South Somerset District Council
Local Development Framework

Core Strategy
Issues and Options
March 2008
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Annex A: Sustainability Appraisal Checklist

Glossary of Terms

This document is open for consultation until Friday 25th April 2008. There are three ways in which you can submit your comments:

On-line via www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy

Visit the website and fill out the electronic copy of the comment form and email to planning.policy@southsomerset.gov.uk

Fill out a paper copy of the form (available at Council and Community Offices and Libraries) and post to the address below

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If you need this publication in large print, Braille, audio cassette or another language or would like to talk to a member of staff to discuss details, please contact 01935 462462
1 Introduction to South Somerset

Purpose of this Document

1.1 South Somerset is already set to see significant change through the development of land within and on the peripheries of its larger towns, in particular Yeovil, through the implementation of the adopted South Somerset Local Plan (April 2006). This development will help to meet the current needs of our community up to the year 2011. But greater change and levels of development will be needed to accommodate the needs of the community up to the year 2026. We therefore need to know and understand the major social, economic and environmental changes and trends that will affect South Somerset over this intervening period. By understanding these issues we will be in a better position to either make the most of them or seek to plan for and mitigate their effects.

1.2 The challenge starts here and this is where we need your views and suggestions, to help to plan for the future developmental needs of the district.

1.3 The District Council has produced this document for consultation with the community in order to assist it in identifying and understanding the planning issues that the community faces now and will face by the year 2026, and how we might best address them through planning so as to help shape and deliver an enjoyable and prosperous South Somerset for all of us and for future generations.

1.4 This “Issues & Options” document marks the culmination of the first stage in the preparation of one the District Council’s Local Development Framework documents, the “Core Strategy”. As the name suggests, the Core Strategy lies at the heart of the Local Development Framework. Its implementation will be fundamental to the delivery of an enjoyable and prosperous South Somerset and so it makes sense that the Core Strategy is produced first, so that we can make sure subsequent documents accord with it.

Planning Policy Framework

1.5 In 2004, the Government introduced significant changes to the way we manage development and plan for the future development-related needs of our communities. One such change was the gradual replacement of district-wide Local Plans with Local Development Frameworks. Provisions were also made to allow councils whose district-wide Local Plans were already at particularly advanced stages of preparation to complete and adopt them before commencing their Local Development Frameworks. South Somerset District Council was one such council and we adopted our district-wide Local Plan quite recently on 27th April 2006. The Policies and Proposals contained within it are “saved” (valid) for three years.

National Context

1.6 At the national level, the Government states the planning policy approach to development that councils should follow in preparing their plans in a series of national “Planning Policy Guidance Notes” and more recently “Planning Policy Statements”. These Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements cover a broad range of planning-related topics such as housing, transport, climate change, flood risk, biodiversity and geological conservation, town centres, sustainable development in rural areas, and industrial, commercial development, and small firms.
1.7 The “Communities and Local Government” department within central government is aiming to create thriving, sustainable, vibrant communities that improve everyone's quality of life. To achieve this, it is driving forward a programme of building more and better homes, reducing homelessness, improving local public services, regenerating areas to create more jobs, working to produce a sustainable environment and tackling anti-social behaviour and extremism.

**Regional Context**

1.8 At the regional level, the South West Regional Assembly is responsible for producing the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), which will incorporate the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). That document is in the process of being prepared and will set the regional planning framework for the period up to 2026 with which the District Council's Local Development Framework documents must be in general conformity. As you may be aware, an Examination was held recently into the appropriateness of the Draft RSS. The Examination Panel Report, which comments on the content of the Draft RSS and recommends a series of changes to it, was published in January 2008. Significantly, these recommended changes include higher levels of job and housing growth for the District. All the recommended changes are being considered by the Regional Assembly over the next few months and their deliberations may result in formal changes being made the Draft RSS later this year. Therefore, in the meantime this consultation document is based on the Draft RSS but also makes particular reference to the Panel Report's recommended higher figures for jobs and housing growth.

1.9 The Regional Spatial Strategy will set out the strategy to achieve sustainable growth that will aim to protect what is highly valued about the region, at the same time making provision for sufficient new homes and jobs and retail and leisure facilities to meet the needs of the community. It does this by identifying:

- the overall level of growth for the region;
- three sub-regional geographic areas and strategy emphases for them ("realising potential", "managing growth", and "stimulating the economy");
- where the main focal points for growth will be;
- housing and jobs figures for our district; and
- the links between broad issues like healthcare, education and crime, as well as basic infrastructure such as transport.

1.10 The South West Regional Development Agency is responsible for producing the Regional Economic Strategy (RES). The RES reinforces the aims set out in the Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS), and complements the Regional Spatial Strategy to ensure that the region is working in an integrated way and to agreed goals. The Regional Economic Strategy concentrates on those issues that are directly related to improving the economy and ensuring that more people can participate in that economy.

**District Context**

1.11 As explained above, at the district (local) level, District Councils are given the responsibility of producing Local Development Frameworks. A local Development Framework is a suite of documents known as “Local Development Documents” that set out the Council’s approach to
development within the district over a 20 year period. The District Council’s Local Development Framework will cover the period up to 2026 in order to accord with the Regional Spatial Strategy’s plan period. Further details of the Council’s Local Development Framework 3 year work programme can be found in the approved Local Development Scheme on the Council’s website.

1.12 The Local Development Framework’s Core Strategy will include a “Vision”, Strategic Objectives, a settlement hierarchy against which the district’s level of growth will be distributed to achieve sustainable communities, and core policies including targets that developments must meet in order to secure the Vision for the future of South Somerset. South Somerset’s Local Development Framework Core Strategy will also include a streamlined suite of Development Management policies to be applied to development proposals in conjunction with national and regional planning policy, as advocated by the Government and in line with national good practice. Once adopted, planning applications will be made in accordance with the Core Strategy and other relevant Development Plan documents.

**Sustainable Community Strategy**

1.13 As referred to above, the Core Strategy is having regard to other relevant strategies throughout its production. An important role of the LDF is to help to deliver the spatial elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy, which is produced by the Local Strategic Partnership. The Sustainable Community Strategy is currently undergoing a comprehensive review and being revised. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the emerging Sustainable Community Strategy and Core strategy are comprehensive, robust, consistent with sustainable development principles, and reflect the community’s diverse needs whilst according with strategic policy and guidance. The Local Strategic Partnership and the District Council have worked closely since June 2006 on the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Development Framework by working collaboratively on the preparation of both the Sustainable Community Strategy and Core Strategy and consciously aligning the timings and processes and sharing comprehensive evidence base material in order to achieve this.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal**

1.14 The fundamental premise on which the national, regional and local planning policy framework is based is “sustainability”. This is a significant and complex challenge, particularly for such a rural district as ours where the population is so dispersed. The challenge here is to reconcile the need to deliver sufficient housing, employment, education, recreation and healthcare opportunities to meet the growing community’s ever-changing needs whilst conserving the valuable natural and built assets of the district, minimising the need to travel and helping to tackle climate change. This thinking needs to be at the forefront of decision making as well as being embedded in the Core Strategy and other Local Development Framework documents.

1.15 The European Directive 2001/42/EC “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment” (the Strategic Environmental Assessment or ‘SEA Directive’) brought in a requirement to conduct an environmental assessment of the impacts of certain documents/strategies on the environment. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a requirement to appraise the sustainability of certain Local Development Framework documents. The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations in the preparation of
those LDF documents. It is possible however to produce a Sustainability Appraisal report that satisfies both requirements.

1.16 To tackle this challenge, the District Council and Local Strategic Partnership are appraising the sustainability credentials of both emerging documents right from the outset in order to ensure the final documents and their implementation will deliver truly sustainable communities. However, we are not required to consult on the Sustainability Appraisal element of the Core Strategy until the “Preferred Options” stage (September 2008) and so for this reason and due to the technical nature of this piece of work and the size of the document, it is not considered appropriate to include this in the consultation material at this stage. Having said that, to help understand how the suggested “Options” contained in this consultation document have been sustainability appraised and to assist your consideration of alternative Options that you may wish to suggest as part of this consultation exercise, the draft Sustainability Appraisal Checklist is annexed.
A Pen Portrait of South Somerset

2.1 What follows is a brief description of the district and some of its defining characteristics. An appreciation and understanding of what makes South Somerset what it is and how it works is essential to devising a “spatial” (planning) Vision and Core Strategy that will help to deliver the type of district we want in 20 years’ time through the Local Development Framework.

Geography, Population & Settlement Pattern

2.2 South Somerset district forms much of the eastern side of the County of Somerset, south of the Mendip Hills. It accounts for nearly a third of the County’s landmass, covering an area of 958 km² (370 mls²) and is predominantly rural in nature.

2.3 South Somerset has a population of over 156,000. Although Yeovil is home to approximately ¼ of the district’s total population, having some 41,000 or so residents, significantly, over 40% of the district’s population live in small towns, villages and hamlets of fewer than 2,500 residents. The district’s population density is only 1.6 people per hectare, compared to the England and Wales average of 3.4. Taking both population and area together, South Somerset is the largest District in England.

2.4 In settlement terms, South Somerset consists of a mixture of sparsely inhabited rural areas and a network of 48 “Villages”, 7 smaller towns (“Rural Centres”) and 5 larger “Towns”, as currently defined in the South Somerset Local Plan. South Somerset’s principal town, Yeovil, is situated on the south eastern boundary of the county some 130 miles west of London, 40 miles south of Bristol and 30 miles east of Taunton. The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy proposes that Yeovil should be designated as one of 21 “Strategically Significant Cities or Towns” (SSCT’s) across the South West region, by virtue of the sub-regional role and function that it performs.

Key Trends (taken from emerging Sustainable Community Strategy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>TREND</th>
<th>DRIVERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>Population growth in South Somerset has been almost twice the national average over the past 10 years. Projections to 2028 suggest the population of South Somerset will reach 181,400, an increase of 25,300 residents from the current 156,100.</td>
<td>Population growth is accelerating due to increases in birth rates, decreases in death rates, domestic migration and immigration from Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ageing population - 90% of population growth is predicted from the over 50’s. Population average age is rising, the total number of old people increasing so the proportion of old people are also increasing.</td>
<td>Decreases in death rates, internal migration, especially from the South East and London. Decline in working population &amp; young people due to Higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Housing Demand

- 13,600 new dwellings earmarked for the district between 2006 and 2026.
- 6,400 new dwellings earmarked for Yeovil between 2006 and 2026.

*Note: Draft RSS Panel Report recommends 19,700 new dwellings earmarked for the district between 2006 and 2026, 6,400 dwellings within the existing urban area of Yeovil, 5,000 dwellings within an area of search for urban extension of Yeovil, and 8,300 dwellings elsewhere in the South Somerset Housing Market Area outside Yeovil.*

- 69% of all additional households will be one-person households.
- Widening gap between house prices and wages, most extreme in rural areas.
- Yeovil is expected to grow by 33% and 59%, based on the above Draft RSS and Panel Report figures respectively.

### Education trends and house prices.

- Recent changes in immigration and births may alter trend.

### Economic Prosperity

2.5 Yeovil is the largest town and commercial and administrative centre in the ‘A30 Corridor’ economic zone identified in the Regional Economic Strategy and is a major employment centre providing many jobs in aerospace and associated engineering. In recent years, the development of the "Yeovil Vision" and its complementary "Urban Development Framework" have started to address the outdated image of the town and build on its strengths and assets. Yeovil has a relatively high level of self-containment, although there is notable in-commuting from the surrounding hinterland. Yeovil is close to Sherborne, both geographically and in travel time due to both towns lying on the A30. Consequently, there is a strong interaction between the two places across the administrative boundary.

2.6 The other Towns of Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster and Wincanton provide a broad range and mix of services and facilities and act as general service and employment hubs for the more rural population as well as their own populations. Worthy of mention is the Naval airbase at Yeovilton, to the north west of Yeovil and the smaller scale RAF airfield at Merryfield, northwest of Ilminster.

2.7 The seven "Rural Centres" of Bruton, Castle Cary/Ansford, Langport/Huish Episcopi, Martock, Milborne Port, Somerton and South Petherton act as focal points in their areas for local employment and shopping, social and community activity serving the day-to-day needs of their own populations and the more dispersed populations in the Villages and hamlets in their hinterlands.
2.8 The 84 Villages within the district vary in function and size widely but generally are places that provide limited local services. Having said that, their generally small size and localised function can be beneficial in encouraging a strong sense of community and participation in local affairs but these conditions also pose challenges in terms of the economic provision of services and facilities.

2.9 This pattern of settlements and their social and economic relationships with each other present a real challenge in providing equity of service across such a diverse area.

**Key Trends (taken from emerging Sustainable Community Strategy)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
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<th>DRIVERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Key sectors of importance are reducing in size: - manufacturing (14,200) and the public sector (15,600). 370,000 new jobs in the region are expected by 2011, many of which will be part-time. Shift towards higher qualified workforce (increase in professional/managerial employees and decrease in elementary/manual employees)</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Construction (3,300) and Transport (2,400) will grow.</td>
<td>Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The dominant sectors in South Somerset are low wage, low skills: distribution, hotels and restaurants. Growing low-wage sectors include Distribution and Hospitality (17,400) and tourism (5,440).</td>
<td>Distribution, hotel and restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distribution of Food accounts for 35% of HGV traffic and growing.</td>
<td>Transport and communications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Economics (cont)

Increasing telecommunications services and Information technology businesses.

Finance, IT and other business activities

More business services and Information Technology Services

Working population is declining.

Public admin, education and health

Efficiency agenda driving down numbers

Skills gaps in construction and IT-businesses.

Tourism

Short break and attractions visits

More outsourcing.

Other services

Competitiveness

Another large sector is self-employment at 12,000.

Sole traders and non-VAT businesses

Entrepreneurship and lifestyle changes. Redundancy.

Move to Internet sourcing and small niche traders.

Retail sector

Convenience and individuality Competitiveness and cost

Skills gaps in construction and IT-businesses.

Tourism

Short break and attractions visits

More outsourcing.

Other services

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Another large sector is self-employment at 12,000.

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Entrepreneurship and lifestyle changes. Redundancy.

Move to Internet sourcing and small niche traders.

Retail sector

Convenience and individuality Competitiveness and cost

Health and Well-Being

2.10 The population of the area is growing steadily, due to its many attractions, as a place to live and work. As explained above, Yeovil is the main focus for this growth. Local labour shortages and the quality of life available stimulate in-migration of both workers and the elderly throughout the district. South Somerset now has a growing population of economic migrants, especially from Portugal, Poland and other Eastern European countries. Despite a low unemployment rate, wages and educational qualifications are lower than the national average. The Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2004, shows that several wards in Yeovil and Chard, the most urban parts of the District, are in the most deprived 20% in UK. 12% of the population of South Somerset live in the most deprived 25% Super Output Areas in England and 11% of children under 16 live in low-income households. As a whole, the District is in the top 50% most income deprived Districts in England. The house price to income ratio across the whole district is 7.72:1 compared to 6.25:1 for England and Wales, although in certain more rural areas it reaches 14:1.

Key Trends (taken from emerging Sustainable Community Strategy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
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<th>DRIVERS</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Health and Care  | • Significant changes in patterns of Health and Care demand and 50% increase in provision needed.  
|                  | • Obesity rates have tripled over the past 20 years.                  | • Ageing population. Numbers of very elderly people are predicted to grow by 88% from 1996 levels by 2031. |
Morbidity in heart disease and cancer is declining but varies by area, social class and Body Mass. Stroke, falls and diabetes, stress are increasing.

- Substance abuse, STD and diabetes becoming greater problems, although teenage pregnancy rates are falling.

- Declining Physical Activity levels, leading to obesity lifestyles. Immigration bringing younger families, but also relatives.

- Policy reform of Social Care and Health delivery.

- Increasing work-life stress.

- Yeovil and Chard deprivation clusters.

- Rural isolation as public transport becomes more problematic.

- Only 25% of South Somerset population is within 20 minutes travel time of facilities by walking or car.

### Environmental Quality

2.11 The landscape is mainly undulating, agricultural land with some very fertile belts that have traditionally been famed for top quality food production such as apples and dairy produce. Topography and agricultural practices have helped to secure special status for outstanding landscapes such as the flat lands of the Somerset Levels and Moors Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to the north and west of the district, the rolling Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the south west, and a small part of the Cranborne Chase and West Wilts AONB to the north east. Just west of Yeovil is the heritage site of Ham Hill Country Park.

2.12 The majority of many villages and historic parts of larger settlements are built from local Hamstone or lias stone, and the area has a high concentration of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas as well as grand country homes and estates, some of which are now owned by the National Trust. There is a strong link between the environmental quality and productivity of the area and the success of the local economy, through commerce, recreation, tourism and providing an environment where people want to work and live.

### Key Trends (taken from emerging Sustainable Community Strategy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
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<th>DRIVERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Environment| • A significant increase in energy and water use and more waste by 2020.  
• Increased flooding and storm damage.  
• Rising fuel prices.                                      | • Increase in population & development.                                    
• Climate change.  
• Building in marginal areas (e.g. flood plains) without    |
Transport and Accessibility

2.13 The district has a fascinating environmental, industrial and cultural heritage with an enviable and varied landscape, valued by residents and are a great draw to visitors. The district is situated just inside the entrance to the South West peninsula and is often seen as being en route to and from the South West holiday counties of Devon and Cornwall.

2.14 Two major railway lines with regular daily services and the A303 Trunk Road and A30 run through the district linking it with London and the South West peninsula. The eagerly-awaited implementation of dualling improvements to A303 and A358 through the district and up to M5 at Taunton will help to deliver the region’s Second Strategic Route and welcomed economic inward investment and highway safety improvement within the district.

2.15 The spread of coverage of public transport bus services is reasonable for such a geographically dispersed population but service frequency is poor in all but the largest settlements. This compounds accessibility difficulties to key services and facilities for the more vulnerable elements of our community, namely the elderly, young parents, children and mobility impaired. Having said that, there is a pioneering Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service within the district, which is helping to tackle the shortcomings of existing, traditional bus transport.

Key Trends (taken from emerging Sustainable Community Strategy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>TREND</th>
<th>DRIVERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Road &amp; Air Traffic</td>
<td>• Car and HGV transport increasing</td>
<td>• Time-poor / Convenience culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased traffic congestion</td>
<td>• Increasing cars / household, only 2.4% use public transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• HGV’s on smaller roads increasing</td>
<td>• SatNav and transfer of freight from rail to road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Casualties from road accidents is increasing</td>
<td>• Decreasing use / reliability / availability of public transport.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 The Vision and Strategic Objectives for South Somerset

A Vision for South Somerset in 2026

3.1 For a Core Strategy to be effective it must be based on a clear understanding or "Vision" of what the District Council and wider community are striving to achieve. Central Government advocates the Sustainable Community Strategy as an appropriate source of direction in this regard. The emerging Sustainable Community Strategy's "Vision" taken from the "Shaping South Somerset, Consultation Document for a Sustainable Community Strategy", South Somerset Together (LSP), (June 2007) is for:

"A thriving South Somerset which makes the most of its natural assets, heritage, enterprise and community spirit in order to conserve natural resources, plan and build a better quality of life for everyone, now and in the future."

3.2 The Core Strategy and its "Vision" should also be informed by and must accord with the national and regional planning policy framework.

3.3 Recognising this, the Core Strategy's starting point for its Vision was that of the draft Sustainable Community Strategy. That Vision has been developed and expanded so as to begin to articulate the spatial planning elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Vision recognises the importance of Yeovil being the district's main economic driver and our several Market Towns' and rural complementary economic role across the district, and the future dominant employment industries. It also acknowledges the high quality natural and built environment. In light of the close collaboration between the District Council's Core Strategy and Local Strategic Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy's work and with the planning policy framework as set out above in mind, the proposed spatial planning "Vision" for the Core Strategy is as follows:

The "Vision" for South Somerset in 2026

"South Somerset will be a thriving, attractive, affordable and sustainable district in which to live, work and play in settlements with high quality community facilities, improved transport infrastructure, and high levels of self-containment. This district will be built on its economic, cultural, tourism and educational strengths, recognising its diversity and respecting and protecting its urban and rural environmental assets such as its 80+ Conservation Areas and some 6,000 Listed Buildings, and high landscape character including the network of navigable and potentially navigable waterways.

As a "Strategically Significant City or Town" (SSCT), Yeovil will be the prime economic driver within the district. The Town will be a high quality, economically stronger, destination for the district and parts of adjoining districts. It will be attractive to existing and new businesses and workers through continued investment in its existing manufacturing and service sectors. Particular attention will be focussed on encouraging high-tech diversification in support of its dominant aerospace industries. Yeovil will be an attractive town for students, residents, and cultural and tourist visitors with even more prestigious higher
education facilities, a high quality, vibrant town centre based on the Yeovil Vision's co-ordinated mix of uses in defined "Quarters" and the successful regeneration of the eastern side of the town.

Beyond Yeovil, South Somerset will have a thriving, revitalised and diversified economy, based on existing and new modest-sized but successful businesses focussed in our Market Towns. This will help to deliver the Chard Vision and other regeneration schemes, reduce outward commuting for example from Ilminster to Taunton, provide a local focus to more remote parts of the district and adjoining districts for example Wincanton for parts of Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire, improve tourist accommodation and attractions, and create/maintain a viable agricultural economy supported by appropriate diversification schemes."

**Do you support the spatial Vision for South Somerset?**

**Can you suggest any realistically attainable amendments to it that will help create a better South Somerset?**

**Strategic Objectives**

3.4 For the reasons set out in Chapter 1 "Introduction" above, the Core Strategy should reflect and concern itself with delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy through spatial policy levers. If South Somerset's Core Strategy and wider LDF are to be successful in delivering its spatial Vision, it must have a clearly set out series of Strategic Objectives, which will help to define the Core Strategy and guide subsequent LDF documents. Looking closely at the emerging Sustainable Community Strategy, it has a series of "Goals" that lend themselves through slight refinement to reflect the spatial elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy to being adopted as the Core Strategy's Strategic Objectives. The following suggested Strategic Objectives have therefore been derived from the Sustainable Community Strategy's "Goals".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SO 1</strong> Safe and strong communities with strong social networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SO 2</strong> Everyone able to choose healthy lifestyles and access support to improve their health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SO 3</strong> Services and facilities (including education, health, advice and information, leisure and cultural) that have all been designed around the needs of the community enabling everyone to have fair and equitable access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SO 4</strong> People of all ages and backgrounds across the district to have access to ICT and transport options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SO 5</strong> A competitive, high performing economy that is diverse and adaptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SO 6</strong> Infrastructure in place for businesses to thrive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SO 7</strong> An educated and skilled workforce with less economic disadvantage and a good match with the needs of the business sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SO 8</strong> A thriving Yeovil, market town and rural economy/environment able to attract and retain visitors, consumers and high quality, sustainable businesses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Will the Strategic Objectives set out in this Issues and Options document help to achieve the Core Strategy "Vision" for South Somerset, set out above?

Can you suggest any other or alternative Strategic Objectives that would better help to achieve the Core Strategy’s spatial Vision?

3.5 The Sustainable Community Strategy’s spatial planning issues to be addressed through the Core Strategy have been distilled out and grouped into a series of six “themes”:

- Strategy
- Housing
- Economic Prosperity
- Transport & Accessibility
- Health & Well-being
- Environmental Quality

3.6 In addition to these theme chapters, we have set out in this document Issues that we consider are appropriate to devise Development Management policies for in a separate cross-cutting "Development Management Policies" theme chapter.

3.7 The Development Management Policies have been included within the Core Strategy given that consideration of planning applications is a fundamental way by which the Core Strategy and its attendant objectives and policies will be implemented. Furthermore, the Core Strategy objectives and policies represent the context for Development Management policies. By including the Development Management policies in the Core Strategy as one document, the District Council is presenting a comprehensive policy document presenting both aspiration strategy and delivery mechanism.
4 Strategy

Context

4.1 The fundamental aim of planning in this country is to ensure a better quality of life for everyone: not just today but also for future generations. In striving to achieve this aim, the country's planning strategy is underpinned by the core principle of "Sustainable Development", a widely-accepted definition of which was drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 and states that Sustainable Development is:

"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

4.2 Allied to this principle of Sustainable Development is the concept of creating "Sustainable Communities". The new Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004 changed the focus of planning from purely geographically-specific land use planning to spatial planning. What this did was introduce a requirement for the planning system to plan in a way that recognises and seizes opportunities to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits to the community through development by working with other key partners and agencies to help create sustainable communities.

4.3 The principle of "Sustainable Development" manifests itself throughout national, regional (South West) and local (South Somerset) planning strategy and policy. As national planning policy\(^1\) states, sustainable development:

"...should be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment, and a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal well being, in ways that protect and enhance the physical environment and optimise resource and energy use."

4.4 National planning policy goes on to state that Planning should support and promote the aim of sustainable development by:

- making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people’s quality of life;
- contributing to sustainable economic development;
- protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities;
- ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources; and,
- ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

4.5 What this means in simple terms is that planning strategy should identify what the community's developmental needs are, and how, where and when they can best be met bearing in mind social, environmental and economic issues.

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economic and environmental impacts underlying to which is the principle of sustainable development.

4.6 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West\(^2\) sets out the strategy for development in the region in accordance with the national policy strategy. The strategy reflects the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the region, the roles and functions for the region's main settlements including Yeovil and sets out the scale of growth to provide for and the distribution of the region's future housing and employment growth by district, and the criteria to be used to establish a broad settlement hierarchy at a district level to direct this growth. The RSS also provides key guidance on strategic issues such as Affordable Housing, planning obligations, climate change and density.

4.7 The role of South Somerset's Local Development Framework Core Strategy is therefore to set out how the district's developmental needs identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West and the Sustainable Community Strategy\(^3\) will be achieved within the national, regional and local planning policy strategy framework.

**Issues**

4.8 The following spatial planning issues in relation to developing the Core Strategy have been identified from the existing and emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West, work on the emerging Sustainable Community Strategy for South Somerset, and through informal consultation and partnership working with key stakeholders via the Council's Core Strategy Project Team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population growth means a high demand for housing in South Somerset.</td>
<td>Levels of Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Inadequate development opportunities to meet the community's needs, particularly in rural areas.  
• What are the South Somerset locations where growth can be accommodated sustainably through the provision of jobs and services and thereby reduce the need to travel and consume energy? | Distribution of Development |

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2 [Currently "Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10)", Government office for the South West, 2001. However, "Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West", South West Regional Assembly, June 2006 is at an advanced stage of preparation and is expected to be adopted and thereby replace RPG10 in 2008. ]

3.[Currently "Community Strategy for Somerset", South Somerset Together, 2005. However, the draft Sustainable Community Strategy for South Somerset ("Shaping South Somerset - Consultation Document for a Sustainable Community Strategy", South Somerset Together Local Strategic Partnership, June 2007) is at an advanced stage of preparation and is expected to be adopted and influence the Local Area Agreement in 2008.]
• Make efficient use of land by re-using/recycling land (development of Previously Developed Land (PDL)) and achieving higher density developments.
• Levels of infrastructure are inadequate to accommodate and support future development.

Sustainable Development

After reading this chapter, we would like you to tell us:
• If any issues for South Somerset have been missed;
• Which option(s) you favour and why; and
• Any other option(s) you can think of for dealing with the issues.
Please provide evidence to support your view.

Levels of Development

4.9 The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West, June 2006 (Draft RSS) and the Panel Report (December 2007), recognise that population growth and change due to demographics and inward and outward migration will mean a higher and different demand for housing in the region and South Somerset district. Consequently, the Draft RSS and Panel Report include a level of housing growth that will need to be accommodated during the 20-year period of 2006 - 2026 in the South Somerset District Housing Market Area. They also include a level of housing growth to be accommodated at Yeovil, given its proposed designation as a Strategically Significant City or Town (SSCT).

4.10 The emerging RSS states that provision should be made for 13,600 dwellings (Draft RSS, June 2006) or 19,700 dwellings (Panel Report December 2007) within the South Somerset Housing Market Area (SSHMA), which has been accepted as covering the same geographical extent as South Somerset district, for 2006 - 2026 of which 6,400 (Draft RSS) or 11,400 (Panel Report December 2007) should be at Yeovil. The Draft RSS figures have also been translated into annualised requirements in the Draft RSS for the SSHMA (district) as a whole and explicitly for Yeovil as an SSCT, but these have not been provided in the Panel Report.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>680</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yeovil: 2006-2026 overall annual average net dwelling requirement = 320 dwellings

4.11 In addition to this and to complement the housing requirement in part, the emerging RSS proposes a requirement to provide for about 9,100 jobs (Draft RSS June 2006) in the "Yeovil Travel To Work Area" (TTWA) (see below) or 10,700 jobs in the South Somerset Housing Market
Area (district), of which 9,100 should be within the Yeovil TTWA and focussed mainly on the Yeovil area. The Panel Report recommends that some 43ha of employment land should be made available focussed mainly on Yeovil.

### Yeovil Travel To Work Area 1998 (based on 1991 Census data)

4.12 Draft RSS advises that authorities will need to base their land requirements and allocations on an understanding of the functional role of towns, local economic circumstances and Central Government's "Employment Land Review Guidance Notes". Because South Somerset's employment "TTWA"s and Housing Market Areas are not aligned and cross administrative boundaries, co-operative working with other local authorities and stakeholders will be required to establish how and where key infrastructure and financial contributions arising from planning obligations will be distributed.
Ultimately, the RSS will dictate the level of housing provision that the South Somerset LDF should provide for for the Housing Market Area (district) as a whole and for Yeovil if confirmed as an SSCT. Furthermore, it is anticipated that it will dictate the number of jobs to be provided for within Yeovil's TTWA. The emerging RSS presents a broad settlement strategy and requires District Councils to make decisions on their Core Strategies to determine where growth should occur specifically within their districts.

While the Draft RSS was being prepared and progressed to the Examination in Public, the Office of National Statistics released more up-to-date population projections, which if accepted, would increase the above requirements. The implication of this ONS data is that 16,600 dwellings would need to be provided within the South Somerset District Housing Market Area, 7,400 of which should be provided for at Yeovil. At the EIP itself the outcome of yet more recent projections were presented to participants for a view as to how they might be accommodated and the appropriateness of the resultant growth levels. The implications of these projections would be that 19,700 dwellings would need to be provided within the South Somerset District Housing Market Area. No breakdown was given for a figure for Yeovil under this scenario, although it was acknowledged by the Regional Assembly that further work on this was required.

Furthermore, Central Government's Housing Green Paper of July 2007 "Homes for the Future" indicated that there is a need to deliver 2 million homes by 2016 and 3 million homes by 2020: that is an extra 1.4 million homes above what is already proposed in Regional Spatial Strategies across the country. Adoption of the green paper growth proposals by Government would result in growth levels yet higher again than the 19,700 figure discussed at the EIP. The Regional Assembly has intimated that the current strategy is robust enough to accommodate yet more growth but clearly the actual scale of growth would be different and the absolute numbers for Yeovil and the rest of South Somerset would change. The RSS will not be addressing the potential extra numbers set out in the green paper. The RSS EIP Panel Report was published in early January and any further changes to the Draft RSS figures will be presented for public consultation later this year.

**Option S1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Based on the above information, which of the following housing supply scenarios do you consider we should plan for and why?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A.** Draft RSS: 13,600 dwellings within South Somerset District Housing Market Area of which 6,400 dwellings to be provided for at Yeovil;

**B.** ONS: 16,600 dwellings within South Somerset District Housing Market Area of which 7,400 dwellings to be provided for at Yeovil;

**C.** Department of Communities & Local Government projection: 19,700 dwellings within South Somerset District Housing Market Area of which an undefined number of dwellings to be provided for at Yeovil; (If choosing this option, please suggest a number of dwellings to be provided for at Yeovil)
D. Draft RSS EiP Panel Report recommendation of 19,700 dwellings, of which 6,400 should be within the existing area of Yeovil and 5,000 should be within an area of search for urban extension of Yeovil, and 8,300 should be elsewhere in the South Somerset Housing Market Area (district) outside Yeovil.

E. Growth in excess of 19,700 reflecting the Government's Housing Green Paper "Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable", July 2007. (If choosing this option, please suggest numbers of dwellings to be provided for for the district and at Yeovil.)

**Distribution of Development**

4.16 Consultants are being commissioned to undertake an analysis of the role and function of our settlements to establish which perform the roles and functions of Development Policy B and C settlements, as defined in Draft RSS, as follows:

**Development Policy B - Development at Market Towns**

In addition to the SSCT’s identified in Development Policy A and other towns identified in Section 4 [of Draft RSS], those places which, based on an analysis of roles and functions, meet all of the following criteria, will be identified as the focal points for the provision of locally significant development:

- Where there is an existing concentration of business and employment, or where there is realistic potential for employment opportunities to be developed and enhanced;

- Where shopping and cultural, religious and faith, educational, health and public services can be provided to meet the needs of the town and the surrounding area whilst minimising car dependence;

- Where there is potential to maintain and develop sustainable transport modes, including accessible local public transport services to meet identified community needs.

The scale and mix of development should increase self-containment of the places identified, develop their function as service centres especially in terms of employment and service accessibility, and secure targeted development which can address regeneration needs.
Development Policy C - Development in Small Towns and Villages

In small towns and villages not meeting all the criteria of Development Policy B, based on an analysis of roles and functions, development will be appropriate where it:

- Supports small-scale economic activity which fits the scale of the settlement and can accommodate the future growth of businesses in the development permitted;

- Extends the range of services available including outreach delivery of services, making use of existing premises where possible;

- Does not significantly increase traffic on local roads and where traffic implications can be demonstrated to be acceptable;

- Promotes self-containment, strengthens local communities, and helps to support key services.

Development of housing in these settlements will be permitted where it relates to requirements identified in housing market studies and other assessments of local needs for housing verified by the local authority or where housing development is necessary to support employment provision locally.

4.17 The output of this work, due to be completed late Spring 2008, along with other recently-commissioned evidence base work such as a Housing Market Area Assessment, Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and a Settlements' Peripheral Landscape Capacity Study will be fundamental to establishing the settlement hierarchy for the district. In turn, the established Settlement Hierarchy will influence the approach to and detailed distribution of development with the objective of encouraging/facilitating commensurate levels and types of economic growth in those settlements and maintaining/enhancing self-containment. The current Settlement Hierarchy, set out in the adopted South Somerset Local Plan is set out below. Further explanation of the adopted settlement hierarchy can be found in the Local Plan Strategy chapter of the South Somerset Local Plan.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Administrative Area</th>
<th>Settlement Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Towns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area East</td>
<td>Wincanton</td>
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<td>Area South</td>
<td>Yeovil</td>
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<td>Area West</td>
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**Option S2**

**Distribution of Development**

Based on the Draft RSS definitions above, are there any particular settlements either in the adopted Local Plan's Settlement Hierarchy set out in the table above or elsewhere within the district that you consider should be classified as:

A. RSS Development Policy B "Market Towns"; or,

B. RSS Development Policy C "Small Towns & Villages".

Please state those settlements by category and provide supporting evidence.

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4.18 The Core Strategy's settlement hierarchy will be used to direct the distribution of the scale of development and associated infrastructure growth identified for the district. If spread across all Development Policy B and C settlements, development may be spread too thinly and thereby not prove effective in achieving the aims set out in the final paragraph of the Development Policy B and C settlements definitions. If concentrated in only some of the Development Policy B and C settlements, effective delivery of those aims may be restricted, thereby not achieving the aims set out in the final paragraph of the Development Policy B and C settlements definitions.

**Option S3**

**Distribution of Development**

Accepting your answer to Question S1 above, how should the residual (non-Yeovil) requirement of dwellings be provided for?

A. Distribute the residual dwellings and commensurate jobs, infrastructure etc to only Development Policy B settlements;

B. Distribute the residual dwellings and commensurate jobs, infrastructure etc to only some Development Policy B (Market Towns) and C Small Towns & Villages) settlements;

C. Distribute the residual dwellings and commensurate jobs, infrastructure etc to all Development Policy B and C settlements;

D. An alternative option.
Sustainable Development

4.19 Making efficient use of land is a fundamental principle of national government planning policy. By achieving higher levels of density of development where appropriate, we can minimise the need to develop more Greenfield land thereby safeguarding the countryside from unnecessary development.

4.20 A national density target no longer exists and government planning policy requires RSS's to set local targets for their regions. Accordingly, Development Policy F of the Draft RSS requires housing developments to achieve at least 50 dph and higher wherever possible. Within urban areas or urban extensions, and where sites are close to public transport nodes, consideration should be given to increasing densities to in excess of 50 dph. The Council has achieved an average density of 57 dwellings/hectare (dph) in 2006/7.

Option S4

Sustainable Development
Should the Core Strategy include a minimum density for residential development and if so, what should it be?

A. 50 dph;
B. 60 dph;
C. 70 dph;
D. An alternative density;
E. Locationally-specific target densities set for different Development Policy A, B and C settlements (SSCT’s, Market Towns, Small Towns & Villages) and elsewhere with higher densities in Town Centres than suburban areas, reflecting settlement form and housing need.
   If choosing this option, please state a density for each locationally-specific target;
F. An alternative option.

4.21 Development of Previously Developed Land (PDL), which is also known as "Brownfield Land" helps to reduce the loss of Greenfield land, remove eyesores, rejuvenate/regenerate areas and can remediate contaminated land.

4.22 Central Government planning policy states a national target of 60% of development taking place on Previously Developed Land (PDL) (also known as "brownfield land"). Draft RSS policy proposes that for the region as a whole at least 50% of new development should take place on PDL. This slightly lower target than the national target is in recognition of the slightly more rural character of the region and therefore less opportunity for redevelopment. Having said that, the actual figure for development on PDL in South Somerset was 75% in 2006/7. This was partly due to the delay in Greenfield Key Sites being built and the continued development of the available PDL sites within the district. As allocated Greenfield sites start to be developed and the latent
supply of PDL starts to dry up, it is anticipated that the percentage of development on PDL will start to decline.

4.23 **Option S5**

**Sustainable Development**

What should the Core Strategy's target for development taking place on Previously Developed Land be?

A. 40%;
B. 50%;
C. 60%;
D. An alternative percentage;
If choosing this option, please provide a justification for the percentage;
E. Locationally-specific target percentages should be set for different Development Policy A, B and C settlements (SSCT's, Market Towns, Small Towns & Villages) and elsewhere;
If choosing this option, please state and evidence a percentage for each locationally-specific target.
F. An alternative option.

4.24 National planning policy set out in PPS12 and Department of the Environment Circular 05/2005) make provisions for Councils to seek planning obligations (provision of/contributions towards infrastructure such as Affordable Housing, roads, foul and surface water drainage, education provision, community centres etc) from developers where it is adjudged to satisfy the Circular's tests of being necessary, relevant to planning, directly related to the proposal, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposal, and reasonable in all other respects. The Council’s adopted South Somerset Local Plan has a policy, which seeks to secure planning obligations. Draft RSS also has a policy “Development Policy D - Infrastructure for Development” that seeks to ensure that existing infrastructure is used most effectively, new infrastructure to support strategic development is secured and investment in infrastructure is phased appropriately.

4.25 In addition to having such a policy, the Council works closely with other infrastructure providers such as the County Council as the authority responsible for highways maintenance and transport schemes, and Primary Care Trusts, to secure infrastructure improvements. Further commentary on this issue is contained more appropriately in the Development Management Policies theme papers.

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Evidence used to inform this theme

CLG, 2007. “Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable” - Housing Green Paper
South Somerset District Council 2006. South Somerset Local Plan
South Somerset District Council 2008. South Somerset LDF Annual Monitoring Report 2006/7
South Somerset Together (LSP), 2005. South Somerset Community Strategy
South Somerset Together (LSP), 2007. Shaping South Somerset, Working Together for a better Future – Consultation Document for a Sustainable Community Strategy
South West Regional Assembly, June 2006. The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026
5 Housing

Context

5.1 It is recognised nationally that there is a shortage of housing and in particular affordable housing. The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) 2006 stated that the South Somerset District Housing Market Area is expected to provide 13,600 dwellings over the 20-year period 2006 - 2026 (equating to an overall annual average net dwelling requirement of 680 dwellings per year), however the recently published Examination In Public Panel Report (December 2007) amends this figure to 19,700 dwellings (equating to an overall annual average net dwelling requirement of 985 dwellings per year).

5.2 The adopted South Somerset Local Plan (2006) (SSLP) sets out the District Council's most recent strategy for the distribution of new housing development. That strategy has been to focus development on the towns i.e. Yeovil, Chard, Wincanton, Ilminster and Crewkerne with limited development taking place in rural centres and villages. This broadly reflects government guidance on the distribution of new housing development. The Spatial Strategy chapter of this document examines the issues and options for the broad distribution of housing development across the district in the future. This chapter considers more detailed housing issues such as affordable housing but it does not consider allocations for housing development; this will be done in an Allocations Development Plan Document to be produced in the future (likely to be post 2010).

5.3 The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) identified Yeovil as a ‘Strategically Significant Town or city’ (SSTC) and the Panel Report has confirmed this status it states that the "about" 19,700 dwellings should be distributed as follows:

• 6,400 dwellings within the existing urban area of Yeovil SSCT.
• 5,000 dwellings within an area of search for urban extension of Yeovil.
• 8,300 dwellings elsewhere in the HMA, outside the SSCT.

5.4 Office of National Statistics (ONS) data shows that South Somerset's population is growing and is getting older. It will therefore be important that the right kind of housing is provided to meet the needs of the whole community including older people. Evidence shows that 69% of all additional households will be one person households with 90% of these going to people over the age of 35 and 33% going to those over 65. ONS household projections also predict a decrease in average household size from 2.25 to 2.05 people.

5.5 The provision of affordable housing that meets the needs of the whole community, including the needs of Gypsies and Travellers accommodation is a key issue for the Core Strategy. The annual shortfall in affordable housing supply in South Somerset that was represented by registered need in 2006 was around 750 dwellings per annum, predominantly, although not exclusively, for social rented housing. Inward migration has led to a rise in rural house prices and research by the Commission for Rural Communities predicts that if the recent trend for urban to rural migration continues populations in rural districts may increase by 20% by 2026.
5.6 The following spatial planning issues in relation to housing were identified from the Local Development Framework evidence base and through the consultation process on the draft South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy (2007):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• General lack of affordable housing to accommodate predicted future demand for the whole community.</td>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increases in migrant workers are impacting on the demand for housing in the district.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of affordable housing for people of working age - large affordability gap between wages and house prices with the average house price being around 10 times the average wage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Unmet demand for homeless shelters and hostels in South Somerset.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of provision for the needs of gypsy and traveller communities - residential and transit - lack of sites and lack of support from councillors and local community.</td>
<td>Gypsies and Travellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased demand for one and two bedroom houses in both rural and urban areas that will allow older people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible. Shortages can result in the elderly having to go into care or under occupying unsuitable homes.</td>
<td>Housing Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Empty residential property - need to ensure all empty/underused property is brought back into use.</td>
<td>Empty Properties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After reading this chapter, we would like you to tell us:
• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed;
• which option(s) you favour and why; and
• any other option(s) you can think of for dealing with the issues.
Please provide evidence to support your view.
Affordable Housing

5.7 Homelessness is a major cause of concern in South Somerset currently there are approximately 7,000 households on the Housing Register. Of the nearly 64,000 homes in the district 74% are owner occupied, approximately 15% are owned by Registered Social Landlords and the remaining 9% are privately rented. In the district the average house price is 11.7 times the average salary this makes it very difficult for first time buyers to enter the housing market.

5.8 The adopted local plan seeks to achieve 185 affordable homes annually in association with general housing and requires 35% of the total number of dwellings to be affordable on relevant sites. The trigger points for the provision of affordable housing are 25 dwellings in settlements larger than 3,000 population (or 1 hectare irrespective of the number of dwellings) or 15 dwellings in settlements of 3,000 or less (or 0.5 hectares irrespective of the number of dwellings). However, in the light of guidance in Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3) where the national indicative minimum site threshold is set the Council has taken the decision to lower the trigger to 15 dwellings (the indicative minimum) in settlements larger than 3,000.

5.9 PPS3 defines affordable housing as being housing that includes social rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. It specifies that the housing should remain at an affordable price for future eligible households and is clear that for planning purposes 'low cost market' housing should not be considered affordable housing. The Core Strategy will need to provide a new overall target for the amount of affordable housing to be provided in the district; the decision as to what that target is will be informed by the RSS and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The SHMA will also provide the evidence to enable separate targets for social-rented and intermediate affordable housing to be set. The range of circumstances within which affordable housing will be required will also need to be set out.

5.10 Through the Core Strategy the opportunity arises to revise the thresholds and targets for the provision of affordable housing. Whilst stating that 30% (amended to 35% in the Panel Report) of all housing development across each local authority area in the region should be affordable, the RSS allows for authorities to require up to 60% or higher in areas of greatest need (this remains unaltered in the Panel Report). By providing sufficient affordable housing within the district the number of homeless people should decrease and as such the need for temporary accommodation for the homeless will decline.

5.11 The provision of affordable housing can be addressed in a number of ways:

- As a part of larger housing developments (when the trigger point is reached) secured as a planning obligation through a S.106 agreement. South Somerset District Council are currently working on a Planning Obligations Guidance Note, which will set out the process for negotiations on the provision of affordable housing.
- Use of an ‘exceptions policy’ which permits affordable housing to be built in rural locations where open market housing would not.
- The allocation of land in rural areas for affordable housing only.
Option H1

What number of dwellings should trigger an affordable housing contribution? (Please select one option).

A. All sites (1 or 2 dwellings requiring a commuted sum with on site provision for 3 or more dwellings);
B. 5 dwellings or more;
C. 10 dwellings or more;
D. 15 dwellings or more;
E. Another option not suggested above.

Should different triggers be set for different locations and if so what should those triggers be?

A. SSCT - Yeovil;
B. RSS Development Policy B settlements (Market Towns or Settlements Suitable for Locally Significant Development);
C. RSS Development Policy C settlements (Small Towns and Villages);
D. Different triggers informed by the spatial outcomes of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

Option H2

What percentage of affordable housing in qualifying developments should we be seeking and how should provision be distributed? (Please select one option and indicate the percentage to be required).

A. Maintain 35% across the district;
B. Set a higher district-wide target based on most recent evidence;
C. Developments in Yeovil to provide a higher percentage than elsewhere;
D. Developments in RSS Development Policy B settlements to provide a higher percentage than elsewhere;
E. Developments on greenfield sites to provide a higher percentage than elsewhere;
F. Developments in rural areas to provide a higher percentage than elsewhere;
G. Another option not suggested above;
Option H3

With regard to the provision of affordable housing in rural areas should we:

A. Maintain a rural 'exceptions policy' only?
B. Combine a rural 'exceptions policy' with allocations specifically for affordable housing?
C. In addition to the above should we be considering more innovative ways of securing affordable housing and if so what?

Although the Core Strategy will not be allocating sites if you support the principle of allocating sites for affordable housing only in the future should those sites be located:

D. In settlements with a population of 3,000 or less only?
E. Outside of development areas where a specific local need is identified?
F. Another option not suggested above?

Option H4

With regard to the distribution of affordable housing units within large development sites, should the units be:

A. 'Pepper potted' across the whole site?
B. In small clusters within the site?
C. In large clusters within the site?

Question QH1: Should affordable housing be South Somerset District Council's key priority when negotiating S.106 obligations?

Gypsies and Travellers

5.12 The adopted South Somerset Local Plan (SSLP) has two criteria based policies covering provision for Gypsies and Travellers; one addressing transit/short stay sites and the other addressing long term/residential sites. Following the publication of ODPM Circular 01/2006, Planning For Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites (Feb 2006), local Planning authorities must allocate land to meet the pitch requirement identified in the RSS. The role of the Core Strategy is to set out the criteria for the location of Gypsy and Travellers sites that will be used to allocate those sites in later development plan documents. The consultation document on the review of pitch requirements produced by the South West Regional Assembly in August 2007, identifies a requirement for an additional 17 residential pitches and 10 transit pitches in South Somerset and that figure was informed by survey work undertaken by the local authorities in Somerset.
Traditionally Gypsy and Traveller sites are located on the edge of settlements, slightly removed from the rest of the community, however, in some quarters it has been suggested that Gypsy and Traveller accommodation could be provided as part of larger allocations such as Key Sites (Key Sites normally include land for housing, employment and community facilities). We would therefore be interested to seek your views as to whether this might be a way of meeting the need for sites in the future.

Option H5

What should the criteria based policy/policies for the allocation of sites for Gypsies and Travellers include: (Please choose one option).

A. Criteria to address the following only:
   • Site access, parking and road safety of occupants
   • Landscaping and visual amenity
   • Proximity to contaminated land
   • Access to the highway network

B. In addition to ‘A’ above criteria relating to accessibility to local services such as shops and schools.

C. Another option not suggested above.

Question QH2: Should provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation be made within Key Site allocations?

Housing Demand

PPS3 identifies that one of the main characteristics of a mixed community is a variety of housing particularly in terms of price, tenure and mix of different households such as families with children, single person households and older people. Through their Local Development Frameworks local authorities will have to ensure that the accommodation needs of all these different groups will be met for both market and affordable housing. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment when completed will provide the evidence base necessary to undertake this task.

Early engagement has identified the particular need to provide additional 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings in South Somerset to enable elderly people to remain in their own homes for longer. Office of National Statistics projections indicate that 69% of all additional households will be one person households with 90% of these going to people over the age of 35 and 33% going to those aged over 65 additionally South Somerset District Council's Housing and Accommodation Strategy highlights the need to recognise and address the implications of the “ageing population” (in terms of housing provision and services).
5.16 In the early 1990s a concept known as Lifetime Homes was developed. Lifetime Homes have sixteen design features that ensure a new flat or house will meet the needs of most households. The features focus on accessibility and design features that make a home flexible enough to meet whatever comes along in life. In order to reduce the requirement to move to alternative accommodation as a family grows or as the householders age it may be appropriate to require some new housing in the district to meet Lifetime Homes standards in the future.

5.17 Issues and options with regard to climate change; carbon reduction and renewables are considered in the Environmental Quality Chapter of this document and previously developed land (often referred to as brownfield land) is considered in the Strategy Chapter. Residential parking standards are considered in the Transport and Accessibility Chapter.

Option H6

With regards to ensuring that there are sufficient properties available to meet the needs of households as they evolve over their lifetime should we: (Please choose the option/options you support).

A. Require a % of all housing in the district to meet lifetime homes standards? If so what should that percentage be?

B. Be seeking to provide a % of new dwellings as 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings and if so what should that % be?

C. Be providing more sheltered or warden assisted housing to meet the particular needs of the elderly and if so where is that housing needed?

Question QH3: Do elderly people want to move into specialist housing and if so what type of housing do they want?

Empty Properties

5.18 Empty properties provide a valuable resource for a number of uses including for residential use. South Somerset District Council’s Private Sector Housing Strategy 2007-2012 (October 2007) estimates that 2.1% of homes in the private sector are empty. The Empty Property Strategy was launched in 1995 and with the use of Empty Property Grants (EPGs) people in housing need have been provided with homes in a relatively quick and cost effective way. Where Empty Property Grants are provided, the properties created must be let to council nominated tenants at an agreed fair rent for five years.

5.19 The SSLP does not include a policy on empty or underused properties but does have a statement supporting the re-use of empty properties. Whilst a core policy on this issue may not be appropriate the re-use of empty properties will be encouraged and promoted through regeneration projects in Area Action Plans (e.g. the Yeovil Town Centre Area Action Plan).
Question QH4: Whilst appreciating that the Core Strategy cannot address the issue of bringing empty properties back into use, what do you think South Somerset District Council should do about the issue?

**Evidence used to inform this theme**

Ark Consultancy, 2006. *Somerset Housing Needs Assessment*
ODPM, 2006. *Circular 01/2006, Planning For Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites*
Somerset Strategic Housing Officers Group (2006).
South Somerset District Council, April 2006. *South Somerset Local Plan*
South Somerset District Council, October 2007. *South Somerset District Council's Private Sector Housing Strategy 2007-2012*
South West Observatory, 2006. *State of the South West*
South West Regional Assembly, August 2007. *Consultation on the revised Gypsy and Traveller Policy of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (GT1)*
South West Regional Assembly, June 2006. *The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026*
6 Economic Prosperity

6.1 This theme has been subdivided into the following headings for consideration:

- Business and Employment Development
- Town Centre Uses
- Agriculture
- Tourism

Business and Employment

Context

6.2 **PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development** (ODPM, 2004), the Government is committed to promoting a strong, stable and productive economy. Planning authorities should actively promote and facilitate good quality development, which is sustainable and delivers environmental and social benefits as well as economic.

6.3 **PPG4 - Industrial, commercial development and small firms** (DoE, 1992), a key aim is to encourage continued economic development in a way which is compatible with the Government's stated environmental objectives.

6.4 **Employment Land Reviews** (Guidance Note 2004), these should ensure that site allocations in LDFs reflect the changing requirements of businesses and local economies.

6.5 Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) aims to enhance the economic prosperity and quality of employment opportunity in the South West. The Draft RSS aligns with the Regional Economic Strategy (RES, produced by South West Regional Development Agency) a joint aim of the RSS and RES is securing sustainable economic progress. The RES recognises that the economy needs to respect environmental limits and meet the challenge of climate change, and identifies the importance of a low carbon approach in helping to achieve this.

6.6 The draft RSS requires the Council through Policy SR24, to make provision for job growth in the Yeovil Travel To Work Area (TTWA) for about 9,100 jobs and an average housing provision of about 320 dwellings per annum at Yeovil over the plan period. The Draft RSS Panel Report (December 2007) suggests these figures be revised, citing a Housing Market Area (district) figure of 10,700 jobs but retaining the requirement for 9,100 jobs for the Yeovil Travel To Work Area over the plan period and equating this to 43 hectares of land and raising the housing requirement to 570 dwellings per annum in the Yeovil area (11,400 houses in total over the plan period). It also states that LDDs will need to address diversifying the economy, broadening the range of retail and leisure opportunities and improving the transport connections, as well as changing the image of the town (Yeovil).

6.7 In contrast to the county, **An Introduction to South Somerset** explains how the area's economy has remained extremely buoyant over the last five years, currently enjoying an unemployment rate of around 1.1% (national rate is 2.5%), below the county, regional and national averages.
6.8 Whilst this is the case, there is an over reliance on manufacturing (is vital to the local economy and employs a large proportion of the South Somerset workforce, almost twice the proportion of employees than the region or Great Britain as a whole - a declining sector with typically a low-skilled workforce and a growing reliance on migrant labour). The Yeovil area is one of the most important aerospace engineering areas in Britain.

6.9 The fact that South Somerset has a robust business environment anchored firmly by major firms like Agusta Westland and Honeywell Aerospace, has meant that over the years they have spun off high technology expertise, research and development skills into the local economy, meaning there is a skilled and trained workforce able to apply knowledge in areas like robotics, electronic engineering, computing, design and manufacturing systems and able to support new firms. However, unless this culture of innovation is built upon, the people trained with these skills will leave the area in search of better opportunities and incomes.

6.10 Engineering generates 17% of jobs in South Somerset. Between 1998-2004 there was an 8% decline in employment in engineering and further employment decline forecast for 2004-2014 of 19%. In engineering particularly, the sector's workforce is shifting significantly towards high skill occupations in 'niche' or specialised engineering businesses, as routine engineering manufacturing is increasingly lost to overseas production. Advanced engineering is an existing priority business sector, particularly in South Somerset. Support for diversification and greater innovation and product diversification by small businesses in the sector is key to its continued competitiveness (Somerset Economic Strategy).

6.11 Whilst manufacturing and agricultural sectors show decline, sectors such as construction and financial services are growing. Economic growth still however, lags behind regional and national rates as higher value added businesses have only seen limited growth. The greatest job creations have been seen in the retail sector over the past couple of years - mainly in large stores or supermarkets.

6.12 A particular feature of South Somerset is the number of small market towns and this market town economy dominates the District. It is estimated that 60,000 people work in nearly 5,000 South Somerset businesses. As a result South Somerset has a higher than average proportion of small employers and own account workers.

6.13 South Somerset is doing better than Great Britain as a whole in terms of the proportion of people qualified to at least NVQ Level 1, 2 or 3. However, this advantage ceases at NVQ Level 4 suggesting that there are issues around progression from NVQ Level 3 to NVQ Level 4. South Somerset has a slightly lower than average proportion of people working in more professional roles. Training, or rather the lack of it, is an issue.

6.14 **South Somerset Employment Land Review** - South Somerset District Council and Business Link are working together to undertake a survey into the real estate needs of businesses within the District. The aim is to protect current premises and employment sites from redevelopment and to help the District Council to plan for employment premises and sites needed for the future in Yeovil, the market towns and rural areas. The work is due to be completed during spring 2008 and the results will feed into the next stage of this process, the Preferred Options stage.
6.15 **Draft South Somerset Economic Development Strategy** aims amongst other things to increase the proportion of the economy in growth sectors.

6.16 The **Yeovil Vision** delivery strategy is regeneration and employment led.

6.17 The **South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy** is aimed at improving the long-term prospects of the District and making communities ‘sustainable’, helping them to survive and prosper now and in the future. The document looks at social, economic and environmental issues proposing a vision for the future of South Somerset and identifying the community’s employment needs.

### Issues

6.18 The following issues in relation to business and employment land were identified from the Local Development Framework evidence base and through the consultation process on the draft South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy (2007):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There is a net loss of young people from the District due to a lack of employment opportunities.</td>
<td>Location of New Employment Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• South Somerset is over reliant on a declining manufacturing sector and large engineering companies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a lack of inward investment and new businesses setting up in South Somerset.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a lack of inward investment and new businesses setting up in South Somerset.</td>
<td>Choice of Employment Land/ Premises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a shortage of suitable, affordable employment land and premises.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sectors are changing, some are expanding (service, construction, environmental), and the Council will need to cater for the changes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are accommodation shortages for business start-ups and new technology industries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a need to retain employment land/premises in Market Towns and Villages.</td>
<td>Retention of Employment Land/ Premises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The lack of access to Broadband puts some companies at a disadvantage.</td>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After reading this section, we would like you to tell us:
• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed
• which option you favour and why; and
• any other options you can think of for dealing with the issues.
Where possible, we would like you to provide evidence to support your view.

Location of New Economic Development

6.19 The economy needs to be less vulnerable to competitive threats by diversifying and developing a local competitive advantage based on knowledge, skills and location. There is a need to identify new employment sites to provide an appropriate amount and type of land and premises to meet the needs of local businesses and provide sufficient jobs for the resident population.

6.20 The draft RSS has identified that the LDF will need to provide for job growth in the Yeovil Travel To Work Area (TTWA) of 9,100 jobs up to the end of the plan period in 2026. Given that the TTWA includes areas outside the District, we have identified that based on Housing Market Areas, the LDF will need to provide for between 7,800 - 10,700 jobs in the district by 2026. This has broadly been reflected in the Draft RSS Panel Report (December 2007) with a recommended figure for the South Somerset Housing Market Area (district) of 10,700 jobs, of which 9,100 should be provided within the Yeovil Travel To Work Area and mainly focused on Yeovil.

6.21 The decision as to the supply of that land will be informed by the Employment Land Review, which will ensure a ready supply of sites and premises to meet local requirements for business expansion and inward investment to meet the particular needs of small businesses.

Option EP1

Based on the RSS housing figures, do you agree that we should be:

A. Planning to provide for the 9,100 jobs in the Yeovil travel to work area, which equates to somewhere in the region of 7,800 - 10,700 jobs in the district by 2026? or

B. An alternative option. Please provide evidence supporting the figure you identify.

6.22 Providing a Choice of Employment Land and Premises

6.23 A range of affordable premises need to be supplied to meet the development needs of the changing local economy and support growing local businesses. The provision of employment land and premises suitable for small and medium-sized ventures, including start-up businesses, can foster enterprise, innovation, and ultimately inward investment, helping the economy to diversify away from its over-reliance on declining sectors.
Developments such as the Yeovil Innovation Centre and Chard Enviro Centre could be the most effective way to nurture growth and facilitate innovation in the future.

Option EP2

Following the findings of the South Somerset Employment Land Review, how should the Local Authority be providing a range of business units (Use Classes B1, B2 & B8)? In particular should we be providing for smaller businesses by:

A. Making it a requirement that on larger sites, a proportion of the development is for smaller business units, or

B. Making it a requirement that on all sites, a proportion of the development is for smaller business units, or

C. Concentrating smaller units on an enterprise centre model such as the Yeovil Innovation Centre and Chard Enviro Centre, (would this be a proportion of smaller units or all?) or

D. Providing small advanced industrial units just for small businesses.

Retention of Employment Land and Premises

There has been growing pressure over recent years to allow employment land and premises to be developed/redeveloped for other uses (predominantly residential) which offer a greater level of return for investors. If this is allowed to continue, the result could be significant losses to the District’s stock of employment land and premises which is unsustainable as it increases the distances people need to travel to work.

Where employment land/premises are being redeveloped for housing to reflect the changing requirements of the economy, retention of employment opportunities could be the key to maintaining a sustainable jobs-home balance and reduce commuting. A mixed-use proposal could provide additional housing whilst retaining a similar number of jobs.

The draft RSS states that sites that are poorly located for economic development or no longer meet the needs of business should be considered for redevelopment. Alternative uses should be considered in the following sequence: for non-B use class employment generating uses; for mixed-use development including residential use; for residential use only.

Question QEP1 - Under what circumstances should we protect employment land and premises? Can some be allocated for other uses?

5.[B1, B2 & B8 of Use Classes Order: B1 - Offices, Research and Development, Studios, Laboratories, High Tech, Light Industry; B2 - General Industrial; B8 - Wholesale Warehouse, Distribution Centres, Repositories]
Question QEP2- Given the guidance in the RSS, what criteria should be used to determine that a site is poorly located for economic development or is no longer needed?

Telecommunications

6.28 A high percentage of South Somerset residents work from home and 54% travel less than 5km to work. Increased use of telecommunications could increase community cohesion and reduce traffic congestion, but many small businesses are not benefiting from technology, for they still cannot access Broadband as they are too far from an exchange. More and more businesses are trading on-line and surveys have demonstrated that businesses that use Broadband witness an increase in productivity.

6.29 Somerset's rural geography creates challenges for the roll-out of Broadband and future ICT infrastructure which must be addressed to ensure Somerset's future economic competitiveness.

6.30 The Transport and Accessibility section of this document looks at opportunities for developing telecommunications across the District.

Town Centre Uses

Context

6.31 PPS6 - Planning for Town Centres (ODPM, 2005), is based on the ‘town centres first’ objective. Town centres should be considered for new retail and other development that attracts a large number of people, prior to consideration of edge-of-centre and out-of-centre sites. Only if no more central sites are available will out of centre sites be considered. Government policy also states that Councils should actively provide enough land for shops and services.

6.32 The supporting text of the draft RSS identifies Yeovil as a main retail centre within the region and that broadening the range of retail and leisure opportunities and changing the image of the town (Yeovil) are priorities for the LDF.

6.33 Yeovil is the largest town in the District and functions as a sub-regional centre to the wide rural hinterland. Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster and Wincanton are the next largest towns, elsewhere there are important town centres providing a range and variety of services and facilities to a wider catchment area. Whilst the adopted Local Plan seeks to maintain and improve the vitality and viability of existing centres, no retail allocations are made.

6.34 The Yeovil Vision aims to create a thriving centre. The project, commissioned by the Local Strategic Partnership is a statement of ambition for the future of Yeovil. The Core Strategy will assist in delivering the objectives and aspirations of the vision and town centre strategy.

6.35 The Yeovil Town Centre Strategy articulates the aspirations of the Yeovil Vision in terms of a strategic approach to Yeovil town centre. The strategy sets out a series of aspirational projects and initiatives which will contribute towards achieving the vision. It also sets out a series of proposals for the town centre.
6.36 **South Somerset Retail Study** identifies Yeovil as the dominant shopping centre in the District. The town centre is in reasonably good health, highlighted by the below national average vacancy rates, on the other hand there are a lack of opportunities for new retailers to enter the town at present. One area in need of improvement is the environment, as it is felt that Yeovil town centre lacks character. The study identifies the need for additional comparison goods retail development in Yeovil. Development should seek to provide for a mix of shops including large-scale and multi-level units, within a high-quality shopping environment. If development is not forthcoming in Yeovil, it is likely that trade will be lost to higher-order centres.

6.37 The four smaller principal centres, Chard Ilminster, Crewkerne and Wincanton are all displaying reasonably high levels of vitality and viability and have capacity for comparison goods expenditure. Chard has surplus convenience goods expenditure suggesting capacity for further development, and residents in Crewkerne would benefit from having access to a new foodstore, which would meet qualitative deficiencies in the town and improve the retail offer, retaining greater levels of expenditure within the catchment area. The study notes that given that the four smaller principal centres have been reducing in size over recent years and the apparent lack of retailer demand for floorspace, a cautious approach should be taken to the figures identified.

6.38 The District Centres of Somerton and Langport are important in terms of serving needs of local residents as they are the furthest away from Yeovil, whilst Castle Cary is a vital and viable centre offering a diverse mix of goods and services.

6.39 In the Local Centres of Bruton, South Petherton, Martock and Milborne Port, planning policies should be formulated to encourage appropriate facilities to locate within the Local Centres to help prevent the loss of existing retail units.

**Issues**

6.40 The following issues in relation to business and employment land were identified from the Local Development Framework evidence base and through the consultation process on the draft South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy (2007):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There is a need to respond to the demand for retail growth in Yeovil.</td>
<td>Provision of Land for Retailing and Town Centre Uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The retail offer in Market Towns and Villages is declining and there is a lack of shopping opportunities in these locations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a need to encourage retailers to take up realistic growth potential.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a need to broaden the range of retail and leisure opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The image of the town (Yeovil) needs to be changed.</td>
<td>Role and Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a need to define Market Towns, highlight their distinctiveness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The retail offer in Market Towns and Villages is declining and there is a lack of shopping opportunities in these locations.

Retention of Services and Facilities

After reading this section, we would like you to tell us:
• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed
• which option you favour and why; and
• any other options you can think of for dealing with the issues.
Where possible, we would like you to provide evidence to support your view.

Provision of Land for Retailing and Town Centre Uses

6.41 There are very different issue in villages and market towns based on level of shopping they can sustain. In villages, the issue will be preventing complete loss of retailing, whereas in Market Towns it will be looking at enhancing the vitality and viability to reduce leakage. Reducing the use of the car is not the solution, enhancing the ‘offer’ should encourage people to spend locally as often as possible, thereby not shopping elsewhere as often.

6.42 The South Somerset Retail Study identifies retail capacity.

Option EP3

In accordance with the South Somerset Retail Study:

A. Allocate land to bring forward new proposals for retailing to respond to the needs these areas will face in coming years, or

B. Make no allocations, but include a criteria based policy that positively encourages retailing in appropriate locations, or

C. An alternative option.

Role and Function

6.43 PPS6 states that planning authorities should define a network and a hierarchy of centres each performing their appropriate role to meet the needs of their catchments.

6.44 The draft RSS addresses the role and function of settlements by identifying Settlement Categories:

Development Policy A: Strategically Significant Cities or Towns (Yeovil)
Development Policy B: Market Towns
Development Policy C: Small Towns and Villages.
6.45 The authority is undertaking a study looking at the role of function of the District's settlements to identify a development hierarchy, this will obviously be crucial to the future strategic development of the District, and should be complete by the preferred options stage.

**Question QEP3** - Given the stance of the draft RSS that Yeovil needs to broaden its range of retail and leisure opportunities and change its image, what is Yeovil lacking? How can retailing and leisure opportunities be improved in Yeovil?

**Question QEP4** - Thinking about the Development Policy B and Development Policy C settlements that you are most familiar with, what is distinctive about the settlement? What services and facilities, if any, is it lacking? How could this be improved through planning policy?

**Retention of Services and Facilities**

6.46 Many services and facilities in rural areas are under threat from the increased reliance on the private car. The local shop, post office, public house, place of worship and more are important and valuable resources, especially for the less mobile in these communities.

6.47 Local Plan Policy MS1 seeks to protect such services and facilities:

6.48 **Policy MS1 (Local Shopping and Services)** - Proposals which would result in the loss of shops or other local services will not be permitted where this would result in a significant or total loss of such services to the community, except where the applicant has made every reasonable attempt to secure suitable business or local community re-use.

**Option EP4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retain Local Plan Policy MS1, but clarify how an applicant can demonstrate that ‘every reasonable attempt to secure suitable business or local community re-use’. ‘Every reasonable attempt’ could include:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Marketing the premises for a period of time with an approved agent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Consulting the community and local authority on a local community re-use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Alternative criteria.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.49 This issue is also dealt with in the Economic Prosperity [See page 89] section of Development Management Policies, please cross refer to this section.
Agriculture

6.50 Two fundamental issues affecting the agricultural sector in the coming years are climate change and the reform of agricultural funding mechanisms.

6.51 In rural areas, reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) means that subsidies will no longer be so closely linked to farm production, and this should lead to more efficient farm businesses as a result. The expansion of the second ‘pillar’ of the CAP, the Rural Development Regulation, is likely to encourage greater diversification away from agricultural activity, and an increased desire on the part of farmers to diversify their capital assets, for example into workspace.

6.52 Nationally, the growing seasons for plants are extending, mainly due to the early onset of the spring season, providing opportunities to extend crops such as maize.

National Policy Context

6.53 The Government's Rural Strategy emphasises improving the quality and accessibility of rural business support services and creating greater added value in the rural economy.

6.54 PPS7 states that LDDs should recognise the economic, social and environmental significance of the countryside and when preparing LDDs and determining planning applications for development in the countryside the local planning authority should support development that delivers diverse and sustainable farming enterprises. Support should also be given to other countryside-based enterprises and activities which contribute to rural economies, and/or promote recreation in and the enjoyment of the countryside.

Regional Policy Context

6.55 As a result of climate change which 80% of farmers in the South West are aware of, from a planning perspective, farm management may need to focus on arable production and producing renewable energy crops and in wetter areas, increased shelter for livestock and dirty water management.

6.56 The RSS notes that as a result of financial changes, businesses in rural areas now and in the foreseeable future are likely to have little connection with the land-based industries but should be supported where they secure jobs for local people and improve the viability of rural communities.

Local Context

6.57 In South Somerset, outside the market towns and rural centres, the rural economy is characterised by low productivity activities and is subject to sectoral decline including fundamental agricultural change. Cereal farms increased by 15% between 2000 and 2005, whilst dairy farms decreased by a comparable figure and the numbers of dairy cows and pigs continue to decline. Figures show a noticeable rise in smallholdings with less than 5 hectares. Twenty percent of farm businesses currently deliver negative incomes, consequently there is a need to maintain rural employment and encourage farm diversification.
6.58 The **draft South Somerset Economic Strategy** seeks to promote the development and diversification of rural enterprises, successfully promote farm diversification and increase local food sourcing/farmers markets.

6.59 To help reconnect farmers with their customers, farmers markets exist in Crewekerne and Wincanton. Farmers markets are supported nationally because of the recognised environmental and health benefits as well as economic.

### Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Environmental (climate change) and economic (financial incentives, grants, schemes) changes are affecting agricultural productivity and viability, there is a need to support diversification. 20% of farm businesses currently deliver negative incomes.</td>
<td>Farm Diversification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Farm diversification needs to be addressed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a need to support farmers markets.</td>
<td>Farmers Markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a need to promote the production and sale of local food.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There should be support growing own food spaces (allotments) in urban areas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After reading this section, we would like you to tell us:
• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed;
• which option you favour and why; and
• any other options you can think of for dealing with the issues.
Where possible, we would like you to provide evidence to support your view.

### Farm Diversification

6.60 PPS 7 states that the important role of agricultural development should be recognised and well-conceived farm diversification schemes should be supported where they contribute to sustainable development objectives and help sustain an agricultural enterprise.
6.61 **Option EP5**

Include a criteria based policy in the LDD relating to farm diversification projects. The criteria against which farm diversification schemes would be assessed could include:

A. Role of the scheme in the continuing viability of the farm;
B. Compatibility with the existing farm operation;
C. Sustainability of the scheme;
D. The proposed reuse/replacement of existing buildings;
E. Development of new buildings;
F. Scale of the development;

Do you agree with some, or all of the criteria, are there any alternatives that you feel have been missed?

6.62 The RSS notes that as a result of financial changes, businesses in rural areas now and in the foreseeable future are likely to have little connection with the land-based industries but that they should be supported where they secure jobs for local people and improve the viability of rural communities.

**Question QEP5** - Given this statement in the RSS, do we need to define the types of enterprises that would be acceptable for a) farm diversification schemes, and b) rural areas in general?

**Farmers Markets**

6.63 Markets have in the past been considered against retail policies and their impact on the vitality and viability of a nearby town centre. The District Council is supportive of farmers markets.

**Question QEP6** - Rather than introducing a new policy, should we retain the existing approach to assessing farmers markets against retail policies?

**Tourism**

**Context**

6.64 The **Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism** states that the planning system, by taking a pro-active role in facilitating and promoting the implementation of good quality development, is
crucial to ensuring that the tourism industry can develop and thrive in the most sustainable manner possible.

6.65 Tourism has changed, according to South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA), people are increasingly more interested in the experience rather than the destination. Today people are seeking to take shorter breaks related to their hobbies and interests - good health and well-being, access to natural environmental assets and locally distinctive cultural and historical activities. By 2015 it is forecast that there will be a 20% increase in day visitors to the South West and a 20% increase in domestic spend in the region.

6.66 The overall objective regionally for tourism in the draft RSS is to encourage more sustainable tourism. The draft RSS recognises that a high proportion of the region’s tourism ‘product’ is generated by smaller-scale tourism attractions and businesses and that planning policies should reflect the need to maintain and enhance these.

6.67 The Regional Tourism Strategy (Towards 2015 - A Tourism Strategy for the Region) identifies three priorities: sustainable tourism, increased quality and improved destination management. The core objective of is to develop a quality, year round, sustainable tourism sector and to achieve sustainable tourism the draft RSS believes in enhancing the tourism offer by investing in existing attractions and destinations. Quality and provision of accommodation is crucial to the health of the industry.

6.68 Locally, tourism is important to the economy. In 2001, visitors spent £159 million in South Somerset and 7% of the workforce are employed in tourism.

6.69 South Somerset has many strengths in this sector such as a diverse countryside with many designated landscapes, award winning local produce and its relative accessibility from other parts of the UK. However it also has its weaknesses, for example it has a lower profile than compared with other destinations in the South West, it lacks iconic attractions, accommodation and service quality is patchy and the district is mostly used as a ‘passing through’ destination. South Somerset also faces threats such as a continuing decline in market share and the potential to lose out locally to a stronger regional brand focused on the southern edge of the South West.

6.70 The South Somerset Tourism Strategy (2004-2007) is in line with the regional strategy in seeking to increase the value of tourism by supporting year-round sustainable tourism initiatives.

**Issues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • There is a need to support events and attractions.  
• Trends point towards a change in focus of tourism, from long breaks to short/day trips - need to provide attractions | New and existing tourism facilities |
After reading this section, we would like you to tell us:

- if any issues for South Somerset have been missed
- which option you favour and why; and
- any other options you can think of for dealing with the issues.

Where possible, we would like you to provide evidence to support your view.

**New and Existing Tourism Facilities**

6.71 Seven percent of the workforce are currently employed in tourism related activities. With changes in the rural economy, tourism could become an even greater employer, and so ensuring that any new development is sustainable, and contributes to a sustainable rural economy should be a primary objective.

6.72 Currently, the Local Plan includes a statement of intent “The District will continue to support Sustainable Tourism Initiatives” and Policy ME10 - Tourist Accommodation (proposals outside Development Areas will be supported if scale is consistent with rural location and condition for holiday accommodation only) in relation to tourism:

**Question QEP7 - Should tourism be addressed as a separate issue or considered as part of a wider topic such as economic growth?**

**Option EP6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If tourism is to be dealt with separately and in light of the objectives of the draft RSS and South Somerset Tourism Strategy, to secure sustainable tourism that would support a sustainable rural community, we could:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Retain the existing Local Plan approach to tourism (Policy ME10), but include criteria to ensure that the development is sustainable and contributes to a sustainable rural economy, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Direct all major tourism proposals to higher order settlements (Development Policy A and B), allowing some tourism development in Development policy C settlements and outside development boundaries where they satisfy sustainability criteria (contributes to a sustainable rural economy), or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. An alternative option.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evidence used to inform this theme

BMG Research for Somerset and Dorset LSC
CLG, 2005. Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
South Somerset District Council 2007. South Somerset LDF Annual Monitoring Report 2006/7
South Somerset District Council, 2007. Economic Profile - An Introduction to South Somerset
South Somerset Together (LSP), 2007. Shaping South Somerset, Working Together for a better Future - Consultation Document for a Sustainable Community Strategy
South West Regional Assembly, June 2006. The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026
South West Regional Observatory, 2006. Regional Economic Indicators
7 Transport and Accessibility

Context

7.1 The rural nature of large parts of South Somerset means that, for most people, there is a need to travel some distance to get to work, school, food shops, healthcare, leisure facilities and other key services. Improving accessibility to these things is key to tackling social isolation and exclusion, which disadvantages many people within South Somerset. The location and scale of future development is largely dependent on ensuring good transport links and accessibility to services and community facilities.

7.2 South Somerset has one of the highest levels of car ownership in the country, and the private car currently dominates travel patterns within the District. Car ownership has some considerable benefits through giving people access to a range of facilities and activities, but can also lead to problems such as road safety, air pollution, congestion, noise, as well as representing a heavy financial burden for those on low incomes. High levels of car ownership and usage also compromise those who do not have access to a car, as it contributes to making public transport unviable.

7.3 Some see climate change and obesity as the two key issues of public policy facing the UK in the 21st century – shifting travel patterns from the car to walking and cycling addresses both these issues.

7.4 In order to address transport and accessibility issues, the Core Strategy aims to reduce the need to travel in South Somerset; promote sustainable transport choices such as cycling, walking and public transport; and ensure good accessibility to services and community facilities. Where new development is likely to generate significant amounts of traffic, it is necessary to ensure that the road infrastructure is adequate. The ‘Development Management Policies’ considers this in greater detail, setting out options for seeking planning obligations.

7.5 The main responsibility for managing traffic lies with Somerset County Council. The approach to transport and accessibility within the Core Strategy will need to accord with the Somerset Local Transport Plan (2006 – 2011), which contains the following objectives:

- Improve safety for all who travel;
- Reduce social exclusion and improve access to everyday facilities;
- Reduce growth in congestion and pollution and improve health;
- Support sustainable growth in appropriate locations;
- Protect and enhance the built and natural environment.

7.6 The Local Transport Plan also sets out priorities for transport investment within Somerset, which the Core Strategy should also consider in its approach to transport and accessibility:

- Maintaining the road network across the county;
- Reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads;
- Increasing the number of people using public transport;
- Investment to support economic regeneration in the Taunton/Bridgwater/Wellington and Yeovil area;
• Promoting ‘smarter travel choices’ such as cycling, walking and car-sharing through marketing campaigns and travel plans for businesses and schools;
• Targeted implementation of other integrated transport schemes particularly to improve access to basic services in our market towns;
• Ensuring lorries use appropriate routes to improve life in rural communities.

### Issues

7.7 The following spatial planning issues in relation to transport and accessibility have been identified in work on the emerging Sustainable Community Strategy for South Somerset.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Somerset public transport is not meeting the needs of residents. Public transport to further education is still a significant issue within the district. Employment areas are poorly served by public transport.</td>
<td>Public transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is low participation in walking and cycling due to lack of safe cycle/walking routes, lack of time. People rely on short journeys by private car.</td>
<td>Walking/cycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There will be a large increase in traffic congestion on South Somerset roads over the next 20 years leading to pressure on roads and existing transport infrastructure.</td>
<td>Traffic congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of residential parking - appropriate level to contribute to sustainable communities.</td>
<td>Parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to services to people who are socially excluded. Older people in rural areas are isolated from key services such as healthcare and leisure and cultural opportunities - need to increase outreach facilities, make better use of community buildings and improve public transport. Disabled residents still face barriers to accessing services and accessing the labour market - lack of choice in accessing</td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After reading this chapter, we would like you to tell us:

• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed;
• which option(s) you favour and why; and
• any other option(s) you can think of for dealing with the issues.

Please provide evidence to support your view.

Public Transport

7.8 Public transport has been identified as not meeting the needs of South Somerset's residents. There has been a general trend of service withdrawals, making it difficult to imagine that there will be a substantial increase in availability of rural public transport in the coming years. South Somerset's rural nature poses a challenge in providing a financially viable public transport system that can be used by a largely scattered population. Further education and employment areas in particular have been identified as lacking adequate public transport links.6

7.9 Although not directly responsible for public transport provision, through the Core Strategy we can seek to ensure that all new development is designed so that high quality public transport accessibility both within, and from/to developments, can be achieved. Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) such as the ‘SLINKY’ and ‘Nippy Bus’ services, where the public can phone up to request that a bus stops at a particular place, has been a success in providing public transport links in some remote areas. An example of expanding DRT could be to introduce a work bus to employment sites.

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6. [The County Council are preparing two studies relating to these issues, to be completed by winter/spring 2009: ‘Access to Post 16 Education and Adult Learning in South Somerset;’ ‘Access to Employment in rural hinterlands of Yeovil.’]
Option TA1

Public transport
In order to improve public transport, which of the following should the Core Strategy achieve (tick all that apply):

A. New development should be located/designed to optimise high quality public transport accessibility;
B. Protect and improve public transport routes/hubs and support the creation of new ones where possible;
C. Seek to expand Demand Responsive Transport;
D. An alternative option.

Walking/Cycling

7.10 People in South Somerset are walking and cycling less than they used to. Relatively low levels of walking and cycling in South Somerset can be partially explained by its rural nature and scattered settlement pattern. However, even where there are short journeys that could be made by walking or cycling, many people still choose to travel by car.

7.11 The internal layout design of new development can be an important factor in encouraging people to walk and cycle more, through prioritising the needs of pedestrians and cyclists over cars – within the ‘Environmental Quality’ theme, the introduction of Home Zones are discussed as a possible way of doing this.

7.12 People can be encouraged to cycle through providing dedicated cycle parking spaces in a secure location, with changing facilities and easy access for all people using the development. The County Wide Parking Strategy sets out minimum standards for cycle parking spaces in new development. The protection and improvement of existing cycling and pedestrian routes, and the provision of new routes, can promote cycling and walking. It is important that the routes link residential areas, employment centres, town centres, schools, colleges, and other key destinations; and link smaller settlements and district centres to main town centres.

7.13 For obvious reasons, the demand for cycling is sensitive to topography. Yeovil, Crewkerne and Wincanton have all been classed as ‘very hilly’ (within LTP2) which does reduce the potential to increase cycling.
Option TA2

**Walking and Cycling**
In order to promote walking and cycling, the Core Strategy should (tick all that apply):

- A. Protect and improve existing cycling and pedestrian routes;
- B. Provide cycle and pedestrian routes to link new development with new/existing services;
- C. New development should be located / designed to prioritise the needs of pedestrians and cyclists over cars;
- D. Provide facilities for secure bicycle parking within new development;
- E. An alternative option (please give details).

**Traffic Congestion**

7.14 The high level of car ownership and usage within South Somerset has led to increasing traffic congestion and consequently negative effects on amenity and the environment by causing noise and air pollution, and business activity through lengthened and uncertain journey times. Tackling traffic congestion will be a key part of ensuring that plans for future growth within the District are achievable.

7.15 Yeovil in particular has been identified as suffering from traffic congestion, which has led to the town being designated as an Air Quality Management Area (explained further in ‘Environmental Quality’). Government policy (PPG13) states that travel plans should accompany development that would generate significant amounts of travel in, or near to, Air Quality Management Areas; as well as all major development. Some of the key aims of travel plans include reducing car usage and increasing the use of public transport, walking and cycling as travel modes. The Local Transport Plan seeks to deliver transport improvements to enable Yeovil to achieve significant economic growth, by identifying this as an investment priority.

7.16 Demand management measures can be put in place to manage the demand for travel, and encourage more sustainable travel modes. Draft Regional policy sets out that Yeovil, as a regionally significant town, should gradually introduce the following demand management measures:

- Congestion charging – e.g. charging cars to enter our towns.
- Workplace parking levies – e.g. charging employees to park at work.
- Parking strategies, including charges – e.g. reduce parking spaces through encouraging the redevelopment and re-use of existing parking, car park charges.
- Management of road space including bus priority – e.g. introduce bus lanes/high occupancy vehicle lanes.
- Measures to improve travel choice – e.g. provide secure cycle facilities, protect and improve cycle/pedestrian routes.
• Travel plans and travel awareness – e.g. promote travel plans for major traffic generators, set District wide target for the introduction of travel plans.
• Car clubs/car sharing – e.g. the Somerset Car Share Scheme has been set up by the County Council.
• School and Education Travel Planning – e.g. introduce travel plans for schools and colleges.
• Visitor Plans – e.g. provision of better information, maps.
• Public Transport Information Systems – e.g. ‘real time’ facility at bus stops.

7.17 The implementation of these demand management measures will involve close working with the County Council in their role as transport authority, who will be primarily responsible for many of the measures. It is crucial that, in conjunction with traffic demand measures, viable alternatives are provided to enable people to travel in a more sustainable manner, e.g. if people are being charged to park at work, a bus could be provided to transport employees to their place of work.

7.18 One of the options put forward is to introduce these demand management measures to other parts of the District as well as Yeovil. It is likely that all of the demand management measures are not feasible to implement across the District, and there may be some measures that are more appropriate to particular areas than others.

7.19 A previous study has indicated that Park and Ride is not currently feasible for Yeovil, with a financial shortfall projected to 2016. Nevertheless, given the Core Strategy’s timescale up to 2026, it is appropriate to consider Park and Ride as a possibility for Yeovil. The study also indicated that there is no prospect of introducing park and ride schemes in South Somerset’s other market towns.

7.20 Although there will be a focus on demand management measures to reduce traffic congestion, the road infrastructure must be adequate enough to cope with the amount of traffic likely to be generated by new development. This will involve assessing the current infrastructure capacity, future need, and identifying where improvements will need to be made. The Government (PPS12) states that the proposed improvements to the transport network in support of the Core Strategy should be set out, and shown on the Adopted Proposals Map.

Option TA3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traffic demand management measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) In order to reduce the amount of traffic on South Somerset’s roads, which of the following traffic demand management measures should be introduced:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Congestion charging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Workplace parking levies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Parking strategies, including charges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Management of road space including bus priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Which of the following ways of improving travel choice should be introduced:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Measures to improve travel choice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Option TA4

Location of traffic demand management measures
Which of the measures in option TA3 above should be a priority for (state relevant demand management ‘letter(s)’ after the settlement(s)):

A. Yeovil;
B. Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster and Wincanton;
C. Bruton, Castle Cary/Ansford, Langport/Huish Episcopi, Martock, Milborne Port, Somerton, and South Petherton;
D. An alternative settlement option.

Question TA1: Should Park and Ride be introduced in Yeovil? Can you suggest any appropriate broad locations?

Parking

7.21 The availability of car parking is a key factor for people in choosing their means of travel; and can be more significant than levels of public transport provision. Recent Government policy (PPS3) states that residential parking policies should be developed, taking account of expected levels of car ownership, the importance of promoting good design and the need to use land efficiently. The rural nature of South Somerset means that for a large number of people, the car is the only viable means of travel, and adequate parking levels will be essential – Core Strategy parking policies must take this into account.

7.22 Somerset's County Wide Parking Strategy sets maximum parking levels for most types of development:

- 1 bedroom unit = 1 car space per dwelling
- 2 – 3 bedroom units = 2 car spaces per dwelling
- 4+ bedroom units = 3 car spaces per dwelling.

7.23 The County Wide Parking Strategy states that where new developments are in close proximity to an abundance of on-street parking, and served by above average levels of public transport, provision should be made for less than the maximums above. In areas without access to public
transport and little or no on street parking, the maximum level should be implemented. Non-residential parking standards (e.g. for shops, offices, education etc.) are also set out within the County Wide Parking Strategy. As non-residential parking standards are already prescribed in Government policy (PPG13), there is no need to repeat them within the Core Strategy.

7.24 The District-wide Parking Strategy outlines that within market towns, excluding Yeovil, and rural centres it is essential to meet demand with adequate parking provision, in order to support their vitality and viability. In relation to Yeovil, the parking strategy seeks a rationalisation of car parks to enable the redevelopment of town centre sites.

### Option TA5

**Residential parking standards**

a) Should residential parking standards be based upon (tick any that apply):

- A. Dwelling size (number of bedrooms)
- B. Accessibility to public transport
- C. Accessibility to services/community facilities
- D. Availability of on-street parking
- E. An alternative option (please state)

b) Alternatively, do you think:

- A. There should be a single residential parking policy that applies across South Somerset
- B. Each ‘tier’ of settlement should have parking standards (i.e. Yeovil; Market Towns; Small towns and villages; elsewhere)
- C. A combination of all of the above.

**Question TA2:** Further to option TA3 – in order to encourage the use of other transport modes, do you think that it is realistic to reduce the supply of car parking spaces, thereby allowing some car parks to be redeveloped for other uses? Is this only appropriate for Yeovil, or should a reduction in car park spaces take place in any other settlements within the District?

### Accessibility

7.25 In a rural area like South Somerset, it is important that there is good accessibility to jobs, services and facilities. Improving accessibility is a key factor in improving and promoting social inclusion, and is essential to delivering sustainable communities. Social inclusion is related to the extent to which individuals and communities have access to essential services such as employment, education, healthcare, food shops, leisure facilities and other key services. It is important to
ensure that these services are provided with new housing development, in order to make places more self-contained and reducing the need to travel.

7.26 The Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011 contains an accessibility strategy, identifying the following particular issues relating to poor accessibility in South Somerset that are leading to further studies:

- Access to post 16 education and adult learning in South Somerset;
- Access to services in rural Chard, Ilminster and Crewkerne; and
- Access to employment in rural hinterlands of Yeovil.

Option TA6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which of the following should occur to improve access to services:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Encourage the location of essential services near to their users, and residential uses near to existing services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Direct future development to locations accessible by public transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Encourage a mix of uses within new development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. All of the above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. An alternative option. (please state)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Option TA7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing of service provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where a requirement for services related to housing development (e.g. shops, healthcare, education, employment etc.) has been identified, should these services be in place:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Immediately before housing is occupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. At the same time as the housing becomes occupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. After a set number of homes become occupied (please suggest a figure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Different timings depending on the type of service (please suggest).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Access**

7.27 Government policy (PPG8) seeks to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems, whilst keeping environmental impact to a minimum, and protecting public health. A key part of minimising environmental impacts is protection from visual intrusion, especially important in a rural area like South Somerset that contains some nationally protected areas.
The Local Development Framework can attempt to address the lack of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) skills within South Somerset by looking upon telecommunications systems positively, and providing better access to education, where ICT training can take place. A rural district such as South Somerset does contain areas where there is poor access to telecommunications, and some villages are still not broadband enabled. The Development Management policies will provide general advice on issues that can be used to determine telecommunications applications, further to guidance within Government policy.

Question TA3: Should the Core Strategy identify broad areas in South Somerset that would/would not be appropriate for telecommunications masts?

Evidence used to inform this theme

CLG, 2007. Guidance on Transport Assessment
South Somerset District Council, 2006. District-wide Car Parking Strategy
South Somerset Together (LSP), 2007. Shaping South Somerset, Working Together for a better Future - Consultation Document for a Sustainable Community Strategy
South West Regional Assembly, June 2006. The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026
8 Health and Well-Being

**Context**

8.1 Corporate Aim three of The South Somerset District Council Corporate Plan 2005-2012 is to "Improve the health and well-being of our citizens". The Corporate Plan recognises the key roles that sport, leisure and culture play in improving the quality of life in the District and is committed to continuing to provide quality cultural experiences and further integrating sport and leisure into the wider healthy communities agenda.

8.2 The Health and Well-Being theme of the Core Strategy sets out the District Council’s approach to protecting the current community infrastructure and facility provision, ensuring that the need for new provision is identified, appropriate sites for development are allocated, and working in partnership with the Sustainable Community Strategy and other service providers to deliver them. The issues and options for the development of sport, leisure and culture across the District over the period 2006-2026 are identified below. Allocations of specific sites for sport, recreation and community facilities will be made in the Allocations Development Plan Document when it is produced, but the Core Strategy will allow for the development of facilities as the need arises. Related issues which may affect health and well-being such as suitable housing, air quality, the protection of the environment and transport are dealt with in other themes.

8.3 The South Somerset Local Plan (SSLP), adopted April 2006, includes policies and proposals that are broadly in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17) reflecting the need for the retention and provision of recreational facilities. With respect to Community Facilities, the Local Plan allocates land to meet specific needs that have been identified by a variety of public, private and voluntary organisations including services such as health facilities, educational establishments, places of worship, and village halls. The developers of larger sites, whether residential, employment or mixed use, will be required to include an appropriate level of public space and to provide infrastructure to meet the needs generated by the development.

8.4 The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) recognises that the region will continue to grow and development will therefore need to cater for the needs of all groups, especially with respect to critical services such as health, education, community and cultural facilities. It also accepts that lost services in many villages are unlikely to be re-introduced, but proposes the retention of services at key local service and transport hubs and promotes the provision of new services relating to future patterns of housing provision as a result of the Draft RSS.

**Issues**

8.5 The emerging Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework evidence base have identified the following spatial planning issues in relation to health and well-being in South Somerset:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Need to improve leisure and cultural activities for young people, especially in rural areas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reduction in outdoor play opportunities for parents and children to play together and for young people in both rural and urban areas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Obesity and lifestyle related illnesses are increasing, including obesity in children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Need to protect allotments against development.</td>
<td>Sports/Active Leisure Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not enough use made of the countryside for leisure and health opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Residents would like to see increased access to rights of way - currently too restrictive, would like allowable uses broadened, eg for cycling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of public awareness of rights of way.</td>
<td>Natural Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Need to ensure new road layouts etc ease congestion to mitigate against poor air quality.</td>
<td>Provision for New Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Level of open space provision (community and informal) - Greenspace Strategy and Open Spaces Policy are required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All developments need space for recreation not just large sites.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Untapped potential for investment in leisure and cultural activities, including play areas and open spaces, through increased developer contributions. (Planning Gain)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community, leisure and cultural facilities should not be provided in isolation - need to be integrated into community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of multipurpose cultural venues in towns - some of the Market Towns do not have village hall type facility.</td>
<td>Provision for New Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of accessible support services for young people - especially with regard to help with drug issues, sexual health and</td>
<td>Health facilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
pregnancy, mental health, offending and other advice.

- Expansion needed in the care sector to meet the demands of the growing ageing population.
- Lack of provision of post-hospitalisation care/convalescence and help for integration back into community for vulnerable people.
- Hypertension (high blood pressure) and teenage birth rates are significantly higher than the county average.
- Importance of reducing health inequalities e.g. life expectancy differs by almost 6 years between the most and least deprived wards in the district. (South West Public Health Observatory).
- Lack of adequate mental health services - particularly preventative services in rural areas for males and for the homeless.

- Lack of affordable pre-school and nursery provision in villages and towns.
- Lack of opportunity for young people to act as leaders within their community.
- Many residents would like to access education classes, leisure and cultural opportunities locally in village halls.
- Need for general service provision to adapt to the needs of the ageing population.
- High levels of investment needed to maintain existing leisure and cultural facilities. Need to find innovative solutions to ensure greater accessibility and added value. Rationalisation of facilities needed to improve viability.

- Variable access to leisure and cultural opportunities - transport is a particular issue especially for children/young people getting to and from weekend and after-school activities, need better use and promotion of existing community facilities, more affordable holiday activities, equal access to all, especially for all age groups, children with disabilities and those on low incomes.
• Need more emphasis on disabled access for all.
• Lots of socially isolated older people, carers and disabled people in rural areas.
• Problems with speeding vehicles in towns and villages - danger to cyclists and pedestrians.
• Also need to improve the management of accident black-spots.

• Antisocial behaviour is a big problem in South Somerset.
• Criminal damage is the most common crime in South Somerset.
• Theft, assault and hate crime are also issues in South Somerset with hotspots spread across the four areas.
• Need for people to feel safe using leisure and cultural facilities and open spaces.
• Fear of using public conveniences.

Crime & Safety

After reading this chapter, we would like you to tell us:

• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed;
• which option(s) you favour and why; and
• any other option(s) you can think of for dealing with the issues.

Please provide evidence to support your view.

Sports/Active Leisure Facilities

8.6 Physical activity and active recreation can make an important contribution towards the health and well-being of a community. A recent national survey by Sport England shows that South Somerset has a higher than average level of sedentary residents. In addition the “State of the South West 2007” published by the South West Observatory quotes survey findings that show that obesity is increasing in the South West, including in children, and that people do less and less exercise as they get older, which has implications with the region's ageing population.

8.7 It is important that healthy and active lifestyles are encouraged to combat the increasing obesity levels and to improve the quality of life of the District's ageing population. South Somerset’s Sport and Active Leisure Strategy aims to increase participation levels in sporting activities by at least 1% year on year. In achieving this goal it will be crucial that local people can access adequate and
affordable facilities within a reasonable distance of where they either live or work. Additionally the South Somerset Play Strategy aims to increase the quantity and enhance the quality of children’s play opportunities in the District. Whilst the Core Strategy cannot supply new facilities itself, it can protect existing facilities, identify the need for new provision in relation to new development, and work in partnership with the Sustainable Community Strategy and other service providers to deliver them. If other need for recreational or community facilities is identified, sites can be allocated in the Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) post 2010, or dealt with under current Local Plan policies.

8.8 Allotments also provide a valuable resource for leisure activity and promoting a more sustainable lifestyle. Whilst it is important that they are protected and encouraged it should be recognised that lack of use and vandalism are a problem in some areas. Consideration should be given to development proposals for such sites if this would give the opportunity for new allotment sites to be provided where demand is higher.

8.9 It is also important to consider trends in the use of such facilities to plan future requirements. The South Somerset Local Plan currently gives additional protection to some open areas of land in towns and villages where they form an important part of the street scene or character of a settlement. These are designated “no development areas” under Policy EH10 and many are used for informal and formal recreation. The designation protects them from development unless a special community, educational or recreational need is identified.

Option HW1

**Protection of Existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation Areas**
How should the Core Strategy seek to protect existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation Areas, Play Space and Allotments when development is proposed on them? (Please tick all that apply)

A. Require potential developers to carry out an assessment to determine that areas are no longer needed for any recreational purpose, methodology to be pre-agreed with SSDC;
B. Require potential developers to consult with the local community to determine support for proposals, methodology to follow principles of Statement of Community Involvement;
C. Require potential developers to fund equivalent replacement resources (could be land, new facility or improvement to existing facility) in suitable areas;
D. Encourage the redevelopment of redundant sites for alternative recreational purposes if need is demonstrated under greenspace strategy;
E. Provide additional protection by way of “no development areas”.
F. Other (please give details)
**Natural Environment**

8.10 The natural environment plays an important part in giving opportunities for active recreation and leisure. Currently 72% of over 1,000 miles of existing rights of way in South Somerset, including public footpaths, roads used as a public path (RUPPS) and bridleways, are open. However, many of these are restricted to pedestrian use. A broadening of allowable uses to include cycling and horse riding, for example, and increased awareness of routes could help promote greater use of this valuable resource. The Core Strategy can aid the provision of recreational opportunities by promoting Green Infrastructure, a strategic network of parks, woodland, nature reserves and historic sites with links such as river corridors, wildlife corridors and greenways. These can provide important areas for recreation and the links between them would form useful routes for recreation and leisure as well as providing safe routes for alternative means of travel such as cycle or on foot. However, whilst access to the countryside can be managed and supported, it is not the role of the Core Strategy to allocate new recreational routes.

8.11 Air quality is also important to health and well-being, and although air quality in South Somerset is generally good, there are towns, particularly Yeovil, which suffer from pollution due to vehicle emissions. The Somerset Air Quality Strategy is currently being drafted, and will set out the Council’s approach to considering air quality issues.

8.12 Options for reducing the need to travel, promoting the use of modes of transport other than the car and improving pedestrian and cycling routes are included in other themes of the Core Strategy.

**Facilities for New Developments**

8.13 With the predicted increase in population there will be a high demand for new housing, much of which will be directed to the larger settlements for sustainability reasons. As many of the new residents will be elderly the need for supported or adapted housing to meet their needs, good access to health, leisure and social facilities, and provision of local shops and community centres is of major importance. It is likely that Planning Obligations will be sought to include new leisure, community and cultural facilities on major sites and/or to improve existing facilities in order to satisfy the needs of additional residents. The provision of open areas for social activity is also important, and the provision of ‘village greens’ and parkland should be considered.

8.14 The need for new provision to help increase participation in community sport is highlighted in the Strategy for Sport and Active Leisure in South Somerset. The Core Strategy can aid this provision by securing contributions from housing developers to enhance and maintain sport, open space and recreation areas, and by encouraging and developing active travel opportunities as a means of travel to work and for leisure purposes.
Option HW2

Facilities for New Developments
Should an amount per dwelling be required (to provide new resources/facilities on-site or off-site, or improve existing facilities) by way of Planning Obligations for all new dwellings irrespective of site size?
Yes/No

Should there be any exceptions? (eg Affordable housing)
Yes/No (please supply details)

Should there be a time limit for the use of these contributions if off-site facilities are to be improved or provided by agencies other than the developer (ie the contributions to be returned to the developer if unused within a certain time)?
Yes/No

If yes, what should the time limit be?

Should the community facilities provided on-site for new developments depend on the size of the site/number of dwellings?
Yes/No

At what threshold should the following facilities be provided on-site? (Please tick all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>No of Dwellings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Play Areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Playing pitches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Other open space</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Multi-use Community Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Health Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Place of Worship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What other facilities could be provided?
8.15 ONS estimates for South Somerset predict that the population will increase by 25,300 between 2005 and 2028, and that 90% of this increase will be in the over 60 age group. This ageing population will lead to increased demand for health and care facilities, and affect the type of provision needed for housing, and leisure and cultural services.

8.16 An analysis of multiple deprivation has shown that some areas in Yeovil and Chard are amongst the 20% most deprived in England with life expectancy up to six years lower than the least deprived wards. It will therefore be necessary to focus especially on Chard and Yeovil to tackle major health inequalities in South Somerset. The rural nature of the District also causes some residents difficulties in accessing services. Those lacking independent means of transport can feel particularly isolated and improved public transport is key to improving access to health facilities in much of South Somerset.

8.17 The Core Strategy cannot supply new health facilities, but will ensure that relevant service providers are consulted when new development is proposed. There will be the opportunity to allocate new sites, if a need is identified, when the Allocations DPD is produced post 2010. The promotion of better public transport and the protection and promotion of safe cycling and walking routes is dealt with under the transport theme.

**Educational Facilities and Other Community Facilities**

8.18 Office of National Statistics (ONS) projections show that there will be a decrease in school-age residents in South Somerset. This is likely to have implications for the viability of rural schools as pupil numbers fall. However village schools are often a vital centre for their communities, and “extended schools” (Extended Schools: access to opportunities and services for all, Department for Education and Skills 2005) are an important government initiative seeking better use of schools’ resources and facilities, and possibly making the school a hub of multi-agency work. Additional uses of school facilities could include a range of recreational and cultural activities, access to ICT, lifelong learning, pre-school and nursery provision, and access to health and social care services. The importance of this potential contribution to the District’s community and recreation facilities should be recognised and encouraged particularly in view of the location of schools within the communities they serve.

8.19 Other traditional centres for rural communities have included churches, village shops and public houses. It is important to protect such local amenities where possible as they provide a valuable facility for less mobile members of the community, and also contribute to the rural economy. However it must be recognised that local shops and other services are not always economically viable and it is inevitable that some will be lost to other uses.

8.20 The Core Strategy cannot supply new community facilities, but will ensure that when relevant service providers identify a need they are supported in finding an appropriate site. The promotion
of better public transport and the protection and promotion of safe cycling and walking routes is dealt with under the transport theme.

8.21 The protection of existing community facilities is dealt with in the Development Management Policies document under Option DMTA4.

**Transport/Access**

8.22 Access to facilities is a particular issue due to the rural nature of South Somerset. Public transport is inadequate and it is unlikely that services will improve due to the lack of financial viability. Community transport has an important and increasing role in serving many rural areas of South Somerset and should be supported. However, the encouragement and development of active travel opportunities as a means of travel to work and for leisure purposes is an important aid to health and well-being. The promotion of better public transport and the protection and promotion of safe cycling and walking routes is dealt with under the transport theme.

**Crime and Safety**

8.23 Crime can have a significant effect on the health and well-being of a community. Whilst the Core Strategy is unable to directly tackle crime it can require developers of sites to have regard to guidelines such as Secured by Design (SBD). This police initiative aims to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures in development design to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime, creating a safer and more secure environment. Supported and managed by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and with the backing of the Home Office, it is intended to achieve a better quality of life by addressing crime prevention at the earliest opportunity in the design, layout and construction of homes and commercial premises. In doing so Secured by Design supports one of the Government’s key planning objectives - the creation of secure, quality places where people wish to live and work. In addition a good practice guide, Safer Places – the Planning System and Crime Prevention encourages greater attention to crime prevention principles and the attributes of safer places, but also recognises that each location is unique so the characteristics of the local area need to be taken into account.

8.24 This general design issue is dealt with in the Environmental quality chapter of the Development Management Policies document under Option DMEQ3.
Evidence used to inform this theme

APHO and Department of Health, 2007. South Somerset Health Profile 2007
CLG, 2005. Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
Department for Education and Skills (now Department for Children, Schools and Family) 2005. Extended Schools: access to opportunities and services for all
Somerset County Council. The Somerset Children and Young People’s Plan 2006-2009
South West Regional Assembly, June 2006. The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026
South Somerset District Council. Strategy for Private Sector Housing 2007-2012
South Somerset District Council. Strategy for Sport and Active Leisure in South Somerset 2006-12
South Somerset Together (LSP), 2007. Shaping South Somerset, Working Together for a better Future - Consultation Document for a Sustainable Community Strategy
Sport England, 2006. The Active People Survey
9 Environmental Quality

Context

9.1 The quality of South Somerset's environment is of great importance. The landscape is varied and of a high quality, with parts of three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty within the District. There is a wealth of wildlife habitats and sites, including the internationally protected Somerset Levels and Moors and 39 Sites of Special Scientific Interest. South Somerset is also rich in terms of its historic environment, being present to more than 80 conservation areas and, as a district, contains the second highest number of listed buildings in the country. In the face of increasing pressure from development, it is imperative that the environmental quality of South Somerset is maintained and enhanced for future generations to enjoy.

9.2 The issue of climate change has gained a huge amount of interest in recent times. The impacts of climate change will be felt on a global scale - we in South Somerset must take responsibility to ‘do our bit’ in tackling climate change at a local level.

9.3 The Core Strategy includes both ‘Core Policies’ that provide a framework for protecting and enhancing environmental quality in South Somerset, and ‘Development Management Policies’ that consider more detailed environmental issues relating to development quality (e.g. minimising the impact of development proposals, design matters).

Issues

9.4 South Somerset's emerging Sustainable Community Strategy has identified the following spatial planning issues in relation to environmental quality in South Somerset.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• South Somerset has the highest levels of carbon dioxide emissions in Somerset.</td>
<td>Carbon emissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• South Somerset is over-reliant on non-renewable energy sources - need to increase use of sustainable energy sources.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Rising demand for energy resulting in increased levels of CO2 and other greenhouse gases.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• New build design to feature increased insulation/solar panels to combat climate change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High and rising costs of transporting goods, heating homes and buildings, especially where they are poorly insulated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• South Somerset has an unsustainable ecological footprint.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Quality</td>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to protect wildlife and habitats both for conservation reasons and tourism reasons - Somerset has the lowest proportion of Sites of Special Scientific Interest in favourable condition in the South West Region at only 66%.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erosion of character and distinctiveness of local landscape.</td>
<td>Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is poor air quality in some of the towns, especially in parts of Yeovil.</td>
<td>Air quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing traffic levels consuming fuel and causing air pollution.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Climate change will lead to greater risk of flooding, and hotter, drier summers.</td>
<td>Flood risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern over poor quality design for all development. Need to improve design (increasing issue - high density development).</td>
<td>Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of built environment.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing focus on crime prevention (designing out crime).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher housing and build densities could cause problems of conflicting lifestyles and problems with noise etc.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Flats need to have storage areas for wheelie bins designed in.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited recycling opportunities in South Somerset.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A need to improve the appearance of market towns to increase tourism, local pride and inward investment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Somerset is rich in terms of its historic environment - it is important that these features are protected, enhanced and/or preserved for future generations.</td>
<td>Historic environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After reading this chapter, we would like you to tell us:

- if any issues for South Somerset have been missed;
- which option(s) you favour and why; and
- any other option(s) you can think of for dealing with the issues.

Please provide evidence to support your view.
Carbon Emissions

9.5 There is now strong evidence that climate change is happening, and man-made emissions of greenhouse gases are its main cause - the main greenhouse gas in the UK is carbon dioxide. South Somerset currently has an unsustainable ecological footprint, with the highest level of carbon dioxide emissions in Somerset, and an over-reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

9.6 By 2026, draft Regional policy states that greenhouse gas emissions within the South West region should be reduced by at least 30% (compared to 1990 levels). In order to reduce the contribution that South Somerset makes to climate change through carbon emissions, it will be necessary to take some tough measures.

9.7 The Code for Sustainable Homes is a Government document promoting sustainable home building practice based on a sustainability rating system, judging performance across nine categories:

- Energy demand
- Water demand
- Materials
- Surface water run-off
- Waste and recycling
- Pollution
- Health and well-being
- Management
- Ecology.

9.8 There is some debate as to whether implementing the Code for Sustainable Homes is a matter for planning policy, or should be the role of Building Regulations. For the time being, the option for it to be incorporated within the Core Strategy is set out below. The Government has stated that all new homes should meet code level 3 by 2010, code level 4 by 2013, and code level 6 (carbon neutral) should be achieved by 2016.

9.9 For non-residential developments, the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) is a variety of assessment methods aimed at reducing the environmental impacts of development through assessing buildings against a set criteria, resulting in either a ‘pass; good; very good; or excellent.’ These methods can apply at different stages of the construction process, from the manufacture of building materials, through the design stage, during construction, and post construction. Draft Regional policy outlines that all new and refurbished buildings should achieve a BREEAM 'very good' standard.
Option EQ1

**Code for Sustainable Homes**

a) Which of the following Code for Sustainable Homes standards should new development be required to meet:

A. Level 1 (10% more energy efficient than 2006 Building Regulations standard).
B. Level 3 (25% more energy efficient than 2006 Building Regulations standard).
C. Level 6 (carbon neutral)
D. Another level.

b) The Code for Sustainable Homes should be mandatory in proposals for:

A. A single dwelling upwards
B. 5 - 14 dwellings
C. 15 dwellings or more
D. Another option.

**Question EQ1:** Is the implementation of the Code for Sustainable Homes a matter for planning policy, or Building Regulations?

Option EQ2

**Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM)**

All new and refurbished buildings should meet which of the following BREEAM standards:

A. Pass
B. Good
C. Very good
D. Excellent

**Renewable Energy**

9.10 Renewable energy describes those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment: the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, the sun, and biomass (PPS22). Draft Regional policy states that 10% of the energy needs of larger scale development should come from on-site renewable sources. More recent Government policy (Proposed PPS: Planning and Climate Change) encourages a slightly more flexible approach, outlining that a significant proportion of the energy supply of substantial new development should be gained.

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7. [‘Larger scale development’ is the development of 10 or more dwellings or sites of more than 0.5 ha if the number is not given; for all other uses, where the floor space will be 1,000 sq m or more or the site is 1 ha or more (Draft RSS for the SW).]
on-site and renewably and/or from a decentralised, renewable or low-carbon, energy supply. However, the Government’s current definition of carbon neutral homes excludes the use of off-site renewable energy - national research is currently being carried out to see if this can be rectified. The location of renewable Combined Heat and Power (CHP) generators, primarily within major new developments, is another way of being more energy efficient.

9.11 The Government makes clear (PPS22) that stringent policies for minimising impact on landscape and townscape should be avoided if they do not allow renewable energy schemes to go ahead, apart from in exceptional circumstances (such as international/national designations). The Core Strategy could, if there is robust evidence, set out areas within South Somerset that may be appropriate for large-scale renewable energy schemes such as wind farms. Alternatively, a criteria based Development Management Policy could be included outlining how proposals will be considered e.g. impact upon landscape, biodiversity, residential amenity etc.

Option EQ3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion of renewable energy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Which of the following percentages of energy consumption should new developments generate from on-site renewable sources and/or from a decentralised, renewable or low-carbon, energy supply:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| B. At least 10%.
| C. At least 20%.
| D. At least 50%.
| E. A different proportion. (please state) |

b) This renewable energy proportion should be required:

| A. For all development |
| B. Only in ‘larger scale development’ |
| C. A lower threshold than ‘larger scale development’ (please state suggested threshold) |
Option EQ4

Renewable energy
What approach should the Core Strategy take to a policy on proposals for large scale renewable energy schemes:

A. Set out broad locations that would be appropriate for large scale renewable energy uses
B. Include a criteria-based policy for considering proposals for renewable energy generation within the Development Management policies
C. Both A and B
D. An alternative option. (please give details)

Biodiversity

9.12 Biodiversity describes the variety of life on earth, or in a specified region or area. Conserving biodiversity has numerous wider benefits, with a key role to play in meeting quality of life, well-being and sustainability objectives in issues such as housing, health, education, tourism and economic development.

9.13 Government policy (PPS9) outlines that an indication should be given to the location of designated sites of importance for biodiversity and geodiversity, with policies making clear distinctions between the hierarchy of such sites; and any areas or sites for the restoration or creation of new priority habitats should be identified and supported through appropriate policies. Measures should be taken to protect the habitats of 'species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England' from further decline through policies. It is envisaged that this will be covered in the Development Management Policies.

9.14 South Somerset is highly valued for its biodiversity, with the presence of the internationally protected Somerset Levels and Moors, and 39 Sites of Special Scientific Interest. However, the condition of SSSIs in Somerset is the worst in the region, and biodiversity in general faces increasing pressure from development. It also should be recognised that the distribution of habitats and species will be affected by climate change.

9.15 The South West Nature Map identifies the best areas in the region to conserve, create and connect wildlife habitats at a landscape scale, and can be used to map opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. The South Somerset Biodiversity Action Plan (draft February 2007)

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8.[The principle reason for Somerset having the lowest proportion in the South West to date lies in the particular difficulties of securing appropriate water levels across the SSSIs on the Levels and Moors. It is important to qualify this statement, as it is to refer to the particular difficulties faced in securing viable and sustainable farming practices to deliver favourable condition of designated sites on the floodplain.]
contains targets to ensure biodiversity is maintained and enhanced, identifying five habitats\(^9\) and one species\(^{10}\) as priorities for conservation action in South Somerset over the next five years.

9.16 One way of conserving and enhancing biodiversity is through the promotion of Green Infrastructure (also see ‘Health and Well Being’ chapter), which is a strategic network of ‘accessible, multifunctional sites' such as parks, woodland, informal open space, nature reserves and historic sites, as well as ‘linkages,’ for example river corridors and floodplains, wildlife corridors and greenways. Green Infrastructure networks should include both existing and new features, linking smaller, more local sites with larger, more strategic ones. These networks can provide links between the town and country, different parts of an urban area, and existing and new development. Green spaces, through enabling water evaporation, which acts to cool the air, can also help to tackle global warming.

**Option EQ5**

**Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.**
How should the Core Strategy seek to enhance biodiversity within the District (tick any that apply):

- A. Require new development to contribute to South Somerset Biodiversity Action Plan targets, where appropriate;
- B. Require new development to seek biodiversity enhancement in line with the South West Nature Map, where appropriate;
- C. Set out the broad locations of existing and proposed Green Infrastructure;
- D. An alternative option. (please give details)

**Question EQ3: Do you have any suggestions for the future location of Green Infrastructure?**

**Landscape**

9.17 The landscape provides the natural context for settlement, and contributes to local distinctiveness and a sense of place. The rural nature of South Somerset means that the landscape is a prime element of the District's character. Parts of the landscape have been designated for its national importance, with three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty extending into South Somerset: Blackdown Hills, Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs, and Dorset.

9.18 The erosion of landscape character in South Somerset has been linked to agricultural practices and development pressure. Whilst agricultural practices are largely outside the scope of spatial planning, accommodating development very much is. South Somerset, and Yeovil in particular,
have been earmarked for significant amounts of growth up to 2026. It is essential that this growth is properly accommodated in a landscape-sympathetic manner, in order to provide a pleasant and vibrant environment for South Somerset’s existing and future communities.

9.19 A study of the potential for the landscape around the main settlements in South Somerset to accommodate additional development is currently being undertaken, in order to ensure that future development is located and designed to protect the character and distinctiveness of the landscape. This will be completed in time to inform the Core Strategy ‘Preferred Options.’

**Question EQ3: What is it about South Somerset's landscape that you value?**

**Air Quality**

9.20 Although air quality in South Somerset is relatively good compared to the rest of England, some of the towns do suffer from poor air quality, largely caused by traffic. Yeovil in particular has been identified as suffering from poor air quality, due to pollution caused by transport. Consequently, the whole of Yeovil has been identified as an Air Quality Management Area, where it must be ensured that new development should not worsen air quality problems. The Somerset Air Quality Strategy sets out the Councils' approach to considering air quality issues.

9.21 Policies elsewhere within the Core Strategy that reduce the need to travel and encourage the use of modes other than the car should help to reduce air pollution, as well as cut carbon dioxide emissions.

**Question EQ4: Should the effect upon air quality be a priority in considering the location of new development within South Somerset?**

**Flood Risk**

9.22 One of the impacts of climate change in the UK is likely to be more extreme weather events, including a greater risk of flooding. The Government outlines that flood risk should be taken into account at all stages in the planning process, inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided, and development should be directed away from areas at a high risk of flooding.

The level of flood risk is broadly based upon Flood Zones produced by the Environment Agency setting out the chance of flooding in any year11:

- Flood zone 1 = low risk (less than 0.1%)
- Flood zone 2 = medium risk (0.1% - 1%)
- Flood zone 3a = high risk (greater than 1%)
- Flood zone 3b = the functional floodplain (5% or greater).

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11.[Ignoring the presence of flood defences.]:
9.23 A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for South Somerset is currently being carried out, and will be finished in time to inform the Core Strategy ‘Preferred Options.’ This assessment will inform the future policy direction within the Core Strategy, and provide detail on flood risk within the District to ensure future development is located in acceptably safe areas and takes measures to reduce the risk of flooding.

**Design**

9.24 Poor quality design for all types of development has been identified as an issue in South Somerset, including concerns that recent high density development could cause problems of conflicting lifestyles, noise etc; and a lack of focus on using design to help prevent crime.

9.25 The Government (PPS1) states that planning policies should promote high quality inclusive design that contribute positively to making places better for people through improving the character and quality of an area, based upon the promotion of local distinctiveness. Good design can have numerous and wide ranging benefits, such as help to improve people’s well being and quality of life, benefit public health, increase property values and cut crime.

9.26 Public art is an important aspect of a well designed area through, for example, enhancing the quality of the built environment, giving an individual and distinct character to development, and creating a sense of place, local identity and community pride. One possibility is to adopt a ‘percentage for art’ policy - an extra charge on development proposals with the specific objective of providing public art.

9.27 Government policy refers to several guidance documents that should be used to deliver high quality development. A recent design publication is ‘Building for Life,’ (2005, 2007) which is supported by the Government as the standard for design quality of new homes, and sets out 20 questions upon which new housing schemes can be judged, within the four categories of:

- Character; e.g. does the scheme feel like a place with distinctive character?
- Roads, parking and pedestrianisation; e.g. does the building layout take priority over the roads and car parking, so that the highways do not dominate?
- Design and construction; e.g. is the design specific to the scheme?
- Environment and community; e.g. does the development have easy access to public transport?

9.28 Schemes that meet 14 of the 20 questions are eligible to apply for ‘silver’ standard, whilst if a scheme meets 16 or more it will be considered for ‘gold’ standard. Great Bow Yard, Langport was one of only three developments nationwide to win the ‘Building for Life’ gold standard in 2007, and shows that it is possible to meet high standards of design in South Somerset.

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12 [For example, By Design - Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice; Better Places to Live By Design: A Companion Guide to PPG3; Secured by Design.]
9.29 ‘Secured by Design’ is the UK Police flagship initiative of ‘designing out crime’ through the use of effective crime prevention and security standards. A series of design guides have been published for different types of development; and development must be tested and certified in order to achieve the ‘Secured by Design’ standard.

9.30 Home Zones are residential streets designed as places for people, not just vehicles, and are encouraged by the Government as a way of improving the quality of life in residential areas by using a range of environmental and traffic calming measures to reduce the impact of motor traffic, and allow greater use of the streets by residents, other than for simply travelling through. Restoring the balance between traffic and communities can help make streets safer, more sociable, and better places to live in, leading to stronger, more vibrant and diverse communities.

9.31 Another design issue that has been identified is the need for flats to have storage areas for wheelie bins/recycling bins designed in. Good design principles should incorporate measures such as this within new residential development, whilst also helping to tackle the issue of limited recycling opportunities.

9.32 The appearance of market towns can be improved through regeneration initiatives, and the re-use of brownfield land and derelict buildings.

Option EQ6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) In order to promote high standards of design, should new residential development accord with ‘Building for Life’ standards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Yes - gold standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Yes - silver standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Yes - a standard lower than gold or silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) What other ways of improving design quality should be sought within the Core Strategy (tick any that apply):

| A. Adopt a ‘percentage for art’ policy |
| B. Encourage ‘Home Zones’ within new residential development |
| C. Require new development to accord with ‘Secured by Design’ principles |
| D. An alternative option (please give details) |
**Historic Environment**

9.33 The historic environment incorporates buildings (including those listed), conservation areas, archaeological remains, parks and gardens, battlefields and the wider historic landscape. South Somerset benefits from having a rich historic environment, with more conservation areas than any other district in the country, and the second highest number of listed buildings. In accordance with Government policy (PPG15), the Council has a responsibility to ensure that the character or appearance of South Somerset's historic environment is preserved or enhanced.

**Question EQ5:** How can the Local Development Framework best preserve and enhance existing Conservation Areas within South Somerset? Do you have any suggestions for new areas to be classed as Conservation Areas within the District?

**Evidence used to inform this theme**

- CLG, 2006. *Code for Sustainable Homes*
- CLG, 2006. *Consultation on Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change*
- CLG, 2004. *Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control*
- South Somerset District Council, 2007. *Draft South Somerset Biodiversity Action Plan*
- South Somerset Together (LSP), 2007. *Shaping South Somerset, Working Together for a better Future - Consultation Document for a Sustainable Community Strategy*
10 Development Management Policies

10.1 Planning Policy Statement 12 (Local Development Frameworks) recommends that the Development Management DPD (Development Management Document) should contain a "limited suite of policies which set out the criteria against which planning applications for the development and use of land and buildings will be considered". Local Planning Authorities are urged to avoid producing a large number of use-related development control policies that can be repetitive and become quickly out-of-date. Instead, the focus should be on more general policies which apply specifically to the local area and avoid repetition of national and regional policy guidance.

What are Development Management Policies?

10.2 Development Management policies are general, rather than site specific policies that set out criteria against which planning applications for development will be considered. These policies will complement the vision, objectives and policies set out in the Core Strategy, the emphasis being on creating locally-based policies which focus on achieving the outcomes of the spatial vision. In line with Government thinking, there should only be a few policies, as the majority of guidance will stem from national and regional policy.

The use of Development Management Policies

10.3 The Development Management policies will be used, along with other parts of the Local Development Framework (LDF), Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and Government policy to determine whether planning permission should be granted when development is proposed, and to justify refusal if this is the Council's decision.

10.4 Setting out the policies in the plan provides a guide to potential applicants considering whether their proposal is acceptable. For all but the smallest and simplest proposals, this usually involves discussion between prospective applicants and the Council's planning officers. The policies, complemented by national and regional planning policy, will assist in these discussions by providing a framework of what the Council seeks from development locally.

10.5 It is not envisaged that there will be separate policies on every type of development, rather, the intention is to set out what types of impacts development might have or the contributions to a place that new development might make, so that these can be considered regardless of the activity. For instance, the effect on road safety from the traffic generated by new development could be an issue whether the proposal was for a garden centre or a housing estate. It is this impact (amongst other issues) that needs to be looked at in deciding whether a proposal is acceptable.

10.6 The Development Management Issues and Options have been grouped under the five themes that appear in the Core Strategy, this will ensure that they complement the vision, objectives and policies set out in the Core Strategy. They address locally significant matters which are not covered adequately by national or regional policy.

10.7 Under each theme, issues have been identified and these have been grouped into topics for the purpose of this issues and options report and any future policies that may be subsequently produced.
Transport and Accessibility

10.8 This theme covers transport and accessibility in its broadest sense, seeking to maximise access to a wide range of community facilities and services and accessibility in terms of the detailed design and layout of the highway network.

Context

10.9 New development should be well related to public transport and services and facilities as part of creating sustainable communities and patterns of sustainable development.

10.10 Land use planning has a key role in delivering the Government’s integrated transport strategy. By shaping the pattern of development and influencing the location, scale, density, design and mix of land uses, planning can help to reduce the need to travel, reduce the length of journeys and make it safer and easier for people to access jobs, facilities and services by public transport, walking, and cycling.

10.11 The Local Transport Plan (LTP) explains broadly how the needs of the community will be met in terms of better transport. This goes beyond simply increasing the capacity of the road network, but shows how jobs, education, health and other services will be made accessible by a range of means of transport, and how it will be ensured that people can move safely around the County. The LTP sets out a transport strategy that takes these complex issues into account, and contains a set of targets that enable the County Council to measure whether the aims of the strategy are being achieved as the plan is implemented.

Highways

10.12 The physical form and qualities of a place shape, and are shaped by the way it is used and the way people and vehicles move through it. New development should help to create places that connect with each other sustainably, providing the right conditions to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport. As noted in PPG13, people should come before traffic.

10.13 Manual for Streets (MfS) assists in the design, construction, adoption and maintenance of new residential streets. It is also applicable to existing residential streets subject to re-design. MfS does not apply to the trunk road network. The design requirements for trunk roads are set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB).

Access to services and facilities

10.14 In order to promote sustainable communities and reduce the need to travel, access to a wide range of uses, including community facilities and services should be maximised as set out in the Core Strategy. The LDF alone cannot secure these uses and facilities, however, working in partnership with the Sustainable Community Strategy and service providers, the LDF can help identify a surplus or deficit in provision. Where appropriate, it can allocate appropriate locations for services, including for mixed use, so that services can be delivered together.

10.15 Planning policy should promote accessibility for all sections of the community in the way that proposals are considered. It will require proposals to make appropriate provision for movement.
and bring about the maintenance of, or an increase in, the mix of activities, through the retention of existing uses, through regard for the context when developing a site, and in the mix of activities included within a site.

Development Management Issues

10.16 The following issues were identified by members of workshop held by Baker Associates for all the planning authorities in Somerset:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highway access and design is not always considered appropriately</td>
<td>Highway Design and Layout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past developments have not always considered accessibility to and safety of movement within a development and beyond for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and public transport users</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently safe design equates to a poor quality environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The traffic produced from new proposals can have a negative effect on a surrounding area</td>
<td>Traffic Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are problems for some people in accessing a particular facility or service</td>
<td>Access to Services and Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to play areas - developer contributions, outline what developer contributions will be expected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking standards for new residential development requires clarification.</td>
<td>Parking Standards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After reading this chapter, we would like you to tell us:
• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed;
• which option you favour and why; and
• any other options you can think of for dealing with the issues.
Where possible, we would like you to provide evidence to support your view.

Highway Design and Layout

10.17 Reducing the need to travel and achieving modal shift are themes running through both PPG13 and the draft RSS. To help achieve a step change, all new development needs to be designed using best practice methods to optimise accessibility both within, and to/from developments for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport providers.
Option DMTA1

A policy that requires all new development to be designed in a way that gives priority to people over ease of traffic movement and provides more priority road space for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

10.18 Options TA1 Public Transport [See page 54], TA2 Walking/Cycling [See page 55] and TA3 Traffic Congestion [See page 56] in the Transport and Accessibility chapter of the Core Strategy look at highway design and layout, please cross reference and consider where such issues should be dealt with, in the Core Strategy or Development Management Policies section of the LDF.

Option DMTA2

Either retain a policy to cover the safe design of residential roads (previously Local Plan Policy TP4), or have one policy covering the safe design of roads? Or, safety could be included as a criterion in a general design of development policy, removing the need for a separate policy and facilitating a higher standard of design.

10.19 Option TA2 Walking/Cycling [See page 55] in the Transport and Accessibility chapter of the Core Strategy looks at walking and cycling, please cross reference and consider where such issues should be dealt with, in the Core Strategy or Development Management Policies section of the LDF.

Traffic Management

10.20 The active management of growth is a strategic issue, ensuring that major generators of travel are located in the most sustainable settlements and that day-to-day facilities are located within easy distance to their clients.

Question DMQTA1: The negative effects of traffic produced from new proposals has been identified as an issue. In Development Areas, where the principle of development has been established, how would nuisance/negative impact (re. harm to residential amenity) be measured?

Question DMQTA2: What other negative effects on the surrounding area could be produced by traffic from new development and how could these be dealt with?

Access to Services and Facilities

10.21 It is the role of the LDF to ensure that new development is served with community facilities to meet the requirements of the growing population. It is essential that new services and facilities are directed to locations that will provide the greatest benefit and accessibility to the existing population. Inevitably, contributions from the planning system towards new facilities will be for those locations where new development takes place. If the majority of new development is directed to the main settlements, this channels investment in new and improved community facilities and services into those communities.
10.22 The LDF will also need to work alongside other service providers’ plans, such as the Local Transport Plan, to improve accessibility of services for everyone.

**Question DMQTA3:** Should new services and facilities be provided within easy walking distance to residential developments, if so, what services and facilities should be provided and what should be considered ‘easy’ walking distance?

10.23 In smaller settlements, the availability of community facilities and services is more limited. These facilities and services are important and valuable, especially for the least mobile members of society and those in more rural areas. Many services and facilities are under threat such as the local shop, post office, public house and place of worship. The role of the LDF will be to protect existing levels of services and facilities in these settlements.

**Option DMTA3**

| Retain Local Plan Policy MS1, but clarify how an applicant can demonstrate that ‘every reasonable attempt to secure suitable business or local community re-use’. What should constitute ‘every reasonable attempt’? |

**Question DMQTA4:** The Economic Prosperity chapter of the Core Strategy looks at the retention of employment land in detail, however, does the loss of employment land and premises need to be addressed as a separate issue, or could one policy cover the loss of all services and facilities including, the loss of employment land and premises.

**Parking Standards**

10.24 PPG13 - Transport, states that parking policies should be used to promote sustainable transport choices and reduce the reliance on the car. Whilst the PPG defines maximum parking standards, the draft RSS explains that an authority can apply reduced parking standards if there is clear evidence and an explanation in the relevant LDD to justify this.

10.25 In South Somerset there have been concerns that the current implementation of Policy TP7 (Parking Provision in Residential Areas, which seeks a maximum of 1 parking space per dwelling in Town Centres) and the resulting off-street residential parking provision could be influencing the use of nearby car parks to the detriment of their main purpose of providing parking to support the commercial and service provision functions of the town centres. The Local Plan recognises that in rural areas many people are dependant on the private car for transport and the survey work (in relation to implementation of Policy TP7) demonstrates this by indicating that even in developments with zero or low level parking, the majority of residents still own a private car. Therefore the presumption that market town centres are sustainable locations for new housing and encouraging people to live on a development without the use of a private car is clearly challenged by these figures.
Option DMTA4

Revise the parking standards to reflect the rural nature of the District, as is being done by officers following research regarding Policy TP7.

Question DMQTA5: Should each town, rural centre and village be assessed on its own merits in relation to the amount of parking that should be provided or should a standard be provided for the District as a whole?

10.26 Option TA5 Parking [See page 58] in the Transport and Accessibility chapter of the Core Strategy looks at parking standards in light of the County-wide Parking Strategy, please cross reference and consider the issues. Also, please decide where the issue should be dealt with, in the Core Strategy or Development Management Policies section of the LDF.

Planning Obligations

10.27 New development often creates a need for additional or improved infrastructure, community services and facilities, without which the development could have an adverse effect upon amenity, safety, or the environment and ought not to be accepted. Planning obligations are legally binding agreements between a local authority and a developer/landowner, and are the means through which these deficiencies are mitigated and the contribution a development makes to what is sought for the area increased. Planning obligations can ensure that something, which is part of the proposal, is part of the development when it is implemented, or can be used to ensure that the development is operated in certain way. They can also be used to secure financial contributions from developers to be spent on things that are related to the development itself.

10.28 Recent government guidance and best practice has sought to improve the way that planning obligations are determined and secured. It is the intention of the LDF policy on obligations to make the process clearer and faster, by providing greater detail on the types of development where contributions will be sought and the range of potential obligations more explicit.

Question DMQTA6: Should contribution towards infrastructure facilities and services vary according to the size of development? Or should a tariff be fixed per dwelling/hectare of land? What should this figure be?

Question DMQTA7: Should there be developments that are exempt from all or certain planning obligations, if so, what should they be?

Question DMQTA8: What range of infrastructure facilities and services should contributions be sought for? For example should we include facilities and services such as community waste and energy projects or local labour and training initiatives?

Question DMQTA9: Under what circumstances should off site provision of facilities and services (commuted sum) be allowed? Should there be a time-limit on the spending of that commuted sum?
Economic Prosperity

Context

10.29 The Government is committed to promoting a strong, stable and productive economy. Planning authorities should actively promote and facilitate good quality development, which is sustainable and delivers environmental and social benefits as well as economic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There is often pressure on employment land, facilities or community services. These may be underused, or under threat of closure and may need to be retained. Retaining these uses would help to secure a mix of uses in an area.</td>
<td>Retention of Employment Land and Premises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Locally, considerable interest in gyms and crèches moving to premises on industrial estates rather than town centre premises.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are issues surrounding large scale uses in the countryside, especially equestrian uses in the District.</td>
<td>The Rural Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Live/work units can be problematic and require further guidance.</td>
<td>Live/Work Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tourism issues - support for existing uses and their expansion (chalet development etc).</td>
<td>Expansion of Existing Tourist Facility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After reading this chapter, we would like you to tell us:
• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed;
• which option you favour and why; and
• any other options you can think of for dealing with the issues.
Where possible, we would like you to provide evidence to support your view.

Retention of Employment Land and Premises

10.30 There has been growing pressure over recent years to allow employment land and premises to be developed/redeveloped for other uses (predominantly residential) which offer a greater level of return for investors. If this is allowed to continue, the result could be significant losses to the District's stock of employment land and premises.

10.31 Where employment land/premises are being redeveloped for housing to reflect the changing requirements of the economy, retention of employment opportunities could be the key to maintaining a sustainable jobs-home balance and reduce commuting. A mixed-use proposal could provide additional housing whilst retaining a similar number of jobs.
10.32 The draft RSS states that sites that are poorly located for economic development or no longer meet the needs of business should be considered for redevelopment. Alternative uses should be considered in the following sequence: for non-B use class employment generating uses; for mixed-use development including residential use; for residential use only.

Option DMEP1

Include a criteria based policy in the LDF identifying how, and what employment land and premises will be protected from unsuitable development.

Question DMQEP1: Should we protect all existing employment land and premises or can some be used for other uses?

10.33 Given the pressure to redevelop employment land and premises for residential purposes, if we can demonstrate through the Employment Land Review and Workspace Demand Study that there is pressure on either all or some types of employment land, and that there is a lack of that type of land/premises in the District, should we include a strict protection policy:

Option DMEP2

Include a strict policy ensuring that employment sites/premises are not lost to housing unless there is an absolute need for that housing. How would the need be demonstrated?

Question DMQEP2: If we allowed the loss or some employment land and premises, how would decide what land and premises could be lost? For example would a judgement be made based on a percentage above which further losses would not be allowed? Would this be a District-wide percentage, or different for each settlement?

Question DMQEP3: Should employment land and premises in Villages and Rural Centres be given greater protection than at present, as this encourages self-containment in those settlements?

Question DMQEP4: Given the guidance in the draft RSS, what criteria should be used to determine that a site is poorly located for economic development or is no longer needed?

Question DMQEP5: This section is duplicated in the Economic Prosperity [See page 37] section of the Core Strategy, where should the issue of retention of employment land and premises be considered? Is it a core strategy, principle of development issue?
The Rural Economy

10.34 According to the draft RSS, businesses in rural areas now and in the foreseeable future are likely to have little connection with the land-based industries but should be supported where they secure jobs for local people and improve the viability of rural communities. With reforms to the funding regimes, farmers are likely to want to diversify their capital assets into workspace for example, diversifying away from agriculture.

Option DMEP3

> Include a criteria based policy in the LDF identifying the type of farm diversification schemes we would view as acceptable.

**Question DMQEP6:** Given the huge development potential, what type of criteria do you think we should used to assess farm diversification schemes? What forms of development is viewed as acceptable?

**Question DMQEP7:** The issue of impact of large-scale uses in the countryside was discussed at the inception meeting, equine-related activities, popular forms of recreation in the countryside, can fit in well with farms seeking to diversify, and so have become popular.

**Question DMQEP8:** There are issues surrounding large scale uses in the countryside, especially equestrian uses in the District - what do you think these issues are and how could they be dealt with? Do we need a separate policy for equestrian activity or could large-scale uses all be dealt with under one policy?

Live/Work Units

10.35 PPG4 is supportive of home-working, where the commercial activity is ancillary to the residential use of the property. Workplace homes (live/work units) are different to home-working, which only requires planning permission when the commercial use is no longer ancillary or has intensified to a level which may compromise surrounding residential amenity, they comprise a dwelling and light industrial workplace so the business can be operated from the site on which the owner of the business lives. The Local Plan supports the concept, but acknowledges that whilst attractive in theory, there are difficulties in bringing schemes into fruition and ensuring they function properly in the future.

**Question DMQEP9:** Should we continue to support workplace homes? If so, how can we ensure that the unit functions as approved through the granting of planning permission? Can we ever ensure this?

**Question DMQEP10:** Should we use a criteria based policy such as we do for agricultural and forestry workers dwellings, to assess whether the workplace home application is genuine? If so, what criteria should we use?
Expansion of Existing Tourist Facilities

10.36 Tourism is a major employer in South Somerset and supporting tourism is a key objective of the District Council. Existing Local Plan Policy ME4 deals with proposals for the small scale expansion of existing businesses (classes B1, B2 and B8) outside Development Areas.

Question DMQEP11: Should tourism be dealt with as a separate issue, or should it be considered as other forms of economic development? Should Policy ME4 be retained and expanded to relate to tourism facilities also?

Environmental Quality

Context

10.37 Securing new development that is sustainable, well designed and reflects the local character, scale and distinctiveness of a place is a key aim of current regional and national planning policy.

10.38 High quality, sustainable development means finding design solutions to create a real sense of place which reinforces the local character and function of that place. Development should also protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment and archaeology. Design will be a key consideration in development decisions and the draft RSS requires local authorities to ensure that all new development delivers the highest possible standards of design.

The Natural, Historic and Built Environment

10.39 South Somerset is a large rural District, the countryside with its rich and varied landscape and wildlife habitat dominates. Protecting and enhancing the natural environment contributes not only to the retention of valuable resources, but also recognises its important role in the economic and social well-being of people living, working and visiting South Somerset.

10.40 The scope of the environment is broad, therefore, all development proposals must be carefully thought out and environmental issues fully considered in the planning application process.

10.41 The historic environment is composed of individual buildings, groups of buildings and spaces, archaeological remains and other features important to the overall character of a settlement. Many settlements in South Somerset are rich in architecture and archaeology and it is important that these features are conserved and enhanced.

Climate Change

10.42 Climate change is a key global issue. Tackling climate change is at the heart of the planning system and the way we build new homes. All development needs to consider ways to reduce energy demand through design of more efficient buildings and the creation of a greater amount of energy from non-carbon dioxide emitting sources. In addition to mitigating against future impacts, it is also important that all development from now on is able to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
10.43 The draft Regional Spatial Strategy suggests the use of established targets and standards for all new buildings in the region to secure more sustainable construction. This includes the use of the BRE Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) for non-residential developments, and Code for Sustainable Homes for residential developments. The standards can be used to assess the environmental performance of both new and existing buildings and is a measure of best practice in environmental design and management. Issues relating to these standards include water use, on-site renewable energy production and energy efficiency measures. Current draft RSS policies also include targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, reducing carbon dioxide emissions and provision of on-site energy use of buildings.

**Sustainability Design Issues**

10.44 It will be important for developers to consider the source of building materials, and to make the best use of material from recycled and renewable sources. Projects will need to be suitably planned and managed to avoid the waste of construction materials, and to recycle materials arising from demolition.

10.45 New development, where applicable, will need to make provision for sufficient space for the storage and collection of recyclable wastes, as well as considering the efficient use of water.

**Development Management issues**

10.46 The following issues were identified through the consultation process on the Local Development Framework:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Past residential developments have not always been in keeping with the existing local character of an area</td>
<td>Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A holistic approach to design and social inclusion has not always been delivered through new development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a real and perceived risk of crime which can be influenced by how a place is designed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Past developments have not always considered accessibility to and safety of movement within a development and beyond for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and public transport users</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are a wide variety of historic environments and archaeology that need to be protected and enhanced</td>
<td>Environmental Protection and Enhancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The integrity of an existing building can be affected by new development, for example, appropriate shop frontages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development has an impact on a site, its surrounding environment and neighbouring uses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development can increase the risk of flooding and pollution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• South Somerset has a wide diversity of natural environments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A stepped increase in development has been identified and this will add pressure to natural environments

Increased tourism and recreation visits places an extra pressure on the environment

Natural resources are running out, not used efficiently, wasted in some instances and demand is rising

Rising amounts of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are being emitted into the atmosphere and causing our climate to change, with development being a key contributory factor

Climate change will affect everyone living, working and visiting Somerset

Climate change, and the increase in development, is placing an extra burden on water resources and increasing the potential for land liable to flood in low lying areas

Existing buildings are not designed to adapt to a warming climate

Many current building designs do not consider the need for waste capacity in relation to recycling

After reading this chapter, we would like you to tell us:

• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed;

• which option you favour and why; and

• any other options you can think of for dealing with the issues.

Where possible, we would like you to provide evidence to support your view.

Design

10.47 The adopted Local Plan contains a ‘Quality of Development' policy, Policy ST6. This identifies design criteria which needs to be met in order to secure planning permission for developments which are acceptable in principle.

10.48 Policy ST6 (Quality of Development) - Proposals for new development, otherwise acceptable in principle, will be permitted where the following design criteria are met:

1. The architectural and landscape design satisfactorily respects the form, character and setting of the settlement or local environment.

2. They preserve and complement the key characteristics of the location, to maintain its local distinctiveness.

3. They do not result in the unavoidable loss of open spaces (including gaps and frontages) with visual or environmental value.

4. They do not cause unavoidable harm to the natural and built environment of the locality and the broader landscape.

5. Their density, form, scale, mass, height and proportions respect and relate to the character of their surroundings.

6. They do not unacceptably harm the residential amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties by disturbing, interfering with or overlooking such properties.
necessary, the district council may impose conditions on any permission regarding hours of opening, operation and servicing.
7. They will not adversely affect, either directly or indirectly, land stability in or around the location.
8. They retain and integrate and/or enhance, where desirable, attractive site features and natural characteristics within the scheme.

10.49 Circular 01/2006 requires all new developments to demonstrate, within a Design and Access Statement, how the development will create high quality places, and how the development will interact with the existing highway network. There are a plethora of design guides to assist applicants with such statements, for example, individual authority's design guides and Conservation Area Appraisals, Village Design Statements and Parish Plans and national information produced by organisations such as Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE).

10.50 The Core Strategy will need to ensure that Design and Access Statements demonstrate how proposals deliver high quality places.

Option DMEQ1

Retain adopted Local Plan Policy ST6 and assess Design and Access Statements against this policy criteria to ensure all development deliver high quality places.

Option DMEQ2

Identify a new list of criteria to assess Design and Access Statements against. What should the criteria be?

Option DMEQ3

Require consultation from a Police Architectural Liaison Officer on schemes to ensure they are ‘Secure By Design’. This could be a criterion of an overall design policy.

Environmental Protection and Enhancement

10.51 Protection and enhancement of the environment are core themes running through Government policy. Much protection is afforded to the natural and built environment through legislation other than planning law.

Question EMQEQ1: Given the level of protection afforded to the natural and built environment through other forms of legislation such as landscape designations (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, AONB) or nature conservation designations (Site of Special Scientific Interest, SSSI), would a general policy seeking to protect and enhance the built and natural, including historic environment, be sufficient? What criteria would be required for such a policy?
Option DMEQ4

Development can increase the risk of flooding and pollution. Include a policy in the LDF addressing issues such as flood risk, impact on air quality, water quality, light pollution noise and other potentially polluting impacts of development.

Question DMQE2: What criteria could be used to assess Option EQ4?

10.52 In addition to the Local Plan strategy which seeks to achieve sustainable development, the adopted Local Plan addresses climate change through a number of Policies:

- ST8 ‘Sustainable Construction'
- EP4 ‘Building Waste'
- EU1 ‘Renewable Energy’
- EU2 ‘Wind Turbines'

10.53 The Core Strategy will need to provide positive policies to enable the achievement of the draft RSS targets for renewable energy (renewable heat and electricity generation), the district target will be informed by the draft RSS.

10.54 Climate change can be dealt with through the use of renewable energy as opposed to fossil fuels to provide heat and energy to a home and through the design of buildings ensuring they are more energy efficient.

10.55 PPS 22 states that local planning authorities (LPA) and developers should consider the opportunity for incorporating renewable energy projects in all new developments. Small-scale renewable energy schemes utilising technologies such as solar panels, biomass heating, small-scale wind turbines, photovoltaic cells and combined heat and power schemes can be incorporated into new developments and some existing buildings. Local planning authorities should specifically encourage such schemes through positively expressed policies in local development documents. The LPA may include policies in local development documents that require a percentage of the energy to be used in new residential, commercial or industrial developments to come from on-site renewable energy developments.

10.56 The draft RSS states in policy RE5 (Renewable Energy and New Development) that larger-scale developments (10 or more dwellings, sites of more than 0.5 ha or developments with 1,000 m2 or more) will be expected to provide, as a minimum, sufficient on-site renewable energy to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from energy use by users on site by 10%. The draft RSS Panel Report (January 2008) increased that target to 20%.
10.57 **Option DMEQ5**

**In light of the draft RSS include a policy which seeks:**

A. The renewable energy requirement set out in Policy RE5 of the draft RSS, or  
B. The renewable energy requirement set out in Policy RE5 of the Panel Report into  
the draft RSS,  
C. Go beyond the draft RSS target and develop an evidence based on-site renewable  
energy requirement policy, extending the draft RSS requirement to apply to all new  
buildings, or  
D. An alternative option.

**In all cases to assist developers in complying with policy, they will be required to submit:**

1. The target building carbon emissions TBE or the target site carbon emissions TSE  
assuming compliance of Part L 2006 of the Building Regulations and no use of on-site  
renewable energy expressed in CO2 tonnes/yr.  
2. An assessment of the renewable energy technologies chosen for the development  
and their expected contribution to the energy demand expressed as a percentage as  
measured in CO2 tonnes/yr.

10.58 Option EQ3 **Carbon Emissions [See page 74]** in the Environmental Quality chapter of the Core  
Strategy looks at renewable energy and climate change, please cross reference and consider the  
issues. Also, please decide where the issue should be dealt with, in the Core Strategy or  
Development Management Policies section of the LDF.

**Health and Well Being**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Need to ensure sufficient recreation space, such as new urban parks, allocations of space currently much too small.</td>
<td>Open Space Provision</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Need good quality housing e.g. amenity/layout.</td>
<td>Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Need quality open space as part of overall design of development.</td>
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</table>
After reading this chapter, we would like you to tell us:
• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed;
• which option you favour and why; and
• any other options you can think of for dealing with the issues.
Where possible, we would like you to provide evidence to support your view.

Open Space Provision

10.59 Open spaces and the ability to undertake recreation outside underpin people’s quality of life. Open space has an important role to play in promoting healthy living, not only do open spaces provide opportunities to be active, but networks of open/green spaces in urban areas are vital from a nature conservation/biodiversity perspective and can act as ‘green lungs’ improving air quality.

10.60 Local Plan Policy CR2 seeks the provision of outdoor playing space and amenity space in new development based on national standards. The policy works well, but the provision of new urban parks cannot be achieved.

Option DMHWB1

Retain and expand Local Plan Policy CR2 to cover the provision of urban parks, the provision of which would be sought from all development.

See planning obligations section in Environmental Quality [See page 72] chapter of this document for a discussion on the provision of planning obligations.

Design

10.61 PPS3 identifies design quality as a key priority for housing, it notes that where family housing is proposed, it will be important to ensure that the needs of children are taken into account and that there is a good provision of recreational areas, including private gardens, play areas and informal space. This issue, along with all other aspects of high quality design is addressed in the Environmental Quality [See page 92] section of the Development Management Policies.

Housing

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<td>• The demand for housing and other types of development is placing pressure on land availability and house prices.</td>
<td>Housing Density</td>
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<td>• In relation to annexes, particularly those in open countryside, there are a lot of properties where the annex is larger than the main house (2 bed and with separate entrances and totally self contained) the conversion of these to</td>
<td>Location of Development</td>
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residential use is an issue as it can be tantamount to new dwellings in the open countryside by default.

After reading this chapter, we would like you to tell us:
• if any issues for South Somerset have been missed;
• which option you favour and why; and
• any other options you can think of for dealing with the issues.
Where possible, we would like you to provide evidence to support your view.

Housing Density

10.62 Density is a measure of the number of dwellings that can be accommodated on a site or in an area. PPS 3 seeks the efficient use of land and requires Local Planning Authorities to develop a housing density policy to ensure this locally. The national indicative minimum should be 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) development below this should have special justification.

10.63 Policy H2 of the draft RSS requires SSTCs to have housing densities of 50 dph or higher in well planned, mixed use developments and that all developments should exceed 30dph. The draft RSS seeks an average across Housing Market Areas (HMAs) in excess of 40dph.

Option DMH1

Develop one broad density range across the District or set out a range of densities across the plan area.

Option DMH2

Set out a range of densities for

A. SSCT - Yeovil

B. Draft RSS Development Policy B settlements (Market Towns)

C. Draft RSS Development Policy C settlements (Small towns and Villages)

What should the densities be:

A. SSCT - Yeovil = 50dph

B. Development Policy B settlements = 40dph

C. Development Policy C settlements = 30dph
Option DMH3

Develop densities based on the merits of each town, rural centre and village in relation to density.

Question DMQH1: Density is an important factor in determining the overall character of development in the District's settlements. Is it a Core Strategy issue that relates to the principle of development? If this is the case, should the density of development be considered in a Development Management policy or should it be in the Core Strategy?

Location of Development

10.64 PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas is clear that new development in the countryside should be strictly controlled (including single dwellings) and that the focus of new residential development should be in existing towns and service centres. Development to meet an identified local need is acceptable under certain circumstances and residential conversions may be appropriate in some locations and for some types of building.

Question DMQH2: Under what circumstances should we allow the conversion of an existing building for a residential use?

Option DMH4

Include a criteria based policy dealing with the conversion of buildings to residential use, criteria could include:

- A. Sustainable location;
- B. Where there is a proven local housing need that would not otherwise be met;
- C. Where there is not a more appropriate economic use for the building;
- D. Where the building has failed marketing, including freehold sale of the property;
- E. Where the essence of the building is preserved and/or maintained;
- F. Alternative criteria, please explain.

10.65 The issue identified above relates to the creation of new residential properties in unsustainable locations, where residential development would not normally be acceptable.

Question DMQH3: Can we prevent the non-genuine conversion of these annexes? If not, how can we prevent the subdivision of the property into two separate units? Is this a fair and reasonable goal for the LDF?
10.66 National Guidance (Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements) identifies issues and policies that should be addressed locally in the relevant Local Development Document (LDD). In addition to the issues which have been addressed above, we need to consider if, and how we include the following as Development Management Policies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PPG/PPS</th>
<th>Issue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPS3 - Housing</td>
<td>Delivery of housing should be managed.</td>
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<td>Encourage sustainable and environmentally friendly housing - see PPS on climate change and Code for Sustainable Homes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPG 4 - Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms</td>
<td>Where appropriate, plans should provide specifically for the types of industry, which, although necessary, may be detrimental to amenity, or a potential source of pollution.</td>
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<td>Optimum use should be made of potential sites and existing premises in inner cities and other urban areas, taking into account such factors as accessibility by public transport, particularly in the case of labour-intensive uses. Local planning authorities should identify such areas and indicate their appropriate alternative uses, including industrial and commercial uses, in their development plans, keep up-to-date details on available sites, and provide information about them to potential developers.</td>
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<td>PPS6 - Town Centres</td>
<td>Define a network and hierarchy of centres</td>
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<td>Define the extent of the primary shopping areas and town centres on the Proposals Map</td>
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<td></td>
<td>develop spatial policies and proposals to promote and secure investment in deprived areas by strengthening and/or identifying opportunities for growth of existing centres and access to local facilities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>set out criteria based policies in accordance with PPS for assessing and allocating new development proposals including development sites that are not allocated</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Should prepare polices to help manage the evening and night-time economy</td>
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| **PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas** | New building development in the open countryside should be strictly controlled.  
LDDs should set out the criteria for permitting the conversion and re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic, residential and other purposes, including mixed uses.  
LDDs should set out the criteria they will apply to the replacement of dwellings in the countryside.  
Local landscape designations, carefully drafted criteria based LDD policies should provide the necessary protection for these areas.  
Suggested that LPAs may want to protect specific areas of best and most versatile agricultural land from speculative development.  
Where appropriate set out policies on the provision of new holiday and touring caravan sites, chalet development and on the expansion or improvement of existing sites. |
| **PPS9 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation** | Plan policies should promote opportunities for the incorporation of beneficial biodiversity and geological features within the design of development.  
LDDs should indicate the location of designated sites of importance.  
LDDs should identify any sites for restoration or creation of new priority habitats.  
Criteria based policies should be in place against which to assess proposed developments in regionally and locally important sites. |
| **PPG13 - Transport** | Protect sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choices for both passenger and freight movements. |
| **PPG17 - Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation** | No Issues Identified. |
| **PPG15 - Planning and the Historic Environment** | Policies should encourage the reuse of neglected historic buildings. |
| **PPG16 - Archaeology and Planning** | Should include policies for the protection, enhancement and preservation of sites of archaeological interest and of their settings.  
Archaeological remains identified and scheduled as being of national importance should normally be earmarked in development plans for preservation. |
<p>| <strong>Good Practice Guidance on Planning For</strong> | Should determine if any policies are needed for tourism beyond what is set out in the Core Strategy. |</p>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Tourism (replaces PPG 21)</strong></th>
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<td><strong>PPS22 - Renewable Energy</strong></td>
<td>LPAs may wish to prepare policies relating to both standalone renewables schemes and the integration of RE within the built environment.</td>
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<td>There should be a general policy in the core strategy, then a criteria policy listing the issues that will be taken into account when considering specific applications.</td>
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<td>Whilst PPS22 avoids the creation of buffer zones, criteria based policies will still need to afford protection to areas outside nationally designated areas, as the impacts upon these designated areas is a material consideration.</td>
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<td>PPS22 makes the introduction of RE into development projects and the use of passive solar design 'normal planning matters', which effectively means the local planning authority has the ability to produce policies on these matters and take them into account when determining planning applications.</td>
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<td><strong>PPS23 - Planning and Pollution Control</strong></td>
<td>LDDs should set out the criteria against which applications for potentially polluting developments will be considered. Appendix A contains a long list of matters for consideration in preparing LDDs and making decisions on planning applications e.g. impacts on health and general amenity, environment benefits that the development might bring and the existing and likely future air quality of an area.</td>
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<td>LPAs may wish to set out in their LDDs principles and policies to deal with cumulative effects of pollution when development would make the impact unacceptable.</td>
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<td><strong>PPG24: Planning and Noise</strong></td>
<td>Policies on noise should take account of the guidance in the Annexes of the PPG which contain noise exposure categories for dwellings, explain noise levels, give detailed guidance on the assessment of noise from different sources, gives examples of planning conditions, specify noise limits, and advise on insulation of buildings against external noise.</td>
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<td><strong>PPS25 - Development and Flood Risk</strong></td>
<td>LPAs should prepare LDDs that set out policies for the allocation of sites and the control of development which avoid flood risk to people and property where possible and manage it elsewhere, reflecting the approach to managing flood risk in the PPS and in the RSS. There should be early consideration of flood risk in the formulation of LDDs.</td>
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<td>Where climate change is expected to increase flood risk LPAs should consider whether there are opportunities in the preparation of LDDs to relocate development to more sustainable locations.</td>
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10.67 The key to many types of development will be if it is acceptable in terms of:
a. where it is located  
b. how it is designed  
c. how it fits into its surroundings

**Question QDMAI1:** Looking at the information above, which issues do you think need to be addressed by us in a DM policy?

**Question QDMAI2:** Given that we are only supposed to have a small number of DM policies are there any policies that could be addressed by a couple of over-arching policies, maybe one already suggested earlier in the document?

**Question QDMAI3:** Are there any issues that you feel we do not need to cover? Why are you of this opinion

**Evidence used to inform this chapter**

CLG, 1992. *Planning Policy Guidance 4 - Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms*  
CLG, 2002. *Planning Policy Guidance 17 - Planning for open space, sport and recreation*  
CLG, 1994. *Planning Policy Guidance 24 - Planning and Noise*  
CLG, 2006. *Planning Policy Statement 3 - Housing*  
CLG, 2005. *Planning Policy Statement 6 - Town Centres*  
CLG, 2004. *Planning Policy Statement 7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*  
CLG, 2004. *Planning Policy Statement 23 - Planning and Pollution Control*  
South West Regional Assembly, June 2006. *The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026*