

Agenda item:

Dorset Local Access Forum

6b

Dorset County Council



Date of meeting	12 June 2009
Officer	Director for Environment
Subject of report	Poundbury Development, Dorchester
Executive summary	<p>Outline planning applications for phases 3&4 of the Poundbury development are expected mid June 2009.</p> <p>This report provides background information with regards to walking and riding provision in the Poundbury development, for DLAF members to consider when deciding how they wish to contribute to the public consultation.</p>
Budget implications	This matter has no implications for the budget of the Forum.
Recommendation	<p>That:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Forum considers this report together with Forum Member Mr Green's report.• The Forum agrees how they wish to contribute to the public consultation for phases 3&4 of the Poundbury development
Report Originator and Contact	<p>Tara Hansford Dorset Local Access Forum Coordinator (Senior Plan Development Officer) Tel: (01305) 221779 email: t.hansford@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Extracts from the adopted West Dorset District Local Plan 2006

1 Background

- 1.1 At the Dorset Local Access Forum Meeting 6 February 2009 Forum Member Mr Green requested that the Forum consider the Poundbury development and its provision for walking and riding at the June meeting.
- 1.2 This was agreed and Mr Green has written a report for members to consider for further discussion at the June meeting.
- 1.3 In support of this, this report provides additional information that may assist members in their discussion and any subsequent decisions made and advice given.

2 Current position – Poundbury Development

- 2.1 Outline planning applications for phases 3 & 4 are expected in mid June.
- 2.2 The local Plan and the Poundbury Development Brief (relevant extracts attached) will be important documents for consideration in determining the application.
- 2.3 The Local Planning Authority will expect the proposals to comply with the policy guidelines and any divergence will need to be explained and justified by the applicants.
- 2.4 As part of the consultation process on the application, comments from the Dorset Local Access Forum will be welcomed.

3 Recommendation

- 3.1 The Forum considers this report together with Mr Green's report for further discussion at the Forum meeting.
- 3.2 The Forum, in their capacity as a strategic, advisory body, considers and agrees their position and how they wish to proceed.
- 3.3 If the Forum agrees it is appropriate to contribute to the consultation process they consider establishing a Working Group and to follow agreed DLAF procedure when responding to consultations. This will accommodate the Poundbury consultation timetable for Phases 3&4 which fall between DLAF meetings in June and October.

Miles Butler

Director for the Environment

June 2009

TSH DLAF Coordinator

APPENDIX 1

Extract from Chapter 9 Transport of the Adopted West Dorset District Local Plan 2006

Cyclists and Pedestrians

- 9.8.1 Cycling is cheap, healthy, efficient and can be enjoyable. Moreover, it can make a significant contribution towards establishing a more sustainable transport system to benefit everyone. However, cycling use in the District is low; only 2% of all trips are made by bicycle, with 5% for journeys to work. Travel to school surveys have indicated that around 2% of journeys to school are made by bicycle.
- 9.8.2 The Government's White Paper has restated the important contribution cycling can make in an integrated transport system¹. It has endorsed the targets and aspirations set out in the National Cycling Strategy (NCS) which set targets for doubling the number of cycle trips (on 1996 figures) by the end of 2002 and quadrupling trips by 2012.
- 9.8.3 The Government suggests that the design and layout of development should be made safe, attractive and convenient for pedestrians and cyclists². Regional Planning Guidance states that "development plans should promote the provision of and enhancement of networks for walking, cycling and public transport and ensure that development which generates large amounts of movement is well served by sustainable transport networks"³.
- 9.8.4 The District Council recognises that a substantial improvement in pedestrian routes is an essential element of reducing the use of the car in urban areas. It also wishes to see improvements to the cycle network, to encourage cycling as an alternative means of transport.
- 9.8.5 The strategy to increase the proportion of journeys undertaken on foot or bicycle largely comprises ensuring that development is concentrated within settlements which have the facilities to cater for the local population, and that uses are mixed within these areas. In addition to this strategy, the Council seeks to maintain and, where possible, improve the pedestrian and cyclist environment, in terms of:
- safety;
 - links to homes, work and community facilities;
 - signing; and
 - cycle parking and hire facilities.
- 9.8.6 One of the particular issues for West Dorset is its rural and topographic characteristics. Whilst there are opportunities to further develop leisure cycling in the rural area, it is in the Weymouth/Chickerell area and the market towns where there is the biggest potential for increases in cycle usage.

¹ A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, 1998, DETR.

² Para. 3.4, A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone - The Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport (Cm 3950), 1998, DETR.

³ Policy V1S 2, Regional Planning Guidance for the South West, (RPG 10), 2001, DTLR.

9.8.7 Bad design of layouts, physical barriers, poorly repaired surfaces, cluttered paths and vulnerability to accidents with other road users all act as deterrents to pedestrians and cyclists. These deterrents are further exacerbated by the dispersal of land uses. If these concerns can be suitably addressed, there is considerable scope for many more journeys currently undertaken by car to transfer to walking and cycling⁴. In general, footpaths and alleyways should be wide, clear of hiding places, well lit and within view of passers-by and frontage development. Unrestricted access to the rear of properties by way of a footpath or alleyway should generally be avoided.

9.8.8 The improvement of the pedestrian and cyclist environment includes the provision of new dedicated routes and facilities for cyclists at their destination. There are two routes of the National Cycleway Network (NCN)⁵ crossing West Dorset. A number of improvements or additions to these have been identified that would benefit the recreational side of cycle provision, both within and between the towns, particularly in terms of green travel/sustainable tourism, these are:

- Linking NCN route 2 to Lyme Regis
- Linking NCN route 2 to Charmouth
- Pursuing NCN route 2 from Dorchester eastwards to link in with Purbeck District and railway stations at Wool and Wareham.

9.8.9 Arguably however, a greater increase in cycling can be achieved by improving facilities in the market and seaside towns. Within the towns the following areas have been identified:

Dorchester

- implementation of the Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan
- completion of the Safe Routes to School Traffic Calming, Coburg Road (Dorchester Middle School, Thomas Hardy School and Leisure Centre)
- Crossways to West Stafford Cycleway
- investigate link between Dorchester and Kingston Maurward College
- investigate improving link to Martinstown (part of NCN2)
- off-road link to Charlton Down

Bridport

- investigate continuing cycleway along Sea Road North to link into Colfox School
- St Mary's Playing Field Cycleway (NCN2 spur) – lighting scheme
- completing the link from Bridport to West Bay (NCN2 spur)
- investigate link between Bridport and Chideock

⁴ Three-quarters of all journeys are under 5 miles in length: Transport Statistics Report: National Travel Survey, 1991, DoT.

⁵ A major project initiated by Sustrans, the civil engineering charity, comprising 10,000 miles of continuous cycle routes passing through most major towns and cities in the UK.

- investigate pedestrian/cycle bridge link from North Allington to Pymore Road
- improved links between Skilling and town centre

Sherborne

- Investigate local link from west of town into town centre
- A30 Sherborne to Milborne port cycleway

Beaminster

- Investigate improved links to Beaminster School

Chickerell

- Investigate improved links within settlement and to College / Industrial Estates.

As indicated in paragraph 9.5.4, alternative provision may be made as a result of changes in development proposals, review, circumstance or strategy.

- 9.8.10 The Council will seek to ensure that, where appropriate, provision is made for pedestrian and cycle facilities to encourage journeys on foot and by bicycle to local facilities. Where appropriate, developers should provide on-site footpaths, bridleways and cycleways to the standards specified in Dorset County Council's Design Guide. The County Council may also seek contributions towards off-site improvements. The District Council's parking guidelines include details on the amount of cycle parking facilities considered appropriate to cater for the travel demands of new development. These are set out in Appendix 1 of the Local Plan.

POLICY TRAN8 CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

All new development will be expected to take account of the needs of cyclists and pedestrians either by the direct provision, or by contribution to new routes or links to existing routes within or adjoining a settlement. Such routes should provide a safe, convenient, direct and attractive environment to the cyclist or pedestrian. Where conditions allow, a choice of routes should be provided to increase the trip potential.

There is no Policy TRAN9.

POLICY TRAN10 LOSS OF PEDESTRIAN OR CYCLE ROUTES

Development which would result in the loss of an existing pedestrian or cycle route or public right of way will only be permitted where a replacement pedestrian route or public right of way would be provided which would maintain the existing network of routes and which would be safe, direct and attractive to pedestrians.

POLICY TRAN11 CYCLE PARKING FACILITIES

Development for non-residential uses will be granted provided there is adequate, secure cycle parking facilities, having regard to the Council's parking guidelines contained in Appendix 1.

- 9.8.11 There are opportunities within the District for the re-use of disused railway tracks for recreational uses. Such tracks pass through attractive countryside and might potentially be used for footways and cycleways which could provide safer alternative routes than the existing highway network and facilitate increased access to the countryside. The District Council will explore opportunities for the re-use of disused railway tracks for recreational uses, including investigating the potential of the former Maiden Newton-Bridport line.

Extract from Chapter 13 Eastern Area – Dorchester and Surrounds, of the Adopted West Dorset District Local Plan 2006

Poundbury

- 13.5.17 The major consultation exercise⁶ to examine options for the future growth of Dorchester is referred to in para. 13.5.5. Approximately 158 hectares (390 acres) of land to the west of Dorchester at Poundbury has been identified to meet the long term needs of the County town and the first phase of the development is complete.
- 13.5.18 The masterplan approach to Poundbury reflects a form of urban development where all community needs and activities are integrated and are contained within areas which are easily accessible on foot. The Defined Development Boundary as shown on the proposals map enables housing and employment needs up to 2016 and beyond to be met. Housing requirements up to 2011, consistent with the housing targets in the Structure Plan up to 2011, are proposed to be met within the Policy EA17 and EA18 sites: beyond 2011, further capacity is available within these sites and on the additional area of land identified in Policy EA19. The details of the layout, mix of uses and phasing will be determined through preparation of a Poundbury Development brief.
- 13.5.19 The Defined Development Boundary on the Proposals Map reflects the Poundbury development style and topography of this part of the site. The approach requires consideration of the quality of design, materials and scale of the development. The precise boundary of the development will be reviewed in the context of these factors through the development brief process and by further investigation of landscape visual impact, contours, slopes and archaeological features in the locality. Matters of design, materials and landscape will be especially important in considering any applications because of the position of the sites in or close to the AONB.
- 13.5.20 At 1 April 2005, 520 dwellings had been completed at Poundbury and there was an existing commitment for a further 303 dwellings. It is estimated that in the period to 2016, approximately 977 additional dwellings will be accommodated at Poundbury, together with employment, recreation and community facilities. This development is spread between three allocated sites, covered by Policies EA17-19.

⁶ Alternative Development Strategies for Dorchester and Surrounding Areas, 1987, WDDC.

- 13.5.21 Approximately 4.5 hectares of employment land have already been provided in Phase 2 of the development, the outline permission for which included provision for a total of 6 hectares of employment land. Approximately 6 hectares (14.8 acres) of further employment land are allocated within the EA17 and EA18 sites, of which around 2.14 hectares (5.0 acres) will be for B2 employment, concentrated on a single site in the Poundbury South Area, and with B1 uses acting as a buffer to surrounding residential development. Employment land will also be provided within the later phase EA19 site. The details of all these employment land proposals, and the amount required on the EA19 site, will be reviewed through the preparation of the Poundbury Development Brief, in the light of the requirements of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy and the findings of the Council's employment land review, currently in progress.
- 13.5.22 Planning permission was granted in 1997 on land to the north of Bridport Road for earthworks in association with the construction of a cricket pitch, three further sports pitches and an informal recreational area, ancillary buildings, access tracks and car parking. The permission has expired; however, the need for recreational land as part of the development at Poundbury remains, and the Poundbury North Area (see Policy EA17 below) will incorporate recreational uses.
- 13.5.23 Local Plan policies EA25, EA26 and EA27 refer to the improvements to the highway network associated with this development. These comprise a replacement district distributor road, the construction of a new pedestrian/cycle link between Maiden Castle Road and Coburg Road, and improvements to junctions in Dorchester. In addition, a number of other policies and proposals are associated with the development and, in this context, attention is drawn to Local Plan Policies EA17, EA18, EA19, EA21 and EA29.
- 13.5.24 It is envisaged that a community planning exercise will be undertaken to ensure that planning decisions are informed by community needs. The Proposals Map identifies two areas for development to 2011 and beyond, together with a further site identified for later phase development. All three will be included in a Poundbury Development Brief, to be prepared in consultation with the local community, to guide future stages of development. Whilst Poundbury represents a comprehensive mixed use development with a range of land uses, which will include residential and employment uses within all areas, the primary land use in the Poundbury North Area will be residential and the primary land use in the Poundbury South Area will be employment. A comprehensive landscape masterplan is required within the context of a landscape strategy plan for Poundbury.

POLICY EA17 POUNDBURY NORTH AREA

Land in the north of Poundbury (as shown on the Proposals Map) is designated for a comprehensive mixed-use development to include the following:

- a) residential development (a range of sizes, types and tenures, including affordable housing);
- b) integrated employment workspace (Use Class B1);
- c) education facilities;
- d) community facilities;
- e) leisure and recreation (including built facilities);

- f) public amenity open space.

The development of the site will be in accordance with a Poundbury Development brief and subject to:

- i) the provision of pedestrian and cycle links within Poundbury and to the centre of Dorchester and to the surrounding areas including the countryside. The links identified in Policies EA26 and EA29 shall be included;
- ii) the highway improvements identified in policies EA25 and EA27;
- iii) details of landscaping, design, materials and density.

The phased development of the site will be permitted subject to the above.

POLICY EA18 POUNDBURY SOUTH AREA

Land in the south of Poundbury (as shown on the Proposals Map) is designated for a comprehensive mixed-use development to include the following:

- a) employment workspace (Use Class B1 and B2);
- b) residential (a range of sizes, types and tenures, including affordable housing);
- c) public/amenity open space.

The development of the site will be in accordance with a Poundbury Development Brief and subject to:

- i) the provision of pedestrian and cycle links within Poundbury, to the centre of Dorchester and the surrounding areas including the countryside. The links identified in Policies EA26 and EA29 shall be included.
- ii) the highway improvements set out in Policies EA25 and EA27;
- iii) land provision for spoil deposit and a programme of implementation in this respect;
- iv) a landscaped noise buffer and a programme for implementation;
- v) details of landscaping, design, materials and density;
- vi) the provision of a separate B2 employment site, with a buffer of B1 uses adjacent to any residential development.

The phased development of the site will be permitted subject to the above.

13.5.25 The Local Plan identifies in policies EA17 and EA18 those areas within which development land requirements to 2011 will be met in accordance with the adopted Structure Plan. These areas also have additional capacity to continue to develop beyond 2011. However, in order to ensure that the site can continue to provide for Dorchester's needs beyond 2011, further potential development land is identified. The submission document of the Regional Spatial Strategy (which will replace the adopted Structure Plan under the new planning system introduced in 2004) indicates housing numbers for West Dorset for the period 2006-2016 which show that the continued development of Poundbury beyond 2011 will be required. It also identifies Dorchester as a regionally significant town, where housing development has the potential to increase its self-containment. There will need to be a close

assessment of the appropriate boundary, having regard to visual aspects and archaeology. The layout, mix of uses and phasing within the site will be addressed within the Poundbury Development Brief.

POLICY EA19 POUNDBURY LAND ALLOCATED FOR DEVELOPMENT AFTER 2011

Land is allocated on the Proposals Map for the continuation of the Poundbury development after 2011.

- 13.5.26 The land uses set out in these policies form part of the development package for Poundbury. The District Council is firmly committed to securing a release of land for employment purposes associated with the development proposed for Poundbury to meet the existing and future needs of Dorchester and the residents at Poundbury.
- 13.5.27 In view of the location of the site at one of the main entrances to the historic town of Dorchester, particular care will need to be taken in the specification of the design, landscaping, building mass and materials to be used.

Extract from Adopted Poundbury Development Brief December 2006

The adopted Poundbury Development Brief can be viewed via the following link:
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=349305>

7. Pedestrian, Cycle and Public Transport Accessibility

Further phases of Poundbury will provide:

- Good access to public transport;
- New pedestrian and cycle links to Dorchester town centre – including a new cycleway along Bridport Road, and other pedestrian and cycle links to improve connection to the rest of Dorchester;
- A new perimeter walkway and cycleway;
- New links to the surrounding countryside, including improvements to the public rights of way network.

Future planning applications will be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement where appropriate.

7.1 The sustainability appraisal of the Poundbury brief indicates that the reduction of dependency on the car in the development is an important aim of achieving sustainable development. Research carried out in 2003 showed that Poundbury does not score well in terms of providing alternatives to car based transport. It is therefore critical that bus services are planned as part of the future phases and that walking and cycling are made to be more attractive alternatives to the car.

Public Transport Accessibility

7.2 The site must be accessible by public transport, in particular to Dorchester town centre but also to surrounding areas. An existing bus route follows the Bridport Road but regular and frequent bus services should be provided around a local loop within the development, including the local distributor roads of Peverell Avenue East and West, with a stop at the central square. A possible route is shown on the plan opposite. This ensures that the majority of the development will be within 400 metres, or a five-minute walk, of the bus route. Contributions will be required from the developer towards the provision of associated infrastructure such as bus stops, and towards the running of services for the first few years. It is also important that street widths are designed so that they are suitable for public transport access, and that public transport routes are agreed before the design of streets is finalised, so that public transport routes are not compromised.

7.3 The transportation services section at Dorset County Council have expressed the view that Dorchester town bus services, and those that will eventually connect with Poundbury, will eventually need to become commercially viable to ensure on-going subsidy will not be required. For this reason it is likely that there would be a need to link any future bus services with those services operating nearby, particularly Victoria Park and 'Old Poundbury'. This could be achieved by using driver-controlled devices to allow bus-only access through existing and proposed traffic

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restrictions, for example at the end of Coburg, Cambridge Road and onto Poundbury Road.

Links to Dorchester Town Centre

- 7.4 Well sign posted and easily recognizable pedestrian and cycle links into Dorchester town centre are essential to encourage travel to the centre by safe and sustainable transport, support the development's relationship with the town centre, and help to integrate the development with the rest of Dorchester. The need to improve pedestrian and cycle routes into the town centre was raised during early public consultation on the development brief.
- 7.5 Further vehicular links into Dorchester have been avoided in order to minimise 'rat running' through the development. The road at the southern edge of the site has the potential to link through to the Thomas Hardy School but has bollards to prevent traffic doing so, although pedestrians and cyclists have access. A similar arrangement is proposed at the north of the site adjoining the cemetery, in order to avoid heavy traffic from the nearby industrial estate cutting through residential areas in Poundbury. Alternative options would have been to open up some or all of these routes (so as to maximise accessibility and integration between Poundbury and the rest of Dorchester) or for some (such as the northern link) to be opened to traffic but with a width restriction to prevent their use by industrial traffic. However, the opening up of these routes was tested as part of the formal consultation of the draft development brief. The majority of respondents commenting on the issue felt that allowing through traffic from Coburg and Cambridge Roads would cause rat running along unsuitable roads and would harm highway safety, particularly for pedestrians and local residents. It was pointed out that school children use these routes to walk to and from Thomas Hardy School. It is not, therefore, proposed to remove the traffic restrictions. It may be at some time in the future that public transport access could be allowed by the use of driver controlled devices such as rising bollards.
- 7.6 Existing and proposed pedestrian links into town are shown on the plan in figure 10. Developer contributions will be negotiated towards the provision of new and/or improved pedestrian and cycle routes. The highway authority has supported the creation of a segregated cycle route running along the Bridport Road from east of Mansell Square into Dorchester and this is also shown in figure 10. The inclusion of this cycle route on the plan does not preclude alternatives being explored – particularly any that might be less steep and therefore easier for cyclists.

Perimeter Walkway and Cycleway

- 7.7 The principle of a perimeter walkway and cycleway is set out in the Local Plan. A formal pedestrian and cycle route is proposed around the whole edge of the development from Maiden Castle Road to Poundbury Road. It will also be extended to the south of the Castle Park Estate. This will provide an attractive and sustainable link between various parts of Poundbury as well as other facilities such as the Weymouth Avenue supermarket and football ground, the Middle School and Thomas Hardy School. In parts it will be planted with trees, which will help to soften the edges of the development as well as providing an attractive route. (See Principle 2 on defined edges). This route will be provided as part of the Poundbury development. The cycle and footway link between Coburg Road and Maiden Castle Road, proposed in the Local Plan, has now been constructed. This cycleway joins the National Cycle Network Route 2, which extends from Dorchester to the Devon border. The use of cycles for everyday short journeys, rather than just for leisure purposes, requires suitable cycle parking facilities. There is therefore a need for

properly designed and well located cycle parking to be provided – particularly in the neighbourhood and district centres. Cycle parking provision should also be incorporated within domestic garden areas, the rear parking courts and in association with commercial and community uses.

- 7.8 In addition, an informal perimeter walkway is proposed around the whole of the outskirts of Dorchester. In places this will follow the route of the more formal Poundbury walkway/cycleway but in other areas (including parts of the south-eastern and north-eastern edge of the Poundbury site) it will follow a separate route. The Poundbury sections of the route will be provided as part of the development. Parts of the route that are shared by pedestrians and cyclists should be clearly signed.

Countryside Links

- 7.9 Safe pedestrian and/or cycle routes, particularly across the A35 by-pass, from the development out to the countryside will be provided. These routes will need to create links to the existing public rights of way network and help facilitate sustainable recreation. Currently, the public right of way to the west is severed by the by-pass and is not safe to use. This right of way is closest to the “general urban area” where recreational need will be greatest. A bridge could be considered across the by-pass. This project could provide an opportunity to combine good engineering with public art, with the bridge designed as a landmark in its own right.
- 7.10 The cycle and footway link between Coburg Road and Maiden Castle Road, proposed in the Local Plan, has now been constructed and forms an important link to the south of the site. An additional link is also proposed from the other side of the Thomas Hardy School.
- 7.11 Two further important links to the public rights of way network are identified on the plan in figure 10. In both cases improvements are needed to enable safer access from the development to existing rights of way. One involves developing a dedicated right of way for pedestrians through the underpass from the south of the development towards Maiden Castle. It is important that pedestrian access is managed so as to minimise any adverse effect on the use of this land for keeping livestock, particularly sheep grazing, but this does potentially provide an important direct and safe link out to surrounding countryside. Another involves creating a dedicated right of way out from the north-west sector of the development, again using an existing underpass to provide a safe access under the Dorchester by-pass. This will be needed in conjunction with the final phase of development.
- 7.12 Finally, there is a need to consider access to the Poundbury Hillfort, as part of the green space and recreation strategy referred to under Principles 3 and 16. This site is a scheduled ancient monument, susceptible to erosion and currently suffering from some degradation. Access needs to be better managed, including identification of the most appropriate access route. All routes should be established to agreed good maintenance and 'easy to use' criteria and comply with Disability Discrimination Act 2005 guidelines.

Design and Access Statements

- 7.13 In the future, the majority of planning applications will need to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, explaining and justifying the proposals and demonstrating the commitment to good design and sustainable access. The access part of this statement should explain how access arrangements would ensure that

all users have equal and convenient access to buildings, spaces and the public transport network. It should make particular reference to the inclusion of disabled people, and should also indicate how access for emergency and service vehicles will be provided.

