously taken place.

Gypsies: Persons who wander or travel for the purpose of making or seeking their livelihood. New Age Travellers do not normally fall under this definition.

H Hectare: Metric unit of measurement of land area (1 Hectare = 2.471 Acres).

Highway Authority: The Department for Transport is responsible for motorways and trunk roads. Dorset County Council is the Highway Authority with responsibility for maintenance, improvement and creation of public highways under the Highways Act.

Historic Parks and Gardens: Parks and gardens created before 1939 which still retain their special interest and which have been listed and graded in the Register of Historic Gardens first published by English Heritage in 1984.

Houses in Multiple Occupation: These are houses which provide multiple accommodation, such as bedsits and lodgings where some facilities are shared.

Housing Needs Survey: An investigation into the housing needs of households in the District, (including the need for different types and prices of housing), as well as energy efficiency, home safety measures etc.

Housing Strategy Statement: A corporate strategy which identifies the housing issues affecting the District which are addressed through a range of objectives and targets, these being reviewed and revised annually.

I Industrial land: Land used or allocated for industrial purposes, including B1 (Office, Research & Development and Light Industrial), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage & Distribution) as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.

Infill: Infill development is development of individual houses or buildings on sites which are gaps in otherwise developed road frontage.

Infrastructure: The system of communications and utility services required to serve new development. Also used in relation to community or social services such as schools, shops, libraries and public transport.

J Joint-Use Facilities: Community facilities, sometimes owned by education authorities, where arrangements are made for use by the local community, often on a restricted basis. One example is school halls.

L Landscaping Proposals: Planning applications will often be required to include proposals for new planting, surfacing, earth moving, retention of existing landscape features and protective measures to avoid damage to existing trees and shrubs during construction. Details of plant species, numbers to be planted, their locations and measures for their maintenance are likely to be required.

Listed Building: Lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest compiled under Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Grade 1 buildings are of outstanding interest. Grade 2 buildings are of special interest which warrant every effort being made for their preservation.

Local Agenda 21: This was an outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit) held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. It is essentially a process by which a community within a local administrative area sets up and implements a long-term action plan to achieve sustainability.

Local Nature Reserve: A title conferred by the local authority under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 on a site needing special protection because of its value for wildlife and for people to see, learn about and enjoy wildlife.

Low Cost Market Housing: This is a form of affordable housing provided by a private housebuilder. The housing usually comprises small units (flats or terraced houses), which are offered for sale to local people at a restricted price.

M Mobility Standard Housing: Dwellings suitable for easy adaptation for a disabled person (including those confined to a wheelchair) without structural alterations.

N National Nature Reserve: A Site of Special Scientific interest of national or international importance for nature conservation, which is owned or leased by English Nature or is managed in accordance with Nature Reserve Agreements with landowners and occupiers.

Nature Conservation: The protection and management of animal and plant communities.

O Occupancy Condition: A condition, attached to a residential planning permission, which seeks to ensure that only specified categories of people may occupy the housing.

P Permitted Development: Development defined under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (and subsequent amendments) as not requiring planning permission.

Planning Applications: An application for planning permission made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and subsequent regulations.

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs): These provide government guidance on planning policies. The Secretary of State and his inspectors will have regard to this guidance when dealing with appeals and called in planning applications.

Primary Routes: A network of A class roads designed to cater for longer distance traffic, with distinctive green signposts and a selective list of destinations. In Dorset they form the top level of the two-tier strategic highway network. Some primary routes are trunk roads, which are financed by central government directly.

Primary Shopping Frontage: Primary shopping frontages are those shopping areas where the Council wants to ensure that a majority of shop units remain in A1 use (ie. grocers, butchers, supermarkets, hairdressers).

Priority Villages: Villages identified in the Structure Plan for Dorset (excluding South-East), approved in 1983, where housing developments of between 50 and 150 dwellings would be acceptable, in order to support local services.

Public Open Space: Areas of undeveloped land either within or close to residential development which is specifically and properly laid out to meet the formal and informal recreational need of local communities. There are three categories:

- (a) Amenity open space - an informal area of open space which is intended to break up the built environment and provide a landscaped area within development.
- (b) Children's play spaces and kickabout areas - these are intended to provide for both younger children's play needs and older children's informal games and normally include the provision of some form of play equipment.
- (c) Sports grounds - incorporate playing fields, tennis courts, greens and other facilities for formal recreation and usually include provision of adequate facilities for changing and car parking.

R RAMSAR Site: A wetland Site of Special Scientific Interest which is designated by the Secretary of State for the Environment under the Ramsar Convention as being of international importance, usually as a waterfowl habitat.

Registered Social Landlord: Bodies, such as Housing Associations which are regulated by the Housing Corporation as social landlords.

Renewable Energy: Energy forms that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, such as wind and tidal power.

Right to Buy Provisions: The right of council house tenants to buy their homes, introduced under the 1980 Housing Act.

River Valley Policy Area: The landscape setting of river valleys and stream courses determined by topography, vegetation and land use.

Rural Priority Area: Geographical areas designated by the Regional Development Agency according to a range of criteria including unemployment levels, range of employment opportunities, age structure of the population and access to services and facilities.

Rural Exception Sites: Sites within or adjacent to a settlement, with a population of 3,000 or fewer, which would not normally be allowed for housing development, but which in exceptional circumstances, may be allowed for affordable housing.

S Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM): Ancient Monuments are designated under Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953.

Secondary Shopping Frontage: Secondary shopping frontages are those shopping areas where the Council will normally permit an A1, A2 or A3 use (i.e. retail, financial services or restaurants/takeaways).

Section 106 Agreement: A legal agreement negotiated under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in order to secure matters related to a development which could not be secured through planning conditions.

Sequential Test: A means of identifying the most appropriate location for different forms of development. Explained in more detail in PPG6 (for retail development) and PPG3 (for residential development).

Settlement Boundary: Defines the area within which development will, in principle, be acceptable subject to the provisions of the Local Plan.

Shopping (A1) Use: Use for all or any of the following purposes:

- (a) for the retail sale of goods other than hot food;
- (b) as a Post Office;
- (c) for the sale of tickets or as a travel agency;
- (d) for the sale of sandwiches or other cold food for consumption off the premises;
- (e) for hairdressing;

- (f) as a funeral directors;
- (g) for the display of goods for sale;
- (h) for the hiring out of domestic or personal goods or articles; and
- (i) for the washing or cleaning of clothes or fabrics on the premises.

SPA: A Site of Special Scientific Interest additionally designated a Special Protection Area because of the need to protect threatened birds, their eggs, nests and habitats.

Special Areas of Conservation: An SSSI additionally designated an SAC in order to maintain or restore natural habitats and wild species identified in the EC Council Directives on the Protection of Natural and Semi-Natural Habitats for Wild Flora and Fauna (the Habitat Directive).

SSSI: A site identified by English Nature under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as being a Site of Special Scientific Interest on account of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features, Development in or near an SSSI must be very strictly controlled.

Strategy for Special Needs Housing: A strategy developed in partnership with other statutory and voluntary agencies, providing information on special needs housing in the District, as well as identifying and prioritising new schemes to meet urgent needs.

Structure Plan: A Plan prepared by the County Council which provides a general framework of statutory planning policies and proposals for Dorset.

Subsidised Housing: Housing provided by a Registered Social Landlord for rent or shared equity, where there is often a degree of public subsidy from the Housing Corporation and/or Local Authority.

Sustainability: Sustainable development is the concept that mankind should live off the Earth's income rather than erode its capital. The consumption of renewable resources must be kept within the limits which allow them to be replaced and future generations handed down not only man-made wealth such as buildings, roads and railways, but natural wealth such as clean and adequate water supplies, good arable land, wildlife and ample forests. (Definition based on 'This Common Inheritance' 1990, para 4.4; a British Government publication).

T Telecommunication Facilities: An expanding range of communication services involving radio, television and telephone networks provided by means of cable, microwave and satellite which range from international to local in scope.



Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987: An order made by the Secretary of State for the Environment defining separate classes for the use of land or buildings. Although there are some exceptions, planning permission is normally required to change from one defined use to another.

Traffic Management Scheme: A scheme for the regulation of traffic over existing highways designed to achieve a particular traffic operational and/or environmental objective.

Tree Preservation Orders: An Order made by a local planning authority under Section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; to protect selected trees and woodland if their removal would have significant impact on the environment and its enjoyment by the public.

U Utility Services: Water supply, sewerage, sewage disposal, land drainage, gas and electricity supply, waste disposal and telecommunications.



V Vitality and Viability: The factors which make a shopping centre successful or otherwise, including environmental quality, range of retailers, accessibility, parking, investment.



Voluntary Purchase Grant: A scheme to enable tenants of Housing Association properties in settlements of 3,000 population and above, the opportunity to purchase their home, at a discount, subject to the Housing Association applying to join the scheme.

W Windfall Sites: These are sites which have not been proposed in the Plan, but which become available for residential development. They are normally found within defined settlement boundaries. They do not include greenfield land.



RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINE SUMMARY

The Urban Village Approach to the development of Major Residential Areas "High Quality Permeable" Layouts:

This appendix explains the concept of "high quality urban village" style housing layouts and how they should be designed using the concept of "permeability".

The following policies in the Local Plan are relevant:

Policy 2.5 Form of Major Housing Development

Major new housing development should be planned as small, compact "urban villages". These should provide "high-quality" living environments with convenient access by public transport to, and the co-ordinated development of; open space, local education, recreation, community facilities and employment opportunities as well as a mix of housing which includes affordable housing and housing for special needs.

Policy 1.8 Standard Assessment Criteria (iv) Design & External Appearance of Buildings

The adaptation of local vernacular styles and use of local materials will be expected in existing areas which have a strong local historic character where pre-20th century properties predominate. (This will be particularly important in Conservation Areas). Buildings in a modern idiom may be approved where they are in sympathetic relationship to their surroundings. The main elevation of new buildings will be expected to face either the major road leading to, or the major road running through the development, so as to create a sense of enclosure, public security and to help integrate new development with existing patterns of development.

Policy 1.8 (vi) Vehicular Access (part)

Road networks leading into new development shall be designed so as to achieve a high level of 'permeability' i.e to have the maximum number of links and access points between all areas for pedestrians, cyclists and for motor vehicles, so as to integrate new development with cyclists and for motor vehicles, so as to integrate new development with existing patterns of development, to create a greater sense of public security and to reduce journey length.

Urban Villages

- utilise a form of development which is based on the style and layout of a traditional village.
- there are normally a variety of house types and styles, based not only on local and traditional styles of architecture, but also in the use of materials.
- they are distinctive because of their compact form, mixture of density and house type.
- houses usually front onto the edge of the public highway, creating a stronger sense of enclosure. the road structure does not dominate the layout, instead variable road widths create a sense of place. "High Quality" Development
- requires an understanding of the context in which development takes place, to give the area a feeling of "local distinctiveness". "High Quality" therefore need not mean "high expense" - rather just a use of good design, layout techniques and the use of appropriate materials!

"Permeability"

- is the extent to which an environment allows people a choice of routes through it, thus reducing journey length for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles by using as far as possible natural desire line links with the existing settlement.

- instead of the standard feeder road and cul-de-sac approach to housing estate design, it utilises through roads wherever possible, with pedestrians and cyclists having priority, usually in a traffic-calmed restricted 20mph area.

See below for illustrations showing the difference between a non-permeable cul-de-sac residential layout and a permeable Urban Village style layout.



OLD APPROACH Non-permeable Cul-de-sac Drawbacks :-

- Houses are set back from the road creating "empty space" and turn their backs on the main settlement.
- Views of rear fences dominate from main road.
- Additional traffic on the feeder roads leading to the development.
- Road layout dominates the design.
- Large radii junctions and maximum visibility splays increase traffic speed.
- Connecting path between the cul-de-sacs lacks overlooking for security. There is no "desire-line" and path therefore will be little used.
- Layout and design could be anywhere does not use any "local distinctiveness" in its approach.

NEW APPROACH Permeable through road 'Urban Village' layout Advantages :-

- Houses front onto main road leading into the settlement creating a visual link with existing buildings.
- Houses extend traditional frontage development and create enclosure.
- Greater route choice - less traffic on feeder roads leading to the development.
- A "sense of place" is dominant with variable road widths creating urban spaces.
- Small radii junctions, minimum visibility splays and road bends calm traffic speed.
- Pedestrians are encouraged to walk along the "desire line" of the street.
- Layout and design uses the "Urban Village" approach and uses character of existing settlement to create "local distinctiveness."
- Compact design and lack of front

