

South Somerset Draft Core Strategy

Papers presented to Area Workshops July 5th to 8th 2010

**Agenda Item 6 of Area West Committee agenda
for the meeting to be held on 18th August 2010 refers.**

The Vision for South Somerset in 2026

South Somerset will be a thriving, attractive and affordable place to live and work in. It will be a far more sustainable place with more self sufficient towns with much better public transport links within and between them and more and better community facilities in each of them. The move to a low carbon economy and low carbon living will have been secured together with adaptation to the changing climate of warmer wetter winters and hotter drier summers expressed through appropriate changes in the build form and enhanced green infrastructure.

The District will have grown in population with a larger Yeovil and expanded market towns based on its economic, cultural and educational strengths and will continue to protect its distinctive urban and rural environments and high landscape character areas reflected in the high number of conservation areas and listed buildings. The growth will have been achieved in concert with the infrastructure provision needed to make it happen and to service it once built over the 20 year period of the Plan and at a scale supported by the wider community. The housing to accommodate this growth will be of the highest standard that people are pleased with and can afford (either to buy or rent). And improves their quality of life. An improved environment for business, better wages and better quality housing, both private and public sector, will have provided a better and more equitable standard of living and fostered more socially inclusive communities throughout the District. Businesses will be attracted from further afield to South Somerset through inward investment promotion and the improved economic assets of the District.

Yeovil will be the prime economic driver within the District (and for parts of West Dorset) with a stronger employment base and more high tech and quality businesses. The town will be attractive to existing and new businesses and workers through continuing investment and promotion of its existing manufacturing and service bases. Particular encouragement of high tech diversification from and in support of aerospace and high tech industries will have yielded a more resilient, diverse, higher wage economy and low carbon economy .

Yeovil will be better linked to the District's market towns and internally through more integrated and sustainable public transport. The town will be attractive for residents, workers, students and visitors with ever improving higher education facilities including university level courses and even better health care. A more vibrant town centre with a quality retail offer (but not at the expense of the market towns' retail roles) and expanded night time economy will have been achieved.

The Yeovil Eco Town urban extension will be established and an exemplar for the benefits of more sustainable living with local job and service self sufficiency, better quality and more desired housing, a high level of attractive open space and parkland and all with a zero carbon impact.

South Somerset's Primary and Local market towns will provide the basis of the thriving regenerated and diversified economy outside Yeovil. These places will have retained their distinctiveness and continue to provide a focus for their surrounding areas. The settlement hierarchy and strategy established in this Core Strategy by building on settlements' existing facilities and functions will have served to secure their continued vibrancy and service provision. A better balance of jobs to housing will be evident. The significant growth identified in this plan for Chard will have served to address physical constraint to growth, economic regeneration and prosperity and moved the town to a higher level of service provision with much improved facilities throughout the town and more and better jobs. The growth (including visitor growth)

proposed at the other Primary and local market towns will serve to provide economic regeneration and better housing and the maintenance and enhancement of commercial and community services across the District and thereby provide better access for all. The mix of housing, employment and associated land uses in these places will promote greater settlement self containment.

A viable agricultural and rural economy will have been supported through policies supporting village development for local provision of jobs, facilities and affordable housing and greater growth where a sustainable case can be made. Farm diversification and more diverse local employment opportunities and support for tourism and tourism accommodation and attractions will also support a better experience of rural living.

The Council's commitment to reducing the impact of climate change will be demonstrated by the eco town and by the wider application of reduced CO₂ emission targets for new development throughout the District along with development secured throughout the District at the highest practical levels of sustainability, whilst development in areas of high flood risk will have been avoided.

Progression of South Somerset's Core Strategy – Audit Trail

I & O	Title		Preferred Option	
Vision for South Somerset	Vision for South Somerset	<p>1) Vision set out in I & O.</p> <p>2) Responses received and considered.</p> <p>3) Approved SCS Vision compared (SCS Vision not drafted when I & O published) and considered – elements not in core strategy draft vision and spatial in nature added in.</p> <p>4) Evidence base considered for material impact on Vision – no material change to vision resulting</p> <p>5) National Policy Changes considered for material impact. – mainly PPS 1 supplement on eco towns requiring an additional section on eco town</p> <p>6) No SA undertaken – not appropriate for vision (verified by PAS)</p> <p>7) Text re-drafted in plain English.</p>	Vision for South Somerset (drafted)	

Proposed Settlement Hierarchy and scale of Growth (Housing & Employment)

Yeovil

Proposed settlement status – SSCT;

Total housing commitments as at Autumn 2009 - 3725

Residual additional Housing provision (additional to existing commitments including allocations) - 7675

Location of development – 3 options; pending review upon receipt of Historic Environmental Assessment

Primary and Local Service Centres

	Chard	Crewkerne	Ilminster	Wincanton	Somerton	Castle Cary Cary Ansford	Langport/ Huish	Ilchester	South Petherton	Martock	Bruton	Milborne Port	Stoke	Other	Total
Proposed Settlement Status	B	B	B	B	B	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	N/A	
Total Housing Commitment at Autumn 2009 (1)	1863	928	191	703	219	238	182	1	145	96	97	199	5	1199	6066
Residual additional Housing Provision (Additional to existing commitments including allocations) (2)	328	100	340	350	281	262	118	150	0	150	120	100	50	0	2349
Total	2191	1028	531	1053	500	500	300	151	145	246	217	299	55	1199	8415
Proposed Location of Development (3)	As in master plan drafted by "LDA" Consultants	Mainly on existing allocations	East of Shudrick Lane and to north	To west of town	To west of Somerton (adj Langport Road)	To north and west and north and east	To north and east away from constraints	To north of the town	N/A	To east or south of town	Partly in urban framework but some will be beyond urban fringe	On periphery with no specific location	Dispersed around the village	N/A	

Emerging Employment Land Requirement (B1, B2 & B8)

Yeovil

Employment Land Required for Settlement (B1, B2 & B8) – 72 hectares

Employment Land Commitment at March 2008 – 38.78 hectares

Difference between requirement and supply – -33.22 hectares

33.5 ha required of which 31 will be in the Eco Town. Continue to save Bunford Lane for development.

Primary and Local Service Centres

	Chard	Crewkerne	Ilminster	Wincanton	Somerton	Castle Cary / Ansford	Langport/Huish	Ilchester	South Petherton	Martock	Bruton	Milborne Port	Stoke	Other	Total
Proposed Settlement Status	B	B	B	B	B	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	N/A	
Employment Land Requirement for settlement (B1,B2,B8) (4)	15 ha (5)	6 ha	6 ha	7.27 ha	2.77 ha	2.85 ha	2.02 ha	1.04 ha	0.77 ha	1.52 ha	1.17 ha	1.81 ha	0.34 ha	N/A	120.56 ha
Employment land commitment (at March 2010)	16.39 ha	10.95 ha	23.59 ha	5.81 ha	1.91 ha	10.09 ha	0.69 ha	0.44 ha	0.0 ha	2.14 ha	0.56 ha	0.04 ha	0.0 ha N/A		111.39 ha
Difference between requirement and supply	1.39	4.95	17.59	- 1.46	- 0.86	7.24 ha	- 1.33	-0.6 ha	-0.77 ha	0.62	-0.61ha	-1.77 ha	-0.34 ha		
Emerging employment land requirement (B1,B2, B8)(6)	Oversupply justified by Key Site. Continue to save Key Site comprising 13ha. 6 ha required for post plan period.	Oversupply justified by Key Site. Continue to save Key Site comprising 10.53ha.	Oversupply justified by strategic location and reduction of out commuting. Continue to save employment allocations.	1.5 ha to promote self contained growth	1 ha to promote self contained growth	No obvious shortage due to development of the pet food factory, town now requires some additional land for future choice.	1.5 ha to promote self contained growth	1 ha to promote self contained growth	1 ha to promote self contained growth	Sufficient land to cater for identified need. This is a minimum and additional land can come forward.	1 ha to promote self contained growth. Evidence locally of need for starter units	2 ha to promote self contained growth. Evidence locally of need for starter units	0.5 to promote self contained growth		43

Settlement Status Justification

Primary Service Centres (B)

WINCANTON

Wincanton should be a Market Town because:

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such.
- It has a strategic role in the provision of shopping, cultural, education, health, leisure and financial services and serves a wide catchment including settlements beyond the District boundary
- The town is identified as one of the nine settlements across the District, which account for 77% of all job provision and therefore displays a strong employment role relative to other settlements.

CHARD

Chard should be a Market Town because:

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such
- It is the second largest settlement in the District.
- It has a strategic role with a wide range of facilities that serve the town and the surrounding area including, employment opportunities, secondary school, health facilities, sports facilities, financial services and retail offer.
- Chard is currently the second main settlement for employment, it provides approximately 5,400 jobs which accounts for 8.5 % of all employment across the District and is identified as being a strategically significant employment location.

CREWKERNE

Crewkerne should be a Market Town because:

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such
- It plays a strategic role in the provision of shopping, cultural, education, health, leisure and financial services within a wide catchment area
- The town is identified in the South Somerset Employment Land Review as being a strategically significant employment location
- Identification under this policy will enable the settlement to grow, increase levels of self-containment and continue to provide services to meet the needs of the existing and surrounding communities.

SOMERTON

Somerton should be a Market Town because:

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such
- It has a strong employment role having the 7th highest jobs total in district
- It has a range of identified retail and community facilities, including the 'strategic' facilities of a defined retail centre and library, health centre and dentists
- There are primary school facilities and secondary school provision is at Huish Episopi, 4 miles away.
- It is felt important that strategic growth in the north of the district is provided, and that Somerton is able to provide for such growth.

CASTLE CARY/ANSFORD

Castle Cary and Ansford should be a Market Town because:

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such.

- It has a strategic role in the provision of shopping, cultural and public services that meet the needs of the settlement and the surrounding area.
- The settlement has a settlement school serving a wide catchment
- The town has an already wide employment base including the Royal Canin factory and serves a wide catchment area including across District boundary but could benefit from a broader range of employment opportunities assisting greater self containment
- Castle Cary has a mainline railway station with good sustainable transport links to the South West and London.

ILMINSTER

Ilminster should be a Market Town because:

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such
- It has a strategic role in the provision of shopping, cultural and financial services
- The town is identified in the South Somerset Employment Land Review as being a strategically significant employment location
- The town is identified as one of the nine settlements across the District, which account for 77% of all job provision and therefore displays a strong employment role relative to other settlements
- The town provides a wide range of additional facilities that serve the town and the surrounding area including health facilities.

Local Service Centres (C)

BRUTON

Bruton should be a Local Service Centre because:

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such
- Whilst it has a strategic education role, providing wide-ranging of facilities from nursery through to private college/further education, it primarily has a local role in the provision of services and facilities.
- It provides a range of facilities that serve itself and surrounding parishes including, health centre, pharmacy, dentist, Post Office, bank, library and recreation and other community facilities.

ILCHESTER

Ilchester should be a Local Service Centre because:

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such
- It has strong employment role relative to other settlements by virtue of the RNAS
- It has an identified retail and community roles serving a wide catchment.

LANGPORT/HUIISH EPISCOPI

Langport should be a Local Service Centre because:

- The settlement has an existing role as a market town as identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) but has significant constraints on future growth, particularly flooding which would restrict the ability to provide for future growth and thus local service centre status would be appropriate.
- It possesses a variety of community facilities including health centre, library, banks and range of shops including a supermarket
- It contains a secondary school with sports hall for public use

MARTOCK

Martock should be a Local Service Centre because:

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such
- It has an identified retail and community role serving the surrounding settlements
- It has a variety of shops and facilities, including a doctor's surgery, pharmacy, optician, dentist, primary school and a supermarket identified as of a strategic nature
- It provides employment opportunities for Martock and the surrounding area and has a high level of travel to work self containment (30.8%)
- It has a higher frequency bus services to higher order settlements

MILBORNE PORT

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such
- It has a local role with a range of facilities that serve itself and surrounding parishes including, a primary school, nursery, health centre/Dr's surgery, pharmacy, foodstore, Post Office, library and recreation and other community facilities.
- It has a higher frequency bus services to higher order settlements

SOUTH PETHERTON

- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such
- South Petherton has an identified retail and community role
- Variety of shops and facilities, including primary school, hospital, doctor's surgery, pharmacy and library. It is identified as having more than 1 strategic function
- It provides employment opportunities for South Petherton and the surrounding area and has a high level of travel to work self-containment (36%)
- It has a higher frequency bus service

STOKE SUB HAMDON

Stoke sub Hamdon should be a Local Service Centre because:-

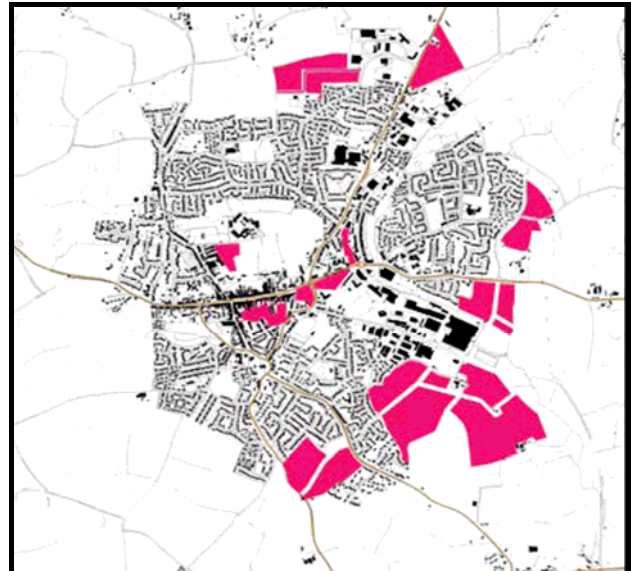
- It is identified in the South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) as such
- It contains a good range of facilities including a health centre, pharmacy, dentist, primary and secondary schools, shops, sports hall, playing pitches and play facilities to support the community for local needs
- It has strategic facilities catering for surrounding settlements such as the secondary school, supermarket and sports hall with catchments areas extending beyond Stoke Sub Hamdon
- There are higher frequency bus services, links to cycle network and access to demand responsive travel opportunities
- Limited growth would support economic activity and the growth of local services, would meet identified local affordable housing needs and would promote greater self-containment of the community

CHARD SCALE AND DIRECTION OF GROWTH OPTIONS

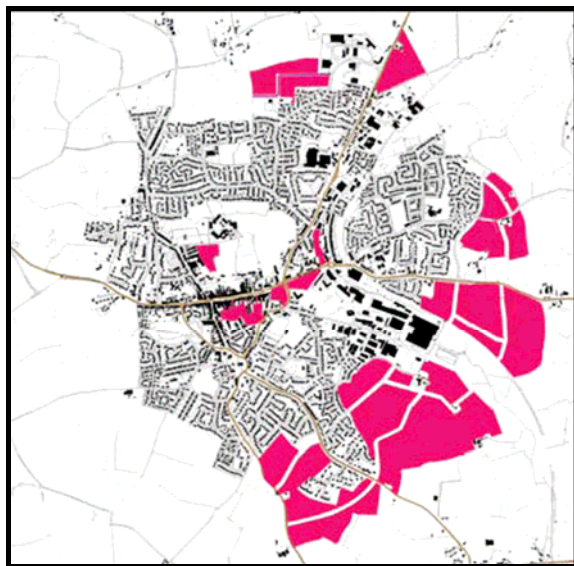
The following summarises the 4 options for growth in Chard and outlines the positive and negative impacts of each. The suggested preferred option is option 3 because it provides a scale of growth that will enable Chard to achieve and maximise its offer of employment, housing, retail and associated amenities whilst not re-introducing undue congestion within the internal road network of the town. Option 3 will provide 2716 dwellings in total. In the plan period to 2026 it will provide 1700 dwellings, which together with existing commitments in Chard will result in 2191 being built in the plan period and 1016 dwellings beyond 2026.



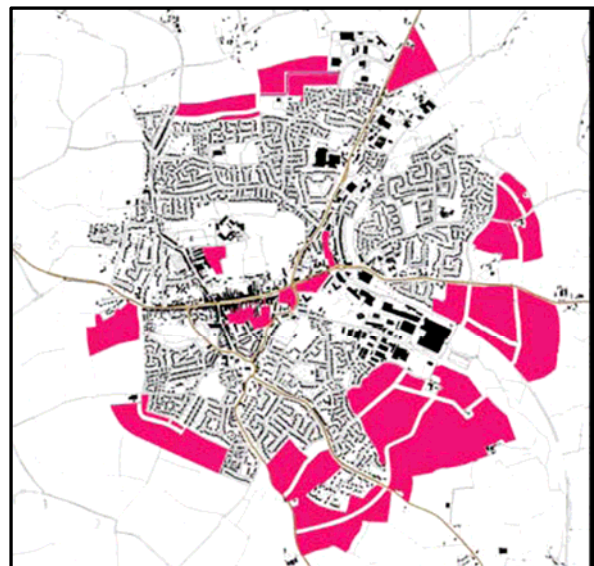
Option 1: Town Centre Regeneration



Option 2: Eastern Growth Area Part 1

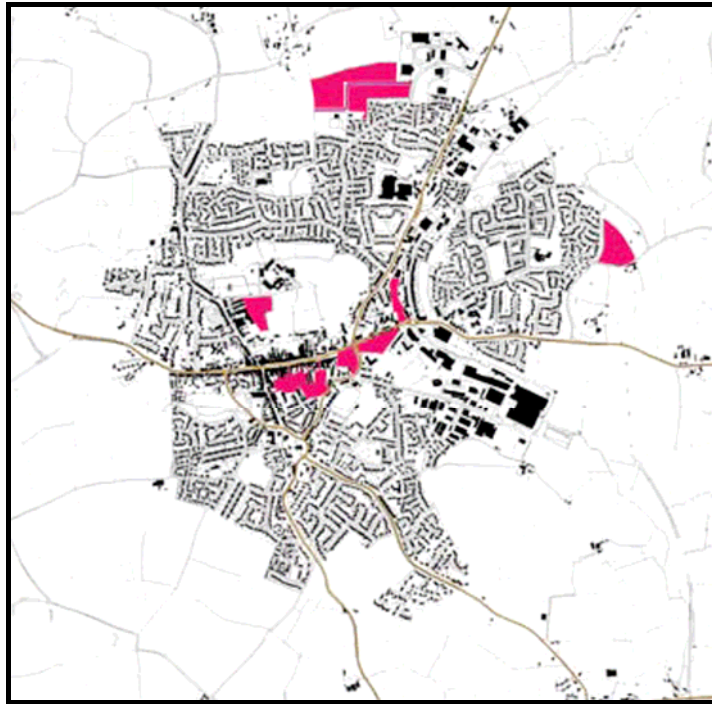


Option 3: Eastern Growth Area Full Build Out



Option 4: Growth to 'Natural Limits'

Option 1: Town Centre Regeneration



Chard Regeneration Plan (LDA, 2009)

This development option would focus on regenerating the town centre and only deliver low levels of housing growth. This option would include:

- Implementing the regeneration initiatives in the town centre such as the Back Plots/Boden Mill, Green Heart, East End and public realm enhancements to High Street/Fore Street;
- The relocation of the football club to the north of the town and associated employment development;
- Some development of the eastern growth area to fund traffic signalling improvements in the town centre, option for the location of this development are indicated on the Phase 1 development plan;
- Housing development on the vacant football club site;
- This option would consist of approximately 410 dwellings.

Positive Impacts:

- Permeability and connectivity of movements within the town centre will be improved and access to local facilities improved.
- Historic environment will be maintained
- Potential reduction in town centre traffic
- Minimal impact on existing habitats and ecological areas
- Sports and open space provision

Negative Impacts:

- Range and quality of housing in the town centre will be improved but will not make adequate contributions towards meeting current and future need identified needs of various social groups
- Will not deliver enough housing to release funding to reduce fuel poverty in existing residential areas as part of any potential 'Allowable solutions'.
- Only moderate improvements to education and skills provision
- Will not increase the physical capacity of the highways network whilst increasing the number of trips and potentially congestion

Option 2: Eastern Growth Area Part 1



Chard Regeneration Plan (LDA, 2009)

This option would follow on from the town centre improvements and continue the development of the eastern growth area, focusing on place making in the Millfield area to create a new district centre and delivering some additional highways links to the east of the town to improve highways capacity. This option would include;

- Creating a highways link from the A30 to the Millfield Industrial Estate with additional housing growth immediately south of the A30;
- Improving the Millfield road from town to the new mixed use district centre south of Millfield
- Completing the highways link from the A30 to the A358 plus associated housing development;
- This option will deliver approximately 1366 dwellings.

Positive Impacts:

- Permeability and connectivity of movements within the town centre will be improved and access to local facilities improved
- Range and quality of housing in the will be improved - option will deliver roughly the same amount of housing as the Key Site including affordable housing
- Promotion of economic growth - critical mass of town will be increased and potentially attract larger employers and retailers
- Some improvement to signalling efficiency and improved road safety. Potential reduction in town centre traffic
- Highways capacity of the network will increase through delivery of a new link road on the eastern side of town
- Historic environment will be maintained and townscape enhanced
- Sports and open space provision

Negative Impacts:

- Some negative impacts upon existing residential areas - Oaklands Ave and Henderson Drive due to increased traffic along these routes
- Some encroachment onto greenfield and agricultural land to the east of the town
- Some impact on existing wildlife habitats and sites of ecological conservation leading to the need for mitigation

Option 3: Eastern Growth Area Full Build Out



Chard Regeneration Plan (LDA, 2009)

This option would continue from options 1 and 2 and complete the growth to the east of the town, creating a second highways link and deliver maximum housing growth to the east of the town. This option would include:

- Delivering additional housing to complete the new communities at Holbear and Millfield;
- Fill out final development plots around Avishayes and;
- Complete the second highways link around the eastern edge of the town;
- This option would deliver approximately 2716 dwellings.

Positive Impacts:

- Permeability and connectivity of movements within the town centre will be improved and access to local facilities improved including access to Millfields neighbourhood centre
- Improvements to physical, social and economic environment of the town centre providing opportunities for start-up businesses and revitalised retail offer
- Range and quality of housing in the will be improved including affordable housing - option will deliver roughly twice the amount of housing as Key Site over the plan period and beyond
- Promotion of economic growth - critical mass of town will be increased significantly to attract larger employers and retailers
- Delivery of 2 new primary school
- Historic environment will be maintained
- Additional link roads around the east of the town will ease the levels of traffic dependent Oaklands Ave and Henderson Drive
- Sports and open space provision

Negative Impacts:

- Significant encroachment onto greenfield and agricultural land to the east of the town
- Some impact on existing wildlife habitats and sites of geological conservation leading to the need for mitigation

Option 4: Growth to 'Natural Limits'



Chard Regeneration Plan (LDA, 2009)

This option takes the level of development to the full build out scenario of the masterplan and delivers additional housing sites to the north and west of the town. This option would deliver approximately 3485 dwellings.

Positive Impacts:

- Permeability and connectivity of movements within the town centre will be improved and access to local facilities improved including access to Millfields neighbourhood centre
- Improvements to physical, social and economic environment of the town centre providing opportunities for start-up businesses and revitalised retail offer
- Range and quality of housing in the will be improved delivering significantly more housing than the local plan including affordable housing
- Promotion of economic growth - critical mass of town will be increased significantly to attract larger employers and retailers
- Delivery of 2 new primary school
- Historic environment will be maintained
- Additional link roads around the east of the town will ease the levels of traffic dependent Oaklands Ave and Henderson Drive
- Sports and open space provision

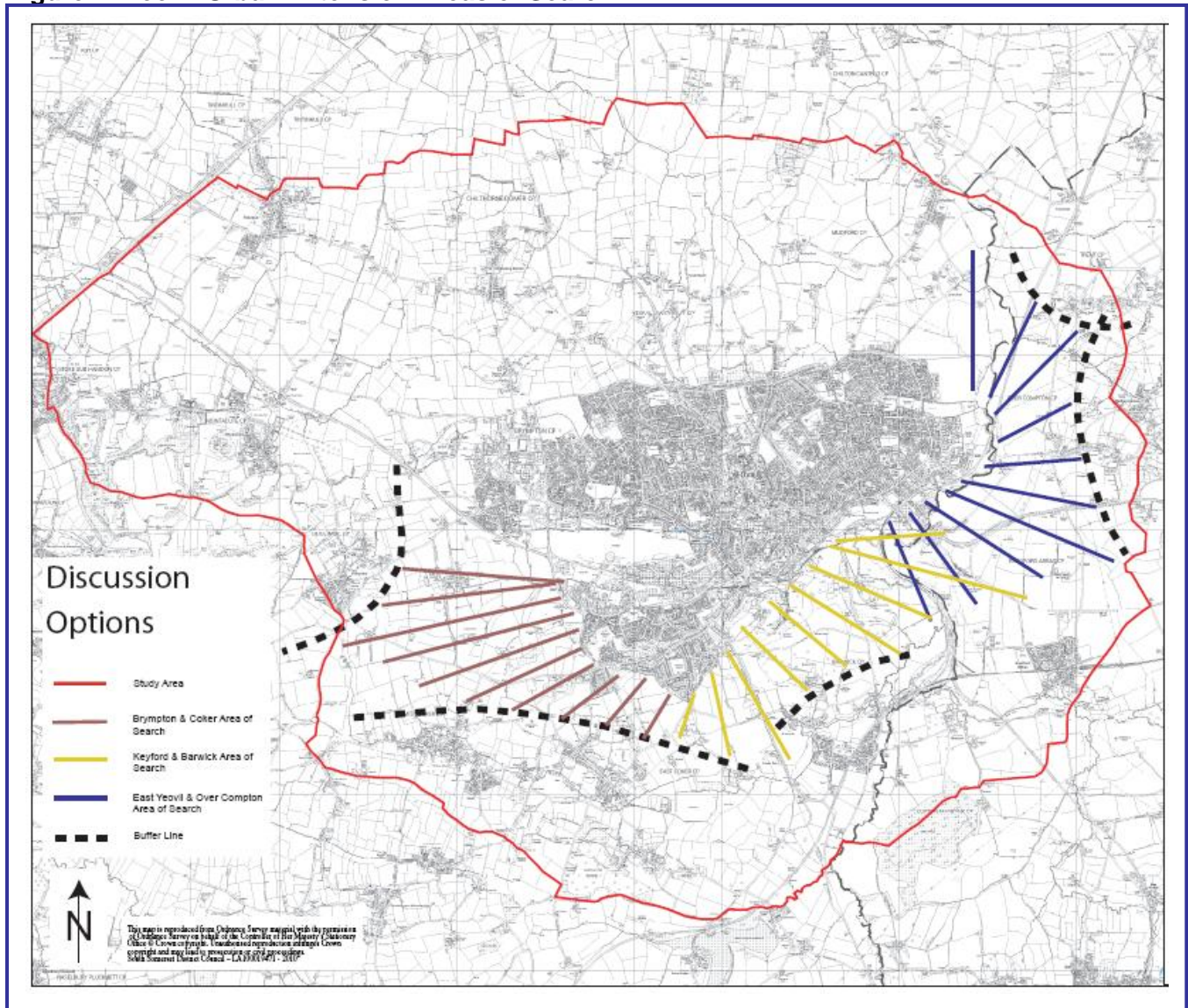
Negative Impacts:

- Levels of growth attributed to this option will require additional employment sites to be identified
- Level of growth results in significant increase in traffic congestion on several key junctions and would need further masterplanning
- Significant encroachment onto greenfield and agricultural land to the east, north and west of the town
- Significant increases in congestion leading to air and noise pollution
- Some impact on existing wildlife habitats and sites of ecological conservation leading to the need for mitigation and results in highest potential negative impact

Yeovil's Urban Extension; Direction for Growth

The following boxes summaries the positive and negative effects for each of the three Yeovil Growth options emerging from the Sustainability Appraisal process. Early work shows that the Barwick/ Keyford option is the preferred direction for growth as the positives are considered to outweigh the negative effects. It should be noted that formal identification of the preferred direction for growth is subject to the outcome of the Yeovil Historic Environmental Assessment, which is due for completion in late June.

Figure 1: Yeovil Urban Extension Areas of Search



Option 1: Over Compton / West Dorset (South & East of Yeovil)

Positives

- The Highways Authority considers option acceptable.
- Option is located in an area of medium to high capacity to accommodate built development from a landscape perspective.
- Option is located in close proximity to the Yeovil Penn Mill Trading Estate encouraging local employment opportunities.
- Option benefits from close proximity to Yeovil Penn Mill Train Station maximising opportunities for sustainable commuting.
- Option presents an opportunity to establish a figure of eight bus route between the outlining stations, town centre and Urban Extension.

Negatives

- Option is located in West Dorset and will involve significant cross border working arrangements.
- Option will impact on the separate identity of the nearby villages of Over Compton & Bradford Abbas. Note: settlement coalescence will be avoided.
- Option will have a negative impact on local biodiversity including resident bat populations.
- Option has unknown transport implications having not been surveyed by Somerset County Council Transport Department.
- Option is located largely on a west facing sloping offering only limited opportunities to maximise passive solar gain.
- Option constrained in part by flooding.
- Option is constrained by a single A road access.
- Option is located in close proximity to Newton Surmaville a Grade I Listed Building a designated Historic Park and Garden.
- Option is constrained by steep topography.

Option 2: Barwick / Keyford (South of Yeovil)

Positives

- The Highways Authority considers option acceptable.
- Option is considered viable by Somerset County Council Transport Department.
- Option is located in close proximity to Goldstones Leisure Centre and the Yeovil Country Park maximising opportunities to encourage healthy living.
- Option offers an opportunity to redress the secondary education imbalance within the town.
- Option is located a short distance from the town centre (albeit via Hendford hill which will form a barrier) this option is considered to offer opportunities for walking and cycling.
- Option would facilitate linkages to the National Cycle Network Route 24.
- Option is located on a south facing slope maximising opportunities for passive solar gain and energy saving measures through passivehaus standards.
- Option is located in an area of medium to high capacity to accommodate built development from a landscape perspective.
- Option is located in close proximity to the Lynx West Trading Estate and Augusta Westlands encouraging local employment opportunities.
- Option will bring Yeovil Junction Station into the Yeovil Urban Area encouraging greater sustainable commuting. Option also offers links with Yeovil Penn Mill Station.
- Option presents an opportunity to enhance Yeovil Country Park as an Urban Park maximising community use.
- Option presents an opportunity to establish a figure of eight bus route between the outlining stations, town centre and Urban Extension.

Negatives

- Option will result in a loss of Grade 1 agricultural land.
- Option is located in close proximity to Barwick Country House a Grade II* Listed Building and Newton Surmaville a Grade I Listed Building, both houses are designated Historic Parks and Gardens.
- Option will impact on the separate identity of the nearby villages of North Coker, Barwick and Stoford. Note: settlement coalescence will be avoided.
- Option will have a negative impact on local biodiversity including resident bat populations.
- Option is constrained by steep topography.
- Option constrained in part by flooding.
- Option is constrained by a single A road access.

Option 3: Brympton / Coker (South & West of Yeovil)

Positives

- The Highways Authority considers option acceptable.
- Option is considered viable by Somerset County Council Transport Department.
- Option is located on low-grade agricultural land.
- Option is not unduly constrained by flooding.
- Option is located on an area of medium to high capacity to accommodate built development from a landscape perspective.
- Option has easy access to cycle routes encouraging healthy lifestyle choices.

Negatives

- Option will have a negative impact on local biodiversity including resident bat populations.
- Option is located in close proximity to Brympton D'Evercy Manor House a Grade I Listed Building and designated Historic Park & Garden as well as West Coker Manor.
- Option is not located near any mainline Railway Stations and would not encourage sustainable commuting opportunities.
- Option presents few opportunities to establish viable bus routes.
- Option is located largely on a north-facing slope offering only limited opportunities to maximise passive solar gain.
- Option is constrained by a single A road access.
- Option is badly related to the town centre.
- Option will result in the loss of Grade 1 agricultural land.
- Option will impact on the separate identity of the nearby villages of Odcombe, East Coker and West Coker. Note: settlement coalescence will be avoided.

Rural settlements

The Core Strategy focuses new development at the most sustainable locations in the district i.e. Yeovil, the Market Towns and the Local Service Centres. However, the rural nature of South Somerset means that there are many smaller settlements scattered across the district that are not considered to be Local Service Centres, but where some development to enhance the sustainability of these rural settlements would be acceptable. Some examples of how the sustainability of rural settlements can be enhanced include the provision of local employment space, community facilities and housing to meet local needs.

In rural areas, most new development should be located in or on the edge of existing settlements where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together.¹ Government policy states that policies should take into account the need to provide housing in rural areas (including the consideration of a Rural Exception Site Policy), in order to enhance or maintain their sustainability;² and although the focus should be existing towns and identified service centres, some new housing should be provided to meet identified local need in other villages.³ At small rural settlements in particular, this should consider the relationship between settlements so as to ensure growth is distributed in a way that supports informal social support networks, assists people to live near their work and benefit from key services, and minimise/improve environmental impact.⁴

Recent housing development in South Somerset has been dispersed across the district, with around 24% of new dwellings built between 2006-09 being located outside the Yeovil, the Market Towns, and Local Service Centres. In order to meet the objectives of the Core Strategy, the criteria for allowing some development in the rural settlements must be carefully restricted to ensure that this dispersal of development does not continue, whilst allowing some appropriate development that will enhance the sustainability of the villages. The overall argument for delivering more sustainable development through the settlement hierarchy is explained above.

Economic development appropriate to the scale of the settlement should be supported where it provides the most sustainable option in villages or other locations that are remote from service centres, recognising that a site may be an acceptable location for development even though it may not be readily accessible by public transport.⁵

In 2008, Matthew Taylor MP carried out a review of how planning can support businesses and affordable housing in rural areas.⁶ This study identified that regional and local plans have tended to prioritise certain narrow environmental indicators (namely to reduce energy use and emissions, measured almost exclusively by transport use) when interpreting what constitutes sustainable development. This emphasis on environmental criteria has been a particular barrier for rural development, at the expense of otherwise potentially beneficial housing and economic development. The study argues that a better balance of social, economic

¹ PPS 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth.

² PPS 3: Housing.

³ PPS 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

⁴ PPS 3: Housing.

⁵ PPS 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth.

⁶ Living Working Countryside: Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing, 2008.

and environmental characteristics should be sought so that truly sustainable communities are created in rural areas (such as South Somerset).

The South Somerset Settlement Role and Function study states that development could be appropriate for settlements not identified under RSS Development Policy C (Local Service Centres) if there is clear justification, which could include: supports rural diversification and provision of appropriate scale employment opportunities in settlements with relatively high economically active population, a young population or limited sustainable transport opportunities; maintains the viability of existing community services or adds justification for additional facility provision where there is an identified need; meets identified affordable housing need. The general principles of this recommendation have informed the following draft policy.

National policy guidance⁷ recognises that the opportunities to deliver affordable housing in rural settlements can be more limited, and that the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs is important in rural areas where significant housing growth is not expected. An exceptions policy based approach is a well-recognised mechanism to enable the provision of affordable housing in rural settlements, in locations where housing may not generally be allowed.

For the purposes of this policy, affordable housing is social rented housing and intermediate affordable housing as defined in Planning Policy Statement 3⁸ (see p. **). Developments for affordable housing only, should remain so in perpetuity enabling local people to continue to benefit from those homes in the long term, should be limited to the number and type of housing which can be justified based on relevant available evidence. 'Local people' are either current residents or those who have an existing family or employment connection. On occasion there may be sufficient evidence from the Council's housing need register, however, ordinarily this will have to be supplemented by a Local Housing Needs Survey to identify the need not expressed through the register (often referred to as 'hidden need'). New and innovative ways of delivering affordable housing in perpetuity, that are acceptable within the national planning policy framework, will be considered.

It is important to ensure that the occupiers of the new homes in Rural Settlements are able to live as sustainably as possible and that they are able to access basic facilities that provide for their day to day needs such a local shop or a primary school where family housing is proposed.

For planning purposes, it is considered that land outside Yeovil, the Market Towns and Local Service Centres is considered as 'open countryside.'

⁷ Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (2006).

⁸ Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (2006), Annex B: Definitions.

Draft Policy SS2 – Development in Rural Settlements

Development in rural settlements (not Market Towns or Local Service Centres) within the open countryside will be strictly controlled and limited to that which justifies a rural location and restricted to that which:

- provides employment opportunities appropriate to the scale of the settlement; and/or
- creates, contributes to or enhances community facilities and services to serve the settlement; and/or
- meets identified housing need, particularly for affordable housing.

Development which is commensurate with scale and nature of the settlement, increases the sustainability of the settlement and provides for one or more of the types of development above will be permitted.

Proposals for affordable housing solely in Rural Settlements will be subject to the following criteria:

- The proposal is limited to the number and type of housing to that which can be justified based on the evidence from a local housing needs survey or the housing need register; *
- There is access to a basic range of services appropriate to the scale and nature of housing proposed;
- Appropriate safeguards will be in place to ensure that the housing will remain affordable in perpetuity.

**Indicators to be used in defining local need within the parish or group of parishes are:*

- *The need for affordable housing should be quantified through a local housing needs survey or the Council's housing needs register as appropriate. Local is defined as being the parish or immediately adjoining parishes forming a contiguous group around a central parish.*
- *Existing residents needing separate accommodation in the area (new couples, people leaving tied accommodation on retirement);*
- *People whose work provides important services and who need to live closer to the local community;*
- *People who are not necessarily resident locally but have long standing links with the local community, (e.g. elderly people who needed to move back to a village to be near relatives);*
- *People with the offer of a job in the locality, who cannot take up the offer because of lack of affordable housing; and*
- *Existing residents who would otherwise qualify for housing or re-housing under the criteria used by the District Council in respect of its housing register including those who by reason of age, infirmity or disability are in need of special housing.*

Monitoring indicators

- Proportion of new residential development built in 'rural settlements' (not Market Towns or Local Service Centres).
- Proportion of new employment development built in 'rural settlements' (not Market Towns or Local Service Centres).
- Affordable housing development in Rural Settlements.

South Somerset Draft Core Strategy Policies

Strategy

Draft Policy SS1	Settlement Hierarchy
Draft Policy SS2	Development in Rural Settlements
Draft Policy SS3	Phasing and Cumulative Impact
Draft Policy SS4	Planning Obligations
Draft Policy SS5	Viability

Town Visions & Proposals

Draft Policy TV1	Yeovil Urban Extension
Draft Policy TV2	Yeovil Urban Village
Draft Policy TV3	Chard Growth Area
Draft Policy TV4	Chard Phasing
Draft Policy TV5	Chard Obligations

Housing

Draft Policy HG1	Delivering New Housing Growth
Draft Policy HG2	Strategic Housing Sites
Draft Policy HG3	Provision of Affordable Housing
Draft Policy HG4	Achieving a Mix of Market Housing
Draft Policy HG5	Housing Density
Draft Policy HG6	The use of Previously Developed Land for Housing Development
Draft Policy HG7	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
Draft Policy HG8	Replacement Dwellings and Extensions in the Countryside
Draft Policy HG9	Housing for Agricultural and Related Workers
Draft Policy HG10	Removal of Agricultural & Other Occupancy Conditions

Economic

Prosperity

Draft Policy EP1	Delivering New Employment Land
Draft Policy EP2	Strategic Employment Sites
Draft Policy EP3	Office Development
Draft Policy EP4	Safeguarding Employment Land
Draft Policy EP5	Conversion or Re-use of Buildings in the Countryside
Draft Policy EP6	New Build Live/Work Units
Draft Policy EP7	Expansion of existing businesses in the Countryside
Draft Policy EP8	Farm Diversification
Draft Policy EP9	Retail Hierarchy
Draft Policy EP10	Presumption Against Major New Regional Shopping Facilities
Draft Policy EP11	Retail Vitality and Viability
Draft Policy EP12	Protection of Retail Frontages
Draft Policy EP13	Comparison Floorspace in Yeovil
Draft Policy EP14	District and Local Centres
Draft Policy EP15	Protection and Provision of Local Shops, Community Facilities and Services

Transport &

Accessibility

Draft Policy TA1	Generic District Wide Modal Shift
Draft Policy TA2	Modal Shift for Yeovil
Draft Policy TA3	Modal Shift for Yeovil Eco Town
Draft Policy TA4	Modal Shift for Chard
Draft Policy TA5	Travel Plans
Draft Policy TA6	Transport Impact of New Development
Draft Policy TA7	Parking Standards

Health and Well Being

Draft Policy HW1	Play and open space
Draft Policy HW2	Indoor Sports Provision

Draft Policy HW3	Provision Of Outdoor Playing Space and Amenity Space in New Development
Draft Policy HW4	Protection of Play Spaces and Youth Provision
Environmental Quality	
Draft Policy EQ1	Addressing Climate Change
Draft Policy EQ2	Design
Draft Policy EQ3	Biodiversity
Draft Policy EQ4	Equine Development
Draft Policy EQ5	Green Infrastructure

SOUTH SOMERSET DRAFT CORE STRATEGY 2010 DRAFT POLICIES

STRATEGY

DRAFT POLICY SS1 SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

Yeovil is a strategically significant town and the prime focus for development in South Somerset.

The following are Primary Service Centres where provision will be made for housing, employment, shopping and other services that increase their self containment and enhance their roles as service centres:-

Castle Cary and Ansford, Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, Somerton and Wincanton

The following are Local Service Centres; which are those market towns with a local service role where provision for development will be made that meets local housing need, extends local services and supports economic activity appropriate to the scale of a settlement:-

Bruton, Ilchester, Langport, Martock, Milborne Port, South Petherton and Stoke -sub-Hamdon.

All other settlements will be considered as part of the countryside to which national countryside protection policies apply (subject to the exceptions identified in Policy SS2).

DRAFT POLICY SS2 DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL SETTLEMENTS

Development in rural settlements (not Primary Service Centres or Local Service Centres) within the open countryside will be strictly controlled and limited to that which justifies a rural location and restricted to that which:

- provides employment opportunities appropriate to the scale of the settlement; and/or
- creates, contributes to or enhances community facilities and services to serve the settlement; and/or
- meets identified housing need, particularly for affordable housing.

Development which is commensurate with scale and nature of the settlement, increases the sustainability of the settlement and provides for one or more of the types of development above will be permitted.

Proposals for affordable housing solely on 'rural exceptions sites' will be subject to the following criteria:

- The proposal is limited to the number and type of housing to that which can be justified based on the evidence from a local housing needs survey or the housing need register*;
- There is access to a basic range of services appropriate to the scale and nature of housing proposed;

Appropriate safeguards will be in place to ensure that the housing will remain affordable in perpetuity.

**Indicators to be used in defining local need within the parish or group of parishes are:*

- *The need for affordable housing should be quantified through a local housing needs survey or the Council's housing needs register as appropriate. Local is defined as being the parish or immediately adjoining parishes forming a contiguous group around a central parish.*
- *Existing residents needing separate accommodation in the area (new couples, people leaving tied accommodation on retirement);*
- *People whose work provides important services and who need to live closer to the local community;*
- *People who are not necessarily resident locally but have long standing links with the local community, (e.g. elderly people who needed to move back to a village to be near relatives);*
- *People with the offer of a job in the locality, who cannot take up the offer because of lack of affordable housing; and*
- *Existing residents who would otherwise qualify for housing or re-housing under the criteria used by the District Council in respect of its housing register including those who by reason of age, infirmity or disability are in need of special housing.*

DRAFT POLICY SS3 PHASING AND CUMULATIVE IMPACT

To ensure that development is properly phased in relation to the provision of infrastructure and to prevent the fragmentation of new neighbourhoods, the Council will make use of planning obligations or other appropriate legal agreements, to ensure that infrastructure is delivered alongside future growth.

DRAFT POLICY SS4 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

Planning obligations will be sought to secure a range of house types and community infrastructure in line with the appropriate policies in the Core Strategy. These will include but not be limited to:-

- Affordable housing
- renewable energy provision and reduction in CO2 emissions
- provision and enhancement of open space and children's play areas
- providing for and improving accessibility within the District by a variety of modes of sustainable transport
- improvements to biodiversity assets
- road and highways improvements

Planning obligations may also be sought, where appropriate, from developments to contribute to the delivery of strategic infrastructure to enable the cumulative impacts of developments to be managed in a sustainable and effective manner. These will include, but will not be limited to:

- primary, secondary and tertiary education and extended services provision to serve new and existing communities
- strategic sport and recreation provision and enhancement
- strategic road and highway improvements
- community facilities

The infrastructure will where necessary be coordinated and delivered in partnership with other authorities and agencies.

DRAFT POLICY SS5 VIABILITY

In determining planning applications, the Council will take into consideration the nature, scale and location of the proposed development, and where the need arises for physical and/or community infrastructure from the development either because of its individual or cumulative impact, will use planning obligations to seek prescriptive, compensatory or mitigation measures to secure the necessary social, physical, green or environmental infrastructure to enable the development to proceed. Proposals that form part of potentially wider sites will be assessed in terms of the capacity of the site as a whole and contributions sought on a pro rata basis.

The level of developer contribution will be proportionate to the nature, scale and viability of the proposal having regard to the:

- 1) scale and form of development;
- 2) capacity of existing infrastructure provision;
- 3) potential impact of the development upon the surrounding area and its facilities.

The appropriate range and level of contributions will be assessed in a comprehensive manner, taking into account the above criteria and, where appropriate, the Council will make use of standard charges and formula.

Where viability of a scheme is marginal the Council will adopt open book negotiations in line with the Planning Obligations Protocol 2006.

TOWN VISIONS AND PROPOSALS

DRAFT POLICY TV1 YEOVIL URBAN EXTENSION

Land with the Yeovil Eco-town Urban Extension is required for strategic growth to provide for the following within the plan period;

- 5000 dwellings
- 31 hectares of employment land
- One Secondary School and primary school provision
- Identified community and transport Infrastructure within the South Somerset Infrastructure Delivery Plan

The following three options are the proposed direction for growth for the Yeovil Urban Extension;

- Option 1: Barwick / Keyford (Preferred Option)
- Option 2: Dorset / Over Compton
- Option 3: Brympton / Coker

The Yeovil Extension will be developed to Eco-town standards as listed with the Eco-town PPS the supplement to PPS1 and defined within the Core Strategy. Adoption of Eco-town standards is subject to viability assessment.

DRAFT POLICY TV2 YEOVIL URBAN VILLAGE

The Yeovil Urban Village is identified as a strategic location for a mixed-use scheme including 400 dwellings, retail and leisure uses in the town centre.

The Yeovil Urban Village will be developed to Eco-town standards as listed with the Eco-town PPS the supplement to PPS1 and defined within the Core Strategy. Adoption of Eco-town standards is subject to viability assessment.

DRAFT POLICY TV3 CHARD GROWTH AREA

Land at Chard is allocated for strategic growth to provide the following within the plan period and beyond:

- Approximately 3207 dwellings
- Approximately 19 hectares of employment land
- 2 new primary schools
- 4 neighbourhood centres (Avishayes, Stop Line Slopes, Millfields & Holbear)
- Highway infrastructure and improvements
- Sports and open space provision

DRAFT POLICY TV4 CHARD PHASING

To ensure the timely delivery of highway and other infrastructure to support the proposed growth of Chard a phased approach to delivery will be taken with the following to be delivered:

Within the plan period:

- Approximately 2191 dwellings
- Approximately 13 hectares of employment land
- 1 new primary school
- 2 neighbourhood centres (Millfields & Holbear)
- Sports and open space provision

Post 2026:

- Approximately 1016 dwellings
- Approximately 6 hectares of employment land
- 1 new primary school
- 2 neighbourhood centres (Avishayes & Stop Line Slopes)

In order to ensure the timely delivery of the necessary infrastructure to support the growth, phases will be delivered in the order set out in **Appendix ****, any deviation from that phasing sequence should be justified and it should be demonstrated that that the proposal will not compromise the delivery of the total growth.

DRAFT POLICY TV5 CHARD OBLIGATIONS

Development within phases 1 and 2 of the strategic growth area and other development within Chard will be expected to make contributions (subject to viability) towards essential infrastructure (and in particular the MOVA traffic signalling software and “Millfield Link Road” ensuring continuing traffic flow and circulation within the town) and augmenting public funding for the infrastructure.

Subsequent phases of the strategic growth area and other development within Chard will be expected to pay an appropriate contribution (tariff) towards necessary infrastructure provision to enable all remaining phases of the strategic growth area and continuing traffic circulation in the town (by virtue of that infrastructure) subject to individual site viability. The contribution (tariff) will be determined in the light of land values and identified public funding that are to be regularly re assessed over the period of strategic growth area build out and will be specific to delivering infrastructure within or otherwise servicing the town.

HOUSING

DRAFT POLICY HG1 DELIVERING NEW HOUSING GROWTH

Provision will be made for at least 19,700 dwellings in the plan period 2006 – 2026 of which 11,400 will be located within or adjacent to Yeovil including an urban eco town extension of 5,000 dwellings

This provision will include development and redevelopment within developed areas, greenfield development identified within this strategy or to come forward through strategic housing land availability assessments, conversions of existing buildings, residential mobile homes and development elsewhere in accordance with the policy on development in rural settlements.

The distribution of development across the settlement hierarchy will be in accord with the indicative numbers indicated:

SETTLEMENT	HOUSING COMMITMENT (Autumn 2009) – (including saved allocations) - dwellings	ADDITIONAL HOUSING PROVISION - dwellings	TOTAL HOUSING PROVISION - dwellings	
SSCT				
Yeovil	3725	7675	11,400	5,000 in Greenfield urban eco extension
PRIMARY SERVICE CENTRES				
Chard	1863	328	2,191	1,700 dw of the strategic allocation of 2,716 to be built by 2026
Crewkerne	928	100	1028	
Ilminster	191	340	531	
Wincanton	703	350	1053	
Somerton	219	281	500	
Castle Cary	238	262	500	
LOCAL SERVICE CENTRES				
Bruton	97	120	217	
Ilchester	1	150	151	
Langport	182	118	300	
Martock	96	150	246	
Milborne Port	199	10	299	
South Petherton	145	0	145	
Stoke Sub Hamdon	5	50	55	
OTHER				
Rural settlements	1199	0	1199	
Total (excluding Yeovil)	6066	2349	8415	

DRAFT POLICY HG2 STRATEGIC HOUSING SITES

The following housing allocations are strategically significant and will be safeguarded as residential key sites:

- Land at Lufton (Saved Local Plan Allocation KS/BRYM/1)
- Land North of Thorne Lane (Saved Local Plan Allocation KS/YEWI/2)
- CLR Site, Crewkerne (Saved Local Plan Allocation KS/CREW/1)
- Land East of Chard between Furnham Road and Tatworth Road (Saved Local Plan Allocation KS/CHAR/1)

DRAFT POLICY HG3 PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Planning permission for the erection of new dwellings will be permitted provided that, where it is viable to do so, the scheme provides affordable housing in accordance with the following:

Settlement	Affordable housing target	Threshold (number of dwellings)	OR Hectares (irrespective of the number of dwellings)
Yeovil Urban extension	35%	6	0.1ha
Yeovil	35%	6	0.1ha
Primary Service Centres	35%	6	0.1ha
Local Service Centres	35%	6	0.2ha
*Rural Settlements	35%	6	0.2ha

- All affordable housing contributions shall enable the provision of the number of affordable dwellings without the need for public subsidy.
- Affordable housing will be provided on the application site except where there are good planning grounds that indicate that the provision of affordable housing would not be appropriate on that site and it is preferable that a financial or other contribution should be made towards the provision of affordable housing on another site in the district.
- Where the above level of affordable housing provision renders a site unviable a reduction of provision will be accepted on the basis of an open book submission in accordance with Policy SS5 and the Planning Obligations Protocol 2006.

* Threshold only applies to those developments considered to be acceptable by nature of their sustainability as permitted by Policy SS2. It is not applicable to 100% affordable housing only rural exception sites.

DRAFT POLICY HG4 ACHIEVING A MIX OF MARKET HOUSING

A range of market housing types and sizes should be provided across the district on large sites that can reasonably meet the market housing needs of the residents of South Somerset based on the evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment or successor documents. The mix should contribute to the provision of sustainable and balanced communities.

On small sites housing types and sizes should be provided that, taken in the context of existing surrounding dwellings, contribute to that provision of sustainable, balanced communities.

DRAFT POLICY HG5 HOUSING DENSITY

To ensure the most efficient use of land, the Council shall achieve (net) housing density of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) on all new housing developments or on the residential element of a mixed use development. Housing densities of between 30-50 dph of the net developable area will be sought at (net) densities as set out below:

Location	Density (dwellings per hectare)
Yeovil urban extension	50
Yeovil	40-50
Primary Service Centres	40
Local Service Centres	30
Rural Settlements	30

Different densities may be justified where there are particular site circumstances which need to be taken account of.

DRAFT POLICY HG6 THE USE OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND (PDL) FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

South Somerset District Council will seek to provide a minimum of 30% of new dwellings on previously developed land over the period of the Core Strategy. This will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report and reviewed as necessary.

DRAFT POLICY H7 GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE

The accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will be met by ensuring that they are accommodated in sustainable locations where essential services are available.

The following criteria will guide the location of sites:

- Significantly contaminated land and land within nationally recognised designations (for example Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) should be avoided.
- The development should not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape character and visual amenity of the area;
- The site is reasonably well related to schools and other community facilities
- The health and safety of occupants and visitors will not be at risk through unsafe access to sites, noise pollution or unacceptable flood risk;
- There should be adequate space for on site parking, servicing and turning of vehicles;
- The option of mixed residential and business use on sites will be considered where appropriate.

The number of pitches provided should be appropriate to the size of the site and availability of infrastructure, services and facilities in accordance with the general principles set out in the settlement hierarchy.

DRAFT POLICY HG8 REPLACEMENT DWELLINGS AND EXTENSIONS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside will only be permitted where:

- The scale of the replacement would not result in an unacceptably large increase in the height or scale of the original dwelling; and
- The development is compatible with and sympathetic in scale, design, materials, layout and siting to the character and setting of adjoining buildings, and to the landscape character of the location; and
- The replacement is on a one for one basis and evidence is provided that the use of the existing dwelling has not been abandoned.

Extensions to existing dwellings in the countryside will be permitted where the extension does not result in a dwelling that is disproportionate to the scale of the original dwelling and the size and design of the extension are appropriate to the landscape character of the location.

DRAFT POLICY HG9 HOUSING FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RELATED WORKERS

A development proposal in the countryside to meet the accommodation needs of a full-time worker in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, equestrian activities or other business where a rural location is essential should demonstrate that:

- Provision on-site (or in the immediate vicinity) is necessary for the operation of the business
- No suitable accommodation exists (or could be made available) in established buildings on the site or in the immediate vicinity
- It does not involve replacing a dwelling disposed of recently as general market housing
- The dwelling is no larger than that required to meet the operational needs of the business
- The siting and landscaping of the new dwelling minimise the impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside

Where a new dwelling is permitted, this will be the subject of a condition ensuring the occupation will be limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last working in the locality in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, equestrian activities or other rural business, or a surviving partner of such a person, and any resident dependants.

DRAFT POLICY HG10 REMOVAL OF AGRICULTURAL AND OTHER OCCUPANCY CONDITIONS

Planning permission for the removal of a restrictive occupancy condition for an agricultural, forestry or other similar worker on a dwelling will only be given where it can be evidentially shown:

- That there is no longer a continued need for the property on the holding or for the business
- There is no long term need for a dwelling with restricted occupancy to serve local need in the locality
- The property has been marketed locally for an appropriate period (minimum 18 months) at an appropriate price and evidence of marketing is demonstrated

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

DRAFT POLICY EP1 DELIVERING NEW EMPLOYMENT LAND

The Core Strategy will deliver up to 126.5 hectares gross of employment land (use class B1, B2 and B8) distributed to the following settlements as a minimum, for the period from April 2006 to April 2026:

Yeovil:	72 ha (31ha of which will be associated with the Eco Town) *
Chard:	15 ha *
Crewkerne:	10.53 *
Ilminster:	19.4ha *
Wincanton:	1.5ha
Somerton:	1.0ha
Langport &	
Huish Episcopi:	1.5 ha
Ansford & Castle Cary:	0 ha
Ilchester:	1.0 ha
South Petherton:	1.0 ha
Martock:	1.0 ha
Bruton:	1.0 ha
Milborne Port:	2.0 ha
Stoke Sub Hamdon:	0.5 ha
Total:	127.43 hectares

* The need identified in these settlements is already committed or partially committed through saved Strategic Employment Sites (Policy EP2).

DRAFT POLICY EP2 STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT SITES

The following employment allocations are strategically significant and will be safeguarded for employment use:

- Land off Bunford Lane (Saved Local Plan Allocation ME/WECO/1)
- Chard Key Site (Saved Local Plan Allocation KS/CHAR/1)
- CLR Site, Crewkerne (Saved Local Plan Allocation KS/CREW/1)
- Station Road, Ilminster (Saved Local Plan Allocation ME/ILMI/4)
- Land adjacent to Powrmatic, Hort Bridge, Ilminster (Saved Local Plan Allocation ME/ILMI/5)

DRAFT POLICY EP3 OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for office development should firstly be located within the defined limits of Town Centres.

Where this is not possible because a sequential test demonstrates that there is no available, suitable and viable site, office developments may be acceptable on less central sites in the following order:

1. Edge-of-centre sites (within 200m of the edge of the defined Town Centre) – preference is given firstly to edge-of-centre sites which are well connected, to the centre by pedestrian access,
2. out-of-centre sites with good access to sustainable transport modes, preference is given firstly to out-of-centre sites that are located next to compatible uses
3. Other out of centre sites.

DRAFT POLICY EP4 SAFEGUARDING EMPLOYMENT LAND

Sites and premises which:

- No longer meet the needs of businesses,
- Area poorly located for economic development purposes, or
- Create conflicts of use with neighbouring users,

Should be considered for development of alternative uses in the following sequence:

- Non B use-class employment generating uses (e.g. retailing or leisure uses, such as day care nurseries or gymnasiums)
- Community use
- Mixed-use redevelopment including residential
- Residential

Changes of use will not be permitted unless:

- A marketing strategy and statement is submitted with the planning application,
- Thorough evidence is submitted that demonstrates that the commercial units are no longer needed, are poorly located for economic development or are not viable for an employment use,
- Evidence has been submitted with the application which demonstrates that the site/premises has been actively marketed locally at a reasonable price or rent for at least 18 months prior to application submission,
- It is quite clear that the above sequence has been applied to the redevelopment of the site,
- Adequate access exists or can be achieved to serve the proposed development,
- The proposal would result in significant environmental improvements or enhancements to the character of the area; and
- The site is not in an unsustainable location for the land use proposed

DRAFT POLICY EP5 CONVERSION OR RE-USE OF BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Proposals for the reuse of buildings in the countryside for residential purposes will be permitted provided that every reasonable attempt has been made to secure a suitable:

- business or community re-use firstly, and
- live/work unit on site secondly, prior to consideration for sole residential re-use.

In addition to the sequential approach outlines above, the following criteria will need to be satisfied:

- The buildings are structurally sound and capable of conversion without demolition;
- The proposed re-use preserves the established historic and/or architectural value of the building;
- Use if made of land within the curtilage of the development where possible and outside the curtilage only where it is demonstrated that additional land is essential for domestic amenities;
- There is no adverse impact on the countryside with regard to scale, character and appearance;
- The proposed re-use has regard for protected wildlife species and their habitats; and
- The site is not in an unsustainable location for the land use proposed.

DRAFT POLICY EP6 NEW BUILD LIVE/WORK UNITS

New build live/work forms of development will not be allowed in locations where residential development would not be permitted simply by virtue of the fact that there is an employment element to the development.

DRAFT POLICY EP7 EXPANSION OF EXISTING BUSINESSES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Proposals for the expansion of existing businesses in the countryside will be permitted where:

- The business has been operating successfully and is a viable business;
- It is demonstrated that the proposal is needed in this location;
- The proposal is of a scale appropriate in this location and appropriate to the existing development;
- Existing buildings are reused where possible;
- Firstly use is made of land within the curtilage of the development where possible and outside of the curtilage only where it is demonstrated that additional land is essential to the needs of the business;
- There is no adverse impact on the countryside with regard to scale, character and appearance of new buildings and/or changes of use of land; and
- The proposed development ensures that the expected nature and volume of traffic generated by the development would not have a detrimental impact on the character or amenity of the area and would not compromise the safety and/or function of the road network in terms of both volume and type of traffic generated.

DRAFT POLICY EP8 FARM DIVERSIFICATION

Proposals for development for the purpose of farm diversification within established agricultural holdings will be permitted if they comply with the following criteria:

- the character, scale and type of proposal is compatible with its location and landscape setting
- they form part of a comprehensive farm diversification scheme and are operated as part of a viable farm holding and contribute to making the holding viable
- appropriately located existing buildings should be re-used where possible and
- should new or replacement development be required it is in scale with the surroundings and well related to any existing buildings on the site,

DRAFT POLICY EP9 – RETAIL HIERARCHY

Proposals to broaden the range of retail and leisure facilities in Yeovil town centre are encouraged.

Proposals that maintain and/or enhance retail facilities in the Primary Service Centres of Chard, Crewkerne, Wincanton, Ilminster, Somerton and Castle Cary/Ansford are encouraged subject to the role of Yeovil in the retail hierarchy being safeguarded.

Proposals that maintain and/or enhance retail facilities

In the Local Service Centres of Bruton, Ilchester, Langport, Milborne Port, Martock, South Petherton and Stoke Sub Hamdon are encouraged subject to the relative roles of Yeovil and the Market Towns in the retail hierarchy being safeguarded.

DRAFT POLICY EP10 – PRESUMPTION AGAINST MAJOR NEW REGIONAL SHOPPING FACILITIES

The development of major new regional-scale shopping facilities outside Yeovil town centre within South Somerset will not be supported.

DRAFT POLICY EP11 – RETAIL VITALITY AND VIABILITY

In order to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres, new shopping proposals will be permitted within Yeovil town centre shopping area and the town centres of Primary Service Centres and Local Service Centres provided that:

- The proposals are of a scale appropriate to the size and function of the town centres and would help to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the centre;
- The proposals, either alone or combined with other recent and outstanding planning permissions, would not seriously affect the viability of the town centre of another nearby settlement
- Parking will serve the centre as a whole.

DRAFT POLICY EP12 – PROTECTION OF RETAIL FRONTAGES

Development proposals resulting in the change of use from retail (class A1 of the use classes order) to non retail on ground floors within the defined primary shopping frontages will be permitted, except where the number or coalescence of such uses would undermine the dominant retail function.

DRAFT POLICY EP13 COMPARISON FLOORSFACE IN YEOVIL

The cumulative net increase in comparison goods retail floorspace to be constructed in Yeovil is limited to a figure of 1,000sq m by 2014, 2,500 sq m by 2021 (ie an increase of 1,500 sq m since 2014 and 360 sq m by 2026 with an overall maximum floorspace capacity of the centre of 13,000 sq m. The floorspace provision is to be regularly monitored to take account of changing circumstances.

DRAFT POLICY EP14 DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES

Development of the District centre and local centres associated with the Yeovil urban extension and the local centres associated with development at Chard should be of a scale and nature to meet local needs of the developments within which they will be located but not such that they adversely affect the viability and vitality of Yeovil and Chard town centres.

DRAFT POLICY EP15 PROTECTION AND PROVISION OF LOCAL SHOPS, COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Proposals that would result in a significant or total loss of site and/or premise currently or last used for a local shop, post office, public house, community facility or other service that contributes towards the sustainability of the local settlement will not be permitted except where the applicant demonstrates that:

- alternative provision of equivalent or better quality that is accessible to that local community is available within the settlement or will be provided and made available prior to commencement of redevelopment; or
- for a commercial operation, the use in principle is no longer viable, as demonstrated by an appropriate viability assessment; and
- there is no reasonable prospect of retention at its current site and that all reasonable efforts to secure suitable business or local community re-use have been made for at least the previous 18 months, as set out in Policy EP4 'Safeguarding Employment Land'.

Proposals that would result in new or improved local shops, community facilities and services will be permitted where they meet the identified needs of the local community.

TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY

DRAFT POLICY TA1 Low Carbon Travel

All new residential and employment developments in South Somerset should:

- i. Provide Smarter Travel Information Packs
- ii. Provide for the charging of electric vehicles with an external 13-amp charging point adjacent to each parking space and within the curtilage of the site. Garages within the development should also include a 13-amp socket.
- iii. Provide a Green Travel Voucher for each occupier/employee for 1 year for use on sustainable transport
- iv. Include Measures-only Travel Statement, or a Travel Plan Statement or a Full Travel Plan commensurate with Policy TA5
- v. Ensure that sustainable transport measures are in place and operational concurrent with first occupancy.

Additionally, developments of all new residential dwellings should:

- vi. Enable ease of working from home by providing a designed in specific work area with Broadband connections.

Residential developments of 10 dwellings or more and employment sites with a floor space greater than 1000 sq m should also:

- vii. Deliver improved public transport connections increasing accessibility through enhancements to either existing conventional bus routes or existing Demand Responsive Transport schemes or the provision of new services and new bus stops, bus timetables and bus shelters commensurate with the scale of the development that enable good on-going connections with the public transport network. The developer will be required to enter into a planning obligation in accordance with Policy SS4 to ensure provision of such facilities, which shall be provided prior to first occupation of the new development.

DRAFT POLICY TA2 MODAL SHIFT FOR YEOVIL

In addition to the generic policies that support modal shift throughout the district (Policy TA1), all new residential and employment developments in Yeovil should:

- i. Provide facilities for cycle parking within the new development commensurate with the levels and standards designated in the SCC cycle parking strategy.
- ii. Contribute to sustainable transport interchange within the town.
- iii. Contribute to either
 - a. The improvement of existing public transport services or
 - b. New services and the establishment of a Quality Bus Partnership (or enhancement an existing QBP) to ensure frequent and high quality routes serving the development and developers would be required to provide funding for the general provision of public transport, not to individual providers.
- iv. Contribute to funding the resource needed for Personalised Travel Planning

New residential developments of 10 dwellings or more and employment sites with a floor space greater than 1000 sq m should:

- v. Provide cycling and pedestrian routes both to and permeating the site and protect and improve existing cycling and pedestrian routes where necessary within 400 metres of the site to facilitate links to and from the site to the wider network.

All new residential developments of 20 dwellings or more and employment sites with a floor space greater than 2400 sq m should:

- vi. Provide bus stops, bus shelters and timetable information, dependent on the scale of the development and existing provision, within 400 metres of the development or in the case of larger developments of greater than 50 dwellings or with a floor space greater than 3600 sq m within 400 metres of each dwelling or unit in the development where a bus route exists or can be provided within that distance.

Planning obligations will be sought for such infrastructure where this is required for smaller developments less than 20 dwellings and employment sites with a floor space less than 2400 sq m in accordance with Policy SS4.

All employment sites with a floor space greater than 1000 sq m should:

- vii. Provide preferential and quality spaces in car parks for car sharers at employment sites

DRAFT POLICY TA3 MODAL SHIFT FOR YEOVIL ECO TOWN

(To deliver 50% of travel by sustainable means)

In addition to the generic policies that support modal shift throughout the district (Policy TA1) and the Yeovil policies (Policy TA2) the Eco Town developments should provide:

- i. Intrinsically linked well-designed infrastructure for footpaths and cycle ways ensuring filtered permeability that deliver journey times that are better or more comparable to those by car.
- ii. Free deliveries for bulk shopping journeys using low emission/electric vans
- iii. Car parking management at Eco Town facilities, employment sites & shopping centre including the supermarket, which gives priority to electric vehicles, low emission and shared vehicles and non car modes and which discourages car use for these short journeys.
- iv. A traffic-free immediate environment with limited residential parking separated from the residential areas. These sustainable links shall be designed to enable easy access from the Yeovil Eco Town and urban extension to the town centre, main employment sites, transport interchanges, health and educational establishments and other community facilities.

In addition the Yeovil Eco Town developments should contribute to:

- v. An Electric Car Pool scheme, with provision for on-going management.
- vi. Low emission bus routes that are designed to establish end-to-end journey times that are better or more comparable to those by private car.
- vii. A comprehensive network of real time public transport information for bus and train travel.
- viii. A Quality Bus Partnership to deliver modern desirable bus routes with a frequent service and clean vehicle technology.
- ix. Planning obligations will be used to ensure proper phasing of transport provision to maximise provision prior to first occupation of individual elements of the development.

POLICY TA4 MODAL SHIFT FOR CHARD

In addition to the generic policies that support modal shift throughout the district (Policy TA1) the policies for Chard are:

All residential and employment developments in Chard should:

- i. Contribute to a sustainable transport interchange within the town.
- ii. Make contributions to either the improvement of existing public transport services and/or the establishment of a Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) that aim to provide the doubling of frequency of buses on identified routes and offer higher standards. To take effect at first occupancy to enable 'pump-priming' of these routes. Developers would be required to provide funding for the general provision of public transport, not to individual providers.
- iii. Provide facilities for cycle parking within the new development commensurate with the levels and standards designated in the SCC cycle parking strategy.
- iv. Contribute to the resource needed for Personalised Travel Planning

All residential developments of 10 dwellings or more and employment sites with a floor space greater than 1000 sq m should:

- v. Provide cycling and pedestrian routes both to and permeating the site and improve existing cycling and pedestrian routes where necessary within 400 metres of the site to facilitate links to and from the site to the wider network.

All residential developments of 20 dwellings or more and employment sites with a floor space greater than 2400 sq m should:

- vi. Provide bus stops, bus shelters and timetable information, dependent on the scale of the development and existing provision, within 400 metres of the development or in the case of larger developments of greater than 50 dwellings or with a floor space > 3600 sq m within 400 metres of each dwelling or unit in the development where a bus route exists or can be provided within that distance. Planning obligations will be sought for such infrastructure where this is required for smaller developments less than 20 dwelling and employment sites with a floor space less than 2400 sq m.

All employment sites with more than 1000 sq m should:

- vii. Provide preferential and quality spaces in car parks for car sharers at employment sites

POLICY TA5 TRAVEL PLANS

- i. All Development sites are required to provide either a Measures-only Travel Statement, or a Travel Plan Statement or a Full Travel Plan, the content and actions for which are set out in **Table 1** below. The thresholds for which Measures-only Travel Statements, Travel Plan Statements and Full Travel Plans should be in place are set out in **Table 2** below. The measures should ensure that modal shift is maximised for developments with good levels of accessibility.

Table1

Content	Measures-only Travel Statement	Travel Plan Statement	Full Travel Plan
Travel Plan Document :			
Site Audit Report		✓ (Residential developments only)	✓
Action Plan	✓ Table of Measures	✓ On-site measures	✓
		To be supplemented with Tables of Measures for each phase at reserved matters stage and post-occupation	
Monitoring Strategy and Modal share Targets		✓ (Excluding residential developments)	✓
		Completed modal share targets table attached to travel plan	
SCC's iOn Travel registration and completion prior to travel plan approval		✓	✓
Actions:			
Travel Plan Coordinator		✓	✓
Details of Parking levels/locations for every mode of transport	✓	✓	✓

Table 2		
Land Use Type	Lower Development size threshold (Sq m GFA unless indicated)	Type of Travel Plan Required (MoTS = measures only travel statement TPS = travel plan statement TP = full travel Plan)
A1 –food	>100	MoTS
	>500	TPS
	>800	TP
A1 – Non-food	>100	MoTS
	>500	TPS
	>1500	TP
B1	>500	MoTS
	>1000	TPS
	>1500	TP
B8	>1000	MoTS
	>2000	TPS
	>5000	TP
C3	> 10 dwellings	MoTS
	> 30 dwellings (or where car parking allocation is fewer than 1 space per dwelling for any dwelling in the development)	TPS
	> 50 dwellings	TP
ii. All development within the Eco Town and Urban Extension will be required to meet the Eco Town Framework Travel Plan criteria.		

DRAFT POLICY TA6 TRANSPORT IMPACT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

All new development shall be required to address its own transport implications designed to maximise the potential for sustainable transport through:

- i. Safeguarding existing and new transport infrastructure, which is important to an efficient and sustainable transport network from development that would prejudice their transport use
- ii. Securing inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport that addresses the needs of all;
- iii. Ensuring that the expected nature and volume of traffic and parked vehicles generated by the development would not have a detrimental impact on the character or amenity of the area and would not compromise the safety and/or function of the local or strategic road networks in terms of both volume and type of traffic generated;
- iv. Ensuring that proposals, which specifically require a location with direct access to the strategic road network due to the volumes and quality of traffic generated, are well located on these networks. There is a presumption against direct access from the strategic road network. Exemptions will only be made where the type of development is such that it requires a high order (of route hierarchy) route location, such as roadside service stations or freight transfer facilities;
- v. Assessing the transport impact of development and ensuring delivery of the necessary transport infrastructure for the proposal and requiring larger schemes to prepare Transport Assessments.
- vi. Requiring car parking and vehicle servicing at levels appropriate to the development and its location, in accordance with the approved/adopted standards identified in Policy TA7.

DRAFT POLICY TA7 PARKING STANDARDS

Parking provision in new development should be design-led and based upon site characteristics, location and accessibility. Parking standards should be consistent with the Somerset Countywide Parking Strategy and encourage more sustainable travel choices.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

Draft Policy HW1 -Play and open space

Typology	Quantity Standard (hectares per 1000 population)	Accessibility Standard
Park or Public Gardens	0.19ha per 1000 people	Urban 15 min walking time Rural 20 min drive time
School and Playing Fields	*1.5 Yeovil & market town 1.2 rural centres per 1000 people	15 min walking time
Amenity Greenspace	0.55ha per 1000 people	10 min walking time
Natural Open Space	0.25ha per 1000 people	Urban 10 min drive time Rural 20 min walking time
Country Parks	1.32ha per 1000	Urban 15 min drive time Rural 20 min drive time
Woodland	0.024ha per 1000	Urban 10 min drive time Rural min walking time

Green Corridors, Civic Spaces, Cemeteries, Private Open Space and Allotments are other aspects of Green Infrastructure, which need to be given full consideration, however there are no standards available for this type of provision.

* to be updated on completion of the PPG17 assessment

DRAFT POLICY HW2 INDOOR SPORTS PROVISION

In order to increase the range of opportunities for people of all ages to participate in indoor leisure, promote healthier lifestyles, allow for improved potential in sport and create a sub regional sports venue, the Council and its partners will seek a suitable location for the provision of a Sports Zone of at least 1.5ha. In identifying a suitable location the following locational factors will be taken into consideration:-

- Preference will be given to a site within the existing town of Yeovil.
- If there is no suitable, available and viable site available within the town which can accommodate the development, the site selection should follow a sequential approach with preference given to the location of the Sports Zone on the edge of Yeovil close to public transport links.

DRAFT POLICY HW3 PROVISION OF OUTDOOR PLAYING SPACE AND AMENITY SPACE IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

Where new housing development generates a needs for additional formal and informal recreation facilities, provision will be made in accordance with the standards set out in the SSDC PPG17 Assessment of Sports and Recreation Provision of Facilities 2010 as set out below.

Housing provision consisting of sheltered housing, rest and nursing homes, special needs housing will not be expected to provide for formal play provision but will still be required to provide amenity open space in accordance policy HW1.

Developments of one bedroom dwellings will not be required to provide designated play provision but will be required to provide for other recreation facilities and amenity open space in accordance policy HW1.

Such provision where required should be provided on the proposed development site unless there are particular circumstances making on-site provision inappropriate. In such circumstances off-site provision should be made in a location which adequately serves the new development and a planning obligation may be used to secure this.

Type of Provision	Requirement in sq m per 1000 pop'n
Designated playing space (including equipped areas for play and youth)	0.25*
Sports Hall	46.88
Swimming Pool	10.86
Indoor Tennis	23.72
Synthetic Turf Pitch (STP)	255.5
Community Halls/Village Halls	xxx*

* to be updated on completion of the PPG17 assessment

DRAFT POLICY HW4 PROTECTION OF PLAY SPACES AND YOUTH PROVISION

Development which would result in the loss of formal playgrounds and play areas will only be permitted where:

1. Current provision can be retained and enhanced by partial development of the site
2. Alternative provision of equivalent community benefit of a similar nature is made available locally within the same catchment.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Draft Policy EQ1 – Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset

New development in South Somerset should demonstrate how it has fully mitigated and adapted to climate change through inclusion of the following measures (as appropriate):

- New development should ensure maximum CO₂ reductions are achieved by complying with the following energy hierarchy:
 1. energy efficiency measures;
 2. on-site decentralised energy and directly connected heat technologies; and finally
 3. 'allowable solutions' to achieve carbon reduction.
- Development of decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy generation will be encouraged and permitted, providing there are no unacceptable adverse impacts upon residential amenity, the landscape, , historic features, and biodiversity interest. The presence of several airfields in South Somerset will mean the impacts of wind turbines upon electromagnetic interference and aviation radar will be a particular consideration in the district.
- As an interim measures until 2013, in large-scale development,¹ the provision of decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy should ensure that carbon dioxide emissions are reduced by at least 10% (compared to Building Regulations) unless, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, this is not feasible or viable.
- At major development² of urban extensions to Yeovil and the Market Towns, at least BREEAM³ 'excellent' for non-residential, and the following Code for Sustainable Homes levels will be required, unless it is proven not to be feasible or viable:
 - **At least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 from October 1st 2010**
 - **At least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 from 2013**
 - At least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 6 from 2016.
- Development will be located away from medium and high flood risk areas by using the South Somerset Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to apply the Sequential Test.
- Development should reduce and manage the impact of flood risk through layout, design, choice of materials and the use of sustainable drainage systems.
- Climate change should be considered in the design of new development, incorporating measures such as solar orientation, maximising natural shade and cooling, water efficiency and flood resilience.
- Ensure that sites with biodiversity interest are managed in a way that reduces their susceptibility to climate change.

1. 10 dwellings or more, or commercial development with 1000 sq metres of more commercial floor space.

2. 'Major' in this instance is defined as developments of 50 dwellings or more.

3. Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method.

DRAFT POLICY EQ2 DESIGN

Development will be designed to achieve a high quality, which promotes South Somerset's local distinctiveness and preserves the character and appearance of the district.

Development proposals, extensions and alterations to existing buildings, structures and places are expected to:

- Be designed to meet Building for Life objectives
- Incorporate sustainable construction principles
- Create quality places
- Conserve and enhance the heritage assets of the area
- Complement and consolidate the landscape character of the area
- Reinforce local distinctiveness and respect local context
- Create safe environments addressing crime prevention and community safety
- Have regard to South Somerset District Council's Development Management Advice

Development Proposals should protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties and new dwellings should provide acceptable residential amenity space in accordance with Policy HW1.

DRAFT POLICY EQ3 BIODIVERSITY

All proposals for development including those which would affect sites of regional and local biodiversity and geological interest shall:

- Protect the biodiversity value of land and buildings and minimise fragmentation of habitats;
- Maximise opportunities for restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats; and
- Incorporate beneficial biodiversity conservation features where appropriate.

Where there is reason to suspect the presence of protected species, applications should be accompanied by a survey assessing their presence and, if present, the proposal must be sensitive to, and make provision for, their needs.

DRAFT POLICY EQ4 EQUINE DEVELOPMENT

Horse related facilities and equestrian enterprises in the countryside will be permitted provided:

- New stables/field shelters closely relate to existing settlements or groups of buildings and should not interfere with the amenities of the adjoining residents
- Their design, scale, siting and materials respect the rural character of the locality
- Any proposal for equestrian development including apparatus, jumps, maneges, schooling areas and field sub division should respect or enhance the characteristic pattern and features of the surrounding landscape.

Proposals for larger scale private or commercial enterprises should not be harmful to highway safety. This should be demonstrated by means of a traffic impact assessment.

Draft Policy EQ5 Green Infrastructure

The Council will promote the provision of green infrastructure throughout the district, based upon the enhancement of existing areas including public open space, accessible woodland, and river corridors, and by ensuring that development provides open spaces and green corridor links between new and existing green spaces.

The overall aim will be to provide a network of connected and multi-functional open spaces that:

- **Create new habitats and connects existing wildlife areas to enrich biodiversity**
- **Improve access and recreational opportunities**
- **Link urban areas to the countryside**
- **Enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape**
- **Contribute to local identity and sense of place**
- **Increase the districts tree cover**
- **Help mitigate the consequences of climate change**

To maximise opportunities for this, the Council will undertake a Green Infrastructure Strategy to identify specific actions for the short, medium and long term.