



# **URBAN POTENTIAL** **STUDY**

**February 2004**

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**NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**URBAN POTENTIAL STUDY**

**Surveyed Winter 2001/2002**

**Approved by Cabinet December 2003**

**Published February 2004**

**Cost £5 + 50p postage and packing**

# NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Urban Potential Study

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## Urban Potential Study 2001

### 1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Planning Policy Guidance 3 (PPG3) establishes that priority should be given to reusing previously developed land and buildings in preference to the development of greenfield sites. In order to make the best use of the potential to recycle land, PPG3 sets out the expectation that all authorities will conduct urban potential studies. This report sets out the methodology and findings from the urban potential study undertaken by North Dorset District Council in response to this requirement.
- 1.2 The survey revealed a potential for 1397 dwellings within the four towns of North Dorset during the period 2001-2011. The results have been compared with windfall assumptions made in the Local Plan. They show generally that the potential identified through this methodology is about three times as high as using the traditional trend based predictions. This is not surprising as the urban potential methodology is based on higher densities and a review of local plan allocations as required by PPG3.
- 1.3 The inclusion of sites within the study indicates potential only. It does not guarantee development or that planning permission will automatically be granted. For this reason, plans of sites with potential will not be published.

### 2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 This study investigates the potential of the urban areas of North Dorset to accommodate further housing development. Initial survey work was carried out in December 2000/January 2001. It was carried out in accordance with the requirements of national guidance as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 on Housing (March 2000). At this stage only urban populations of over 5000 were required to be surveyed, (ie Blandford Forum, Gillingham and Shaftesbury). However as Sturminster Newton (3,000 population) is recognised in both Structure and Local Plans as a “town” for settlement strategies, it was also included in this survey. It is intended that Stalbridge and the larger villages will be surveyed in Spring 2004 in order to complete the picture of urban potential in the District.
- 2.2 Revised PPG3 requires that local authorities make the most efficient use of land and buildings within their urban areas so that future loss of greenfield land to development is minimised. In order to achieve this, a ‘search sequence’ has been introduced, starting with the re-use of previously developed land and buildings as identified in the urban

potential study, followed by urban extensions and then nodes in good transport corridors.

- 2.3 “Tapping the Potential”, published by the Government in December 2000, gives guidance on the preparation of urban potential studies and has been used to guide this study.
- 2.4 The information set out in the Report will be used to inform housing policy in North Dorset. The study was not carried out in time to inform the District Wide Local Plan, as this was at an advanced stage when the revised PPG3 was issued. However, the findings will be used in the monitoring process and in any future review of housing policy in the Local Plan, as well as contributing to the current review of the Structure Plan for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole.
- 2.5 Other advice in PPG3 to encourage efficient use of land includes the use of higher densities, considering re-allocating employment and other land to housing, and reviewing parking standards. The study takes these factors into consideration when assessing housing potential.

### **3. THE NORTH DORSET DISTRICT WIDE LOCAL PLAN**

- 3.1 The District Wide Local Plan was adopted on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2003.
- 3.2 As explained in paragraph 2.4, revised PPG3 was not issued in time for an urban potential study to be conducted to inform the Local Plan. However, policy and text in the Plan was amended through the consultation process to ensure conformity where possible. For example, new phasing policies were included to encourage the development of brownfield sites to meet Plan targets. The urban potential study will inform any review of the Plan in relation to future phasing.

### **4. THE BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET AND POOLE STRUCTURE PLAN**

- 4.1 The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan was adopted in July 2000 and is currently under review. A county-wide urban potential study was required to inform the review of housing policy. All local authorities have therefore worked closely together with Dorset County Council to ensure consistency in collecting and presenting the information. The results have been taken into account in formulating options for future settlement patterns in Dorset. These will be set out in the consultation draft of the revised Structure Plan, expected early 2004.

## 5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 At the beginning of the study, consultation took place with parish and town councils, local developers and agents, landowners, housing associations and conservation groups. The consultation was conducted by means of a questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire is included as Appendix B. Responses were received from 23% of those contacted. Suggested sites were included in the survey where they were within settlement boundaries. (Sites suggested in the villages will be considered when the rural areas are surveyed).
- 5.2 In addition, the results of the survey for Shaftesbury were subject to a round table discussion with a local agent, developer, town councillor and CPRE member to assess the suitability and viability of the suggested sites for urban potential. Their contributions were valuable in checking out methodology and some changes in discounting were made in response to their comments. It was disappointing that the House Builders Federation were invited to attend but were unable to send a representative.
- 5.3 A similar exercise was organised at County level using sample plans produced by a cross section of local authorities. The HBF were expected to attend but failed to turn up on the day. The exercise was designed to obtain a view on the different approaches used by the authorities in order to promote a consistent approach. The studies are now being scrutinised by consultants to further check for consistency and accuracy.

## 6. **METHODOLOGY**

- 6.1 The study assesses how much new housing development could be accommodated within the urban area of the District, over the period of 2001-2016 and beyond, (ie the Local Plan period 2001-2011, and the remainder of the periods to be covered by the Structure Plan and Regional Guidance).
- 6.2 The North Dorset study covers the settlements of Blandford Forum, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton. The potential of Stalbridge and the larger villages with settlement boundaries will be assessed at a later stage.
- 6.3 Each town was assessed using the eleven categories set out below. A definition of each category is included in the detailed methodology in Appendix A.
1. Subdivision of existing housing.
  2. Flats over shops
  3. Empty homes.
  4. Previously-developed land now vacant.

5. Intensification of existing residential areas.
  - 6a. Redevelopment of existing housing.
  - 6b. Redevelopment of other uses.
  7. Redevelopment of car parks.
  8. Conversion of commercial and other non-residential buildings.
  9. Review of existing housing allocations in adopted or deposit plans.
  10. Review of existing non-residential allocations in adopted or deposit plans.
  11. Vacant land not previously developed.
- 6.4 The study only covered land within defined settlement boundaries.
- 6.5 Inclusion of a site indicates “potential” for development. It does not guarantee development or that planning permission would be granted. This can only be fully examined through the development control process, and for this reason, plans of sites with potential will not be published.
- 6.6 The assessment of “potential” has gone through two stages:
- 1) initial assessment of “unconstrained yield”, and
  - 2) “discounting” of unconstrained yield.
- 6.7 The first stage, “unconstrained yield”, assessed total theoretical potential. This was calculated by using different methodologies for each category. Desk studies were used where appropriate data was already available, otherwise sites were individually identified by a comprehensive, on the ground, survey. A sample survey form and detailed methodology for each category is set out in Appendix A.
- 6.8 The second stage, “discounting”, was carried out by giving consideration to planning constraints, feasibility and likelihood of development. A round table discussion with development control and County Highway officers highlighted likely constraints. As a general rule, sites currently constrained have been retained, but as long term potential. Detailed methodology is included at the end of Appendix A. In practice, some of the identified sites may not come forward for development, and conversely, some unidentified sites may come forward as policies and new opportunities arise.
- 6.9 Outstanding planning permissions at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2001 have been calculated separately and checked against identified potential to avoid double counting in assessing future housing need.
- 6.10 The results have been compared with existing trend based information. Substantial differences are explained in the relevant paragraphs below.
- 6.11 It is intended that the findings will be adjusted in future annual monitoring reports making allowance for any planning consents issued during the year.

## **7 SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

- 7.1 This section sets out the results of the urban potential study. Table 1 shows the potential for the four towns in total. Tables 2-5 show the potential for each of the four towns individually. Figures are given for the periods 2001-2011 and 2011-2016. Estimates for post 2016 were also made. Radical changes in policy and lifestyle will be required to facilitate most of the development identified in this period and for this reason the figures have not been included in the tables but are given in the text for interest.
- 7.2 Column (a) shows “unconstrained yield”. This is what might be expected if there were no constraints such as overlooking, highway requirements or general amenity. It is often based on a straight density assumption as explained in appendix A, Columns (b) and (c) show “discounted yield”, This is a more realistic figure based on individual site constraints. Column (d) shows the yield based on past trends (per annum). This is included for comparison and is commented on where applicable.
- 7.3 It should be noted that column (b) covers a ten year period whereas column (c) covers only five years (per annum figures are also given). Totals show consistent development growth over the fifteen years although within some categories per annum growth is predicted to be higher in the earlier years.



## North Dorset

- 7.4 The survey revealed a potential for 1396 dwelling units within the existing settlement boundaries of the four towns in North Dorset during the period 2001 – 2011, with a further 578 between 2011 – 2016. (608 were identified post 2016.) Table 1 shows the overall potential for North Dorset towns broken down by category of development.
- 7.5 As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2001, it was calculated that 514 additional windfall dwellings were required over the period 2001 to 2011 in order to meet the windfall element of the planned residential development in the Local Plan<sup>19</sup>. The estimated urban potential figure of 1396 over the same period therefore represents almost three times as much as was then anticipated. This increase is generally explained by the adoption of higher densities and a review of non residential allocations as required by Planning Policy Guidance 3, for example, categories 9 and 10 alone (reviews of housing and other local plan allocations), account for 34% of the increase.
- 7.6 Potential from previously developed vacant land is predicted to rise substantially in the early years. Much of this increase is predicted to take place in Gillingham where several sites may come forward for development. This is further explained in paragraph 7.15. Similarly, predicted rises in subdivision, intensification and redevelopment of housing and redevelopment of other uses are all predicted to rise as the availability of greenfield land is reduced.

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<sup>19</sup> Housing Supply and Modifications to the Local Plan, Table 4 - tabled at Local Plan Committee, 4/4/02

**TABLE 1****Urban Potential: North Dorset**

Source	Un-constrained yield (a)	Discounted Assessment		Annual Past Trends 1991-2001 (d)
		April 2001- March 2011 (b)	April 2011 - March 2016 (c)	
1) Subdivision of existing housing	1429	87 8.7pa	40 8.0pa	4.0pa
2) Flats over shops	131	26 2.6pa	15 3.0pa	3.5pa
3) Empty Houses	307	28	7	No data
4) Previously developed vacant/ derelict land & buildings (non housing)	208	277 27.7pa	4 0.8pa	6.7pa
5) Intensification of existing areas	642	187 18.7pa	121 24.2pa	9.7pa
6a) Redevelopment of existing housing	91	78 7.8pa	0 0pa	4.7pa
6b) Redevelopment of other uses	771	353 35.3pa	103 20.6pa	22.8pa
7) Redevelopment of car parks	339	0 0pa	20 4.0pa	0pa
8) Conversion of commercial buildings	264	54 5.4pa	41 8.2pa	4.9pa
9) Review of existing housing allocations in plans	236	166	70	No comparable data
10) Review of other existing allocations in plans.	321	120	121	No comparable data
11) Vacant land not previously developed	107	20 2.0pa	36 7.2pa	153.1pa
<b>TOTALS</b>	4846	1396	578	N/A

## **Blandford Forum**

- 7.7 Blandford is the largest town in the District. It is located on the River Stour where the river runs through a gap in the Dorset Downs. The river and its floodplain restrict development to the west of the town. The surrounding area to the north east and west is within two designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The town is well placed for development as it is on the A350 and A354 giving links to the SE Dorset conurbation, Dorchester and Salisbury. However, these locational advantages need to be weighed against environmental constraints and the effect on commuting patterns when considering any physical expansion of the town.
- 7.8 The survey revealed a potential for 423 new dwelling units in Blandford Forum during the period 2001 to 2011, with a further 100 in the period 2011 – 2016 and 344 post 2016. As stated in the general section for North Dorset, figures post 2016 are included for interest only as they will be reliant on radical changes in lifestyle and policy. Details of the findings are shown in Table 2.
- 7.9 Table 2 shows that the highest potential comes from the intensification of existing housing areas with a much lower predicted potential from the redevelopment of residential sites. Redevelopment is not a current major feature in Blandford due to existing settlement pattern (ie not much early 20<sup>th</sup> century with large gardens). The split between the two categories will be dependent on the personal circumstances of site owners as well as interpretation of current planning policy. There is also moderate potential for redevelopment of other uses: this includes non-conforming uses in residential areas. The discounted figure in this category indicates a lower yield than achieved over the last 10 years. This implies that the “other” uses are becoming more scarce.
- 7.10 A moderate yield is predicted through achieving higher densities on the one remaining allocated residential site. This will be dependent on the willingness of developers to achieve a quality layout in accordance with recognised urban design principles. There is also some potential for building on urban greenspace where alternative recreation land has or can be provided. No potential has been predicted on committed or proposed employment allocations due to the perceived scarcity of employment land in the town.
- 7.11 A comparison with past trends indicates some predicted changes. For example, there are likely to be fewer "living over the shop" conversions, due to the number permitted over the past ten years resulting in fewer opportunities in the future. Redevelopment of other uses is also predicted to drop for the same reason, whereas the intensification of residential use is likely to rise as people seek to realise their land assets and accept higher density living.

**TABLE 2****Urban Potential : Blandford Forum**

Source	Un-constrained yield (a)	Discounted Assessment		<b>Annual</b> Past Trends 1991-2001 (d)
		April 2001- March 2011 (b)	April 2011 - March 2016 (c)	
1) Subdivision of existing housing	364	30 3.0pa	10 2.0pa	2.7pa
2) Flats over shops	47	10 1.0pa	5 1.0pa	2.3pa
3) Empty Houses	75	0	0	No data
4) Previously developed vacant/ derelict land & buildings (non housing)	10	10 1.0pa	0 0pa	1.8pa
5) Intensification of existing areas	331	109 10.9pa	39 7.8pa	5.9pa
6a) Redevelopment of existing housing	29	26 2.6pa	0 0pa	2.0pa
6b) Redevelopment of other uses	139	53 5.3pa	16 3.2pa	9.1pa
7) Redevelopment of car parks	140	0 0pa	0 0pa	0pa
8) Conversion of commercial buildings	51	9 0.9pa	0 0pa	2.2pa
9) Review of existing housing allocations in plans	64	64	0	No comparable data
10) Review of other existing allocations in plans.	100	100	0	No comparable data
11) Vacant land not previously developed	76	11 1.1pa	30 6pa	33.8pa
<b>TOTALS</b>	1426	422	100	

## Gillingham

- 7.12 Gillingham is the most northerly of the District's towns and has experienced the fastest growth rate of all these towns in the past decade. It is situated on the edge of the Blackmore Vale, with the Rivers Stour, Lodden and the Shreen Water, passing through the town. Gillingham is in a key position to attract economic development, being in the heart of the Blackmore Vale lowlands, with relatively few constraints to future expansion. It is located on the main Exeter to Salisbury rail link and is close to the A350/303 primary routes. Locational benefits need to be weighed against the need for community infrastructure to catch up with the residential growth rate of the past decade before further expansion is encouraged.
- 7.13 The survey revealed a potential for 328 new dwelling units in Gillingham during the period 2001 – 2011, with a further 167 in the period 2011 – 16 and 122 identified post 2016. The figure for post 2016 is included for interest only. Details are shown in Table 3.
- 7.14 The recent rapid growth in Gillingham is reflected in a lower proportion of potential in the categories of intensification and redevelopment of residential areas. In Gillingham the highest potential is from the development of previously developed vacant derelict land and buildings, and the redevelopment of other uses. There is some potential to increase densities on remaining housing allocations.
- 7.15 A comparison with past trends indicates that potential from previously developed vacant land is likely to rise quite considerably (as much as eightfold on previously developed vacant land). This is not surprising, as the amount of greenfield development in Gillingham in recent years has lessened the attraction of brownfield sites, and there are several brownfield sites that could now come forward in the period 2001-2011. Although potential from the sub-division of housing and flats over shops is predicted to rise, the total from these categories is not high.

TABLE 3

**Urban Potential : Gillingham**

Source	Un-constrained yield (a)	Discounted Assessment		<b>Annual</b> Past Trends 1991-2001 (d)
		April 2001- March 2011 (b)	April 2011 - March 2016 (c)	
1) Subdivision of existing housing	389	20 2.0pa	10 2.0pa	0.4pa
2) Flats over shops	35	8 0.8pa	3 0.6pa	0.2pa
3) Empty Houses	89	2	2	No data
4) Previously developed vacant/ derelict land & buildings (non housing)	104	174 17.4pa	4 0.8pa	2.0pa
5) Intensification of existing areas	71	11 1.1pa	19 3.8pa	1.0pa
6a) Redevelopment of existing housing	0	0 0pa	0 0pa	2.7pa
6b) Redevelopment of other uses	203	73 7.3pa	43 8.6pa	3.5pa
7) Redevelopment of car parks	136	0 0pa	10 2.0pa	0pa
8) Conversion of commercial buildings	197	38 3.8pa	20 4.0pa	1.9pa
9) Review of existing housing allocations in plans	50	50	0	No comparable data
10) Review of other existing allocations in plans.	50	0	50	No comparable data
11) Vacant land not previously developed	10	2 0.2pa	6 1.2pa	89.3pa
<b>TOTALS</b>	1334	328	167	

## Shaftesbury

- 7.16 Shaftesbury is one of the oldest recorded towns in England and standing at 700ft above sea level it is also one of the highest. This hill top location, with its commanding views over the Blackmore Vale, has severely restricted growth of the town except to the east. The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the east and south east is a further constraint on expansion. Specific policies relating to the retention of the open wooded slopes and the concentration of phased development on the eastern plateau aim to retain the town's unique hilltop character.
- 7.17 The survey revealed a potential for 217 new dwelling units during the period 2001 –11 with a further 229 in the period 2011-16 and 48 post 2016. The post 2016 figure is included for interest only. Details of the findings are shown in Table 4.
- 7.18 Shaftesbury's potential for intensification and redevelopment of existing residential areas is restricted due to the tight nature of the urban centre and the relatively economic use of land in the more recently built suburban areas. Nevertheless, sites are available and continue to come forward. Some opportunities for intensification are dependent on complicated site assembly, and may not therefore come forward until post 2016.
- 7.19 Land is allocated on the east side of Shaftesbury for a minimum of 680 dwellings. Although this is being phased, its development may affect brownfield sites continuing to come forward to the same degree in the short term. Marginally more sites are therefore predicted to come forward post 2011 than pre 2011. Employment sites are fully let at present and potential from reviewing other employment allocations has been restricted for this reason. It is hoped that the site south of the A30 will come forward shortly so that there will be new employment opportunities for residents moving into the east side of Shaftesbury..
- 7.20 A comparison with past trends indicates that the sub division of housing will increase due to increased pressure to find new opportunities in the town centre. It is interesting to note that no previously developed vacant land was identified. An increase in the intensification of existing residential areas reflects pressure on land and policies encouraging higher densities.

**TABLE 4****Urban Potential: Shaftesbury**

Source	Un-constrained yield (a)	Discounted Assessment		<b>Annual</b> Past Trends 1991-2001 (d)
		April 2001- March 2011 (b)	April 2011 - March 2016 (c)	
1) Subdivision of existing housing	475	27 2.7pa	15 5.0pa	0.8pa
2) Flats over shops	30	4 0.4pa	5 1.0pa	0.7pa
3) Empty Houses	92	16 1.6pa	0 0pa	2.2pa
4) Previously developed vacant/ derelict land & buildings (non housing)	0	0 0pa	0 0pa	2.2pa
5) Intensification of existing areas	148	36 3.6pa	24 4.8pa	1.4pa
6a) Redevelopment of existing housing	19	19 1.9pa	0 0pa	0pa
6b) Redevelopment of other uses	258	59 5.9pa	44 8.8pa	3.0pa
7) Redevelopment of car parks	38	0	0	0
8) Conversion of commercial buildings	13	6 0.6pa	16 0.32pa	0.4pa
9) Review of existing housing allocations in plans	97	27	70	No comparable data
10) Review of other existing allocations in plans.	105	20	55	No comparable data
11) Vacant land not previously developed	17	3 0.3pa	0 0pa	15.0pa
<b>TOTALS</b>	1292	217	229	



## **Sturminster Newton**

- 7.21 The two main parts of Sturminster Newton are situated either side of the River Stour. They are both contained within a Conservation Area and are linked by a fine medieval six-arched bridge. Most recent developments have been to the north of the town centre, spreading out between Bath Road and Manston Road. In view of the inadequacies of the highway network the town is defined in the Local Plan as being suitable for “moderate” growth only.
- 7.22 The survey revealed a potential for 379 new dwelling units during the period 2001 – 2011 with a further 82 in the period 2011 – 16 and 67 post 2016. The post 2016 figure is included for interest only. Details are contained in Table 5.
- 7.23 The main potential in Sturminster Newton is likely to come forward on previously developed vacant/derelict land and buildings or from redevelopment of other uses. Potential through higher densities on existing residential allocations is limited. Potential to review other allocations is likely to be post 2016 due to the need to retain employment land in the area.
- 7.24 A comparison with past trends indicates that most of the categories are predicted to yield more development than in the past. The development of the market site, a "one-off", will increase the proportion of dwellings on previously developed vacant land.

**TABLE 5****Urban Potential: Sturminster Newton**

Source	Un-constrained yield (a)	Discounted Assessment		<b>Annual</b> Past Trends 1991-2001 (d)
		April 2001- March 2011 (b)	April 2011 - March 2016 (c)	
1) Subdivision of existing housing	201	10 1.0pa	5 1.0pa	0.1pa
2) Flats over shops	19	4 0.4pa	2 0.4pa	0.3pa
3) Empty Houses	51	10	5	No data
4) Previously developed vacant/ derelict land & buildings (non housing)	94	93 9.3pa	0 0pa	0.7pa
5) Intensification of existing areas	92	31 3.1pa	39 7.8pa	1.4pa
6a) Redevelopment of existing housing	43	33 3.3pa	0 0pa	0pa
6b) Redevelopment of other uses	171	168 16.8pa	0 0pa	7.2pa
7) Redevelopment of car parks	25	0 0pa	10 2.0pa	0pa
8) Conversion of commercial buildings	3	1 0.1pa	5 1.0pa	0.4pa
9) Review of existing housing allocations in plans	25	25	0	No comparable data
10) Review of other existing allocations in plans.	66	0	16	No comparable data
11) Vacant land not previously developed	4	4 0.4pa	0 0pa	15pa
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>794</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>82</b>	

## **APPENDIX A**

### **1.0 Methodology**

- 1.1 Planning Policy Guidance 3 (PPG3) establishes that priority should be given to re-using previously developed land and buildings in preference to the development of greenfield sites. In order to make the best use of the potential to recycle land and buildings in any one location PPG3 has set out the expectation that all local planning authorities should undertake “urban capacity studies”.
- 4.2 “Tapping the Potential” was published by the former DETR as a short guide to better practice. The methodology set out below is consistent with this guide and with the approach taken by all local planning authorities in Dorset.

### **2.0 Stages in assessing potential**

- 2.1 As explained in the text, potential was assessed in two stages:

1. “unconstrained yield”, and
2. “discounted” yield

The discounted yield was then assigned to a likely time period.

1. by 2006
2. 2006-2011
3. 2011-2016
4. after 2016

Potential yield was calculated for each of the eleven categories identified in “Tapping the Potential”, using a variety of source data and discounting methodologies as set out below.

### **3.0 Category 1 – Sub-division of existing housing**

- 3.1 Unconstrained yield

This was assessed using 1991 census data for all dwellings with 7 or more habitable rooms. It was assumed that each dwelling had the potential for one extra dwelling unit.

- 3.2 Discounting

The unconstrained yield was adapted to past trends, but with an allowance made for a more sympathetic policy approach towards

conversion of property to multiple units, especially within centres or at public transport nodes, where parking requirements may be relaxed.

#### **4.0 Category 2. Flats over shops**

##### 4.1 Unconstrained yield.

This was assessed using the methodology suggested in “Tapping the Potential” (page 27), but adapted to take into account the data available to this authority. As floorspace data is only collected for the main town centres and not suburban shopping parades, it was agreed between Dorset Local Authorities to use the number of shops obtained from rating records rather than floorspace. It is assumed that one third of shops have empty space above them and that this gives the unconstrained yield.

##### 4.2 Discounting

The assumption made is that of the one third of shops with empty space above them, one third is suitable for conversion. Modern supermarkets have been excluded as they are generally unsuitable for flat development over them. This methodology has produced a potential comparable to past trends.

#### **5.0 Category 3: Empty Homes**

##### 5.1 Unconstrained yield

Accurate data on empty homes is not available. As short term vacancies do not represent an opportunity to increase housing potential, it has been agreed between authorities in Dorset that only properties empty for more than one year will be included. Council Tax records on properties charged at 0% and 50% rates have been used. These include properties empty for 6 months rather than 1 year but is the only data available. This may therefore result in a slight over estimate of capacity.

##### 5.2 Discounting

Some allowance needs to be made for normal turnover of stock. The former DTLR estimate this to be 2% of vacant property. The Council has an empty homes policy and statistics indicate that 3 out of the 4 towns are close to the 2% average. It is therefore assumed that potential from this source will be low. In Sturminster Newton where empty property is 3.4% of total stock it is assumed that 1% of total stock should come forward from this category over the study period.

**6.0 Category 4: Previously developed land and buildings, whether demolition and clearance has or has not taken place**

6.1 Unconstrained yield

This information was collected through comprehensive surveys of the urban areas. Officers surveyed on foot to identify potential for new housing development. Previously developed land now vacant and derelict land and buildings were included in this category. Sites were noted on OS base plans which were subsequently plotted and measured using GIS. Basic density assumptions were used to arrive at a figure for unconstrained yield. The basic density assumptions are shown below and plans showing the extent of each “density zone” are shown on pages 26-29.

<b>CATEGORIES OF URBAN AREA AND DENSITY ASSUMPTIONS</b>	
<b>CATEGORY<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>ASSUMED DENSITY</b>
Suburban	30 dph
Inner Urban	60 dph
Heart of Town	120 dph

6.2 Discounting

Site information was recorded on specially prepared data sheets. A separate sheet was completed for each site, covering existing and surrounding uses, accessibility, constraints, opportunities and services within walking distance. The information recorded on these sheets was then used in the discounting process to make an informed decision on the number of dwellings likely to come forward on each site. No general percentage discount methodology was used. It should also be noted that in individual circumstances the density assumption may be considered too low and subsequently the “discounted” figure may be higher than the unconstrained yield.

All identified sites were checked against sites with outstanding planning permission at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2002 to avoid double counting. Similarly, all sites were checked against potential from other categories identified through desk top studies to avoid double counting.

**7 Category 5. Intensification of residential development, including infill sites, additional housing in gardens, parking areas and replacement of garages but excluding demolition and redevelopment.**

## 7.1 Unconstrained yield

Information was collected through site survey as in Category 4. In assigning each site to a specific category, special attention was given to differentiating between intensification of existing residential (category 5) and redevelopment of existing housing (category 6a). In North Dorset, intensification rather than redevelopment has generally been considered more likely except where the site is close in to town centres. Each site was considered on its merits and assigned to this category as considered appropriate. Site areas were plotted and measured and basic density assumptions were used to arrive at a figure for unconstrained yield as for category 4.

## 7.2 Discounting

The information recorded on the individual site data sheets was used to make an informed decision on the number of extra dwellings likely to come forward on each site. Issues taken into consideration included access, topography, overlooking, position of trees and character of the surrounding area. Sites were also discussed with the Highway Authority and the Environment Agency. Where highway constraints were identified, it was assumed that potential would not come forward in the short-term. Apart from in exceptional circumstances, highway and other infrastructure constraints were not taken as a long term deterrent. Again it should be emphasised that the assessment only indicates potential and does not guarantee that planning permission would be granted if a planning application was submitted.

## **8 Category 6(a): Redevelopment of existing housing ie demolition and rebuild (net increase)**

### 8.1 Unconstrained yield

Information was collected through a comprehensive site survey as in categories 4 and 5. Each site was considered on its merits and assigned to this category as appropriate, as distinct from the intensification of existing use. The category includes the demolition of existing housing and replacement with new. The same density assumptions are made as in Categories 4 and 5.

### 8.2 Discounting

The existing number of dwellings on site was subtracted from the unconstrained yield to give a net figure. Otherwise, the discounting procedure was the same as in categories 4 and 5.

- 9 Category 6b: Re-development of other uses, including workshops, garages and other buildings suitable for redevelopment (not conversion) but excluding shops/ hotels and defined industrial estates**
- 9.1 This includes mainly non-conforming uses in residential areas but excludes sites which are derelict and buildings suitable for conversion. Shops, hotels and major industrial sites are also excluded. (Hotels are considered under category 8.) Unconstrained and discounted yields were calculated as in categories 4 and 5.
- 10 Category 7: Car Parks – public car parks only, excluding parking ancillary to other uses.**
- 10.1 All public and private car parks were recorded through site survey. The unconstrained yield was calculated using the same density assumptions as in categories 4, 5 and 6. Private garage courts were excluded (because included in residential intensification), as were car parks ancillary to other uses, (included in redevelopment of other uses). Each car park was assessed according to local knowledge and likely future parking policy to give a discounted yield.
- 11 Category 8: Conversion of commercial buildings, including large industrial or office buildings but excluding shops.**
- 11.1 Unconstrained yield
- This category includes all commercial buildings, including hotels but excluding existing and proposed industrial estates. Residential homes have also been excluded on the grounds that any redevelopment is unlikely to produce a net gain in accommodation units. Generally, because of the small number of commercial buildings suitable for conversion each has been considered on its merits. The unconstrained yield for hotels was calculated by taking the number of bedrooms and assuming one new dwelling for each 3 bedrooms. This approach was adopted in preference to using past trends because of the relatively few hotels in North Dorset compared with the coastal authorities. Guest houses were not included as these are smaller and more likely to be converted back to a single residential unit without a net gain. Public houses have been noted and a view has been taken on how many of these premises may be converted over the study period. Other uses occupying large buildings are considered on their merits.
- 11.2 Discounting
- The key policies in the Local Plan seek to concentrate development in the main towns where there is a range of employment and community

facilities to support the population. It would therefore be short sighted and contrary to policy to allow all commercial properties to convert to residential use. Nevertheless, it is recognised that a number of hotels, offices and even schools may become redundant during the study period. There is not sufficient past history to identify meaningful trends for discounting purposes and each site has therefore been considered on its merits.

**12 Category 9: Review of existing housing allocations.**

- 12.1 Existing housing allocations within settlement boundaries as defined in the emerging District Wide Local Plan have been reviewed. It is assumed that higher densities as set out in PPG3 are likely on all allocated sites where development has not been more or less completed. A new density of 40dph was assumed on these sites. This has resulted in an increase in potential, although due to new phasing policies, some of this land may come forward at a later date than originally anticipated. Assumptions made for allocated sites are contained in the summaries for individual towns where appropriate.

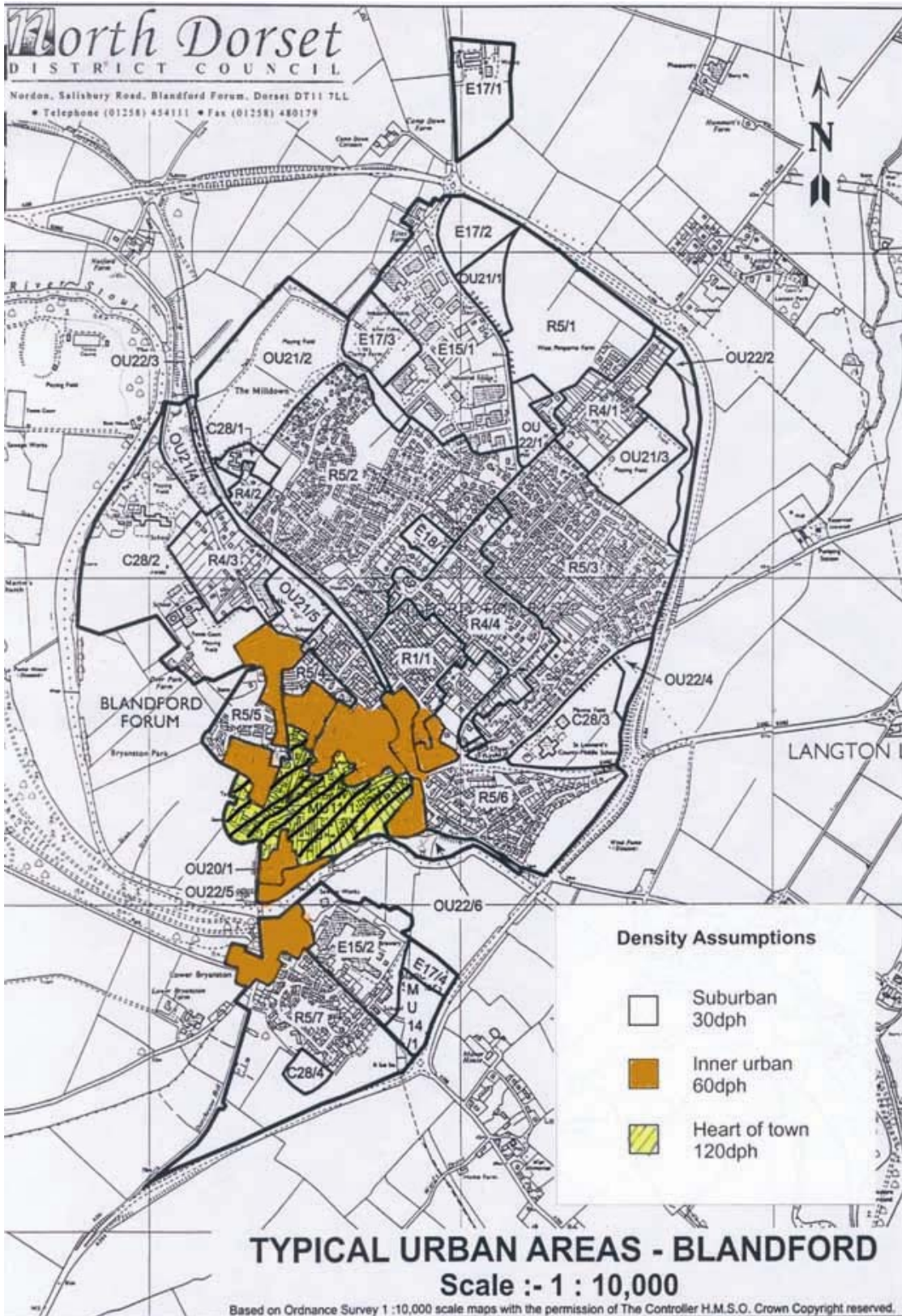
**13 Category 10: Review of non-residential allocations, including formal open space, allotments and IOWAs, and employment allocations.**

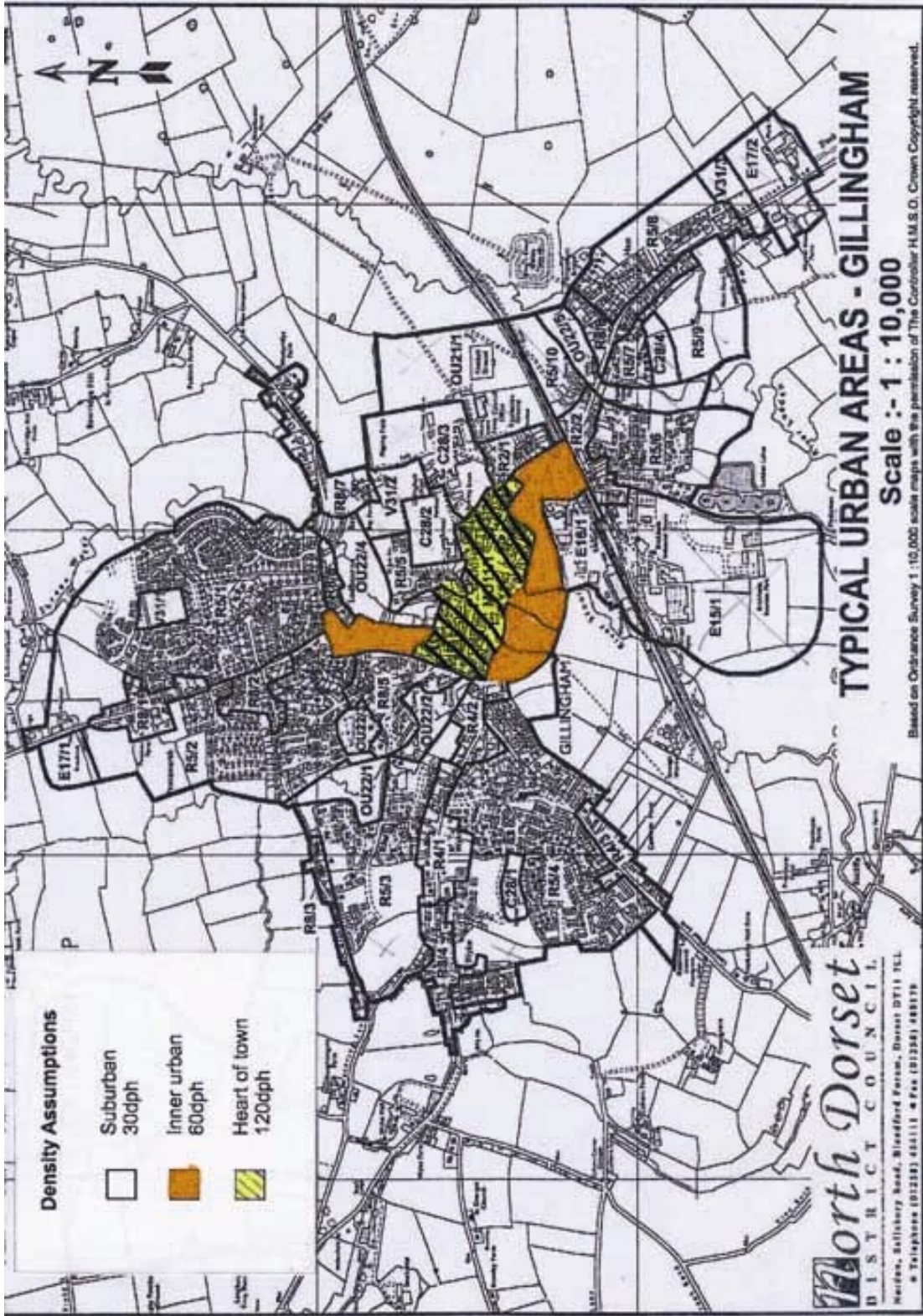
Non residential allocations within the settlement boundaries have also been reviewed by Planning Officers. Using knowledge of local circumstances, estimates of likely potential from these sources has been included as indicated in the summaries for each town. These are sources of potential only, and should not be viewed as indicating that a change of use would necessarily be proposed through the Local Plan Review process.

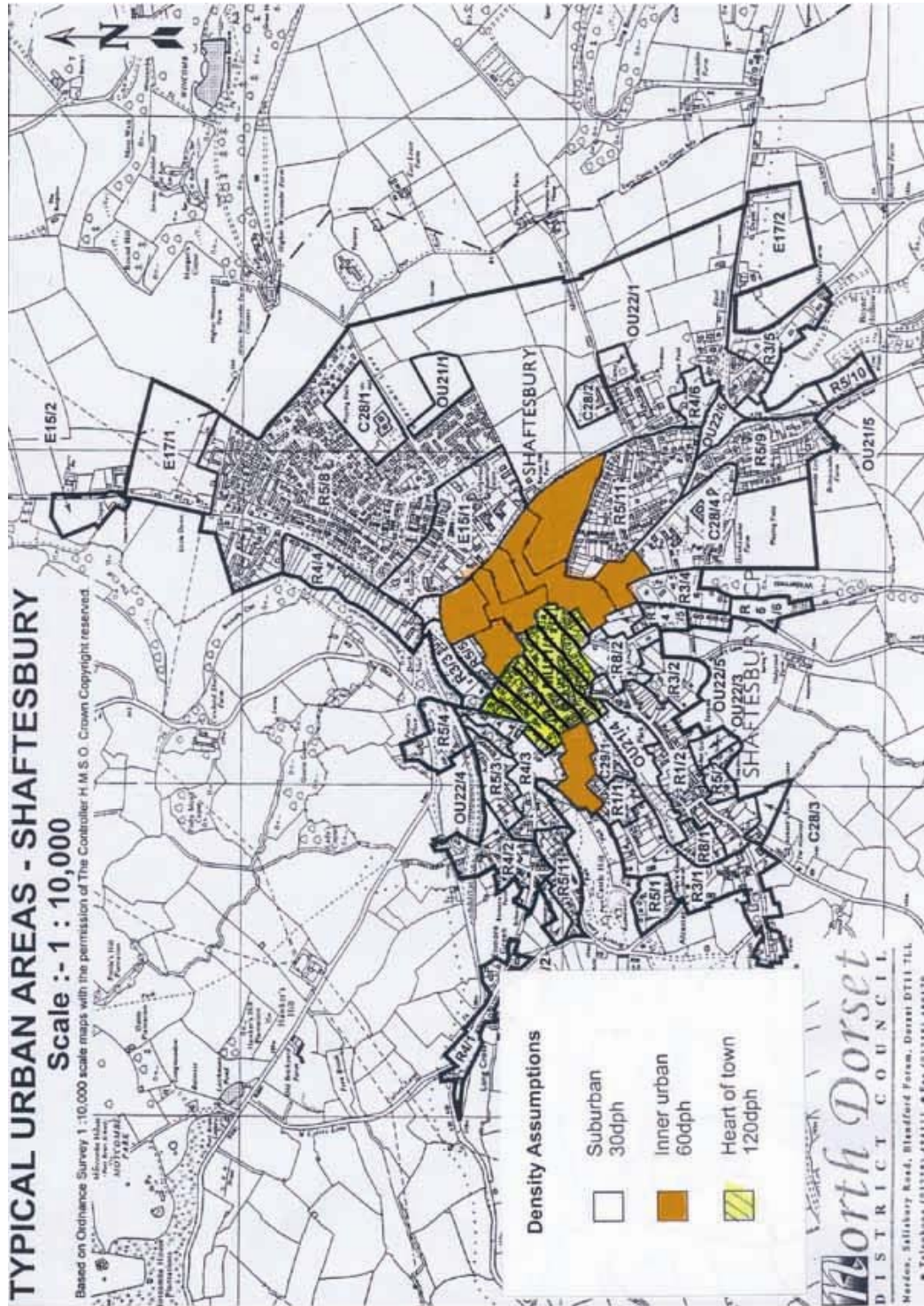
**14 Category 11: Vacant land not previously developed, including urban greenspace, informal public open space but excluding formal open space, allotments and IOWAs.**

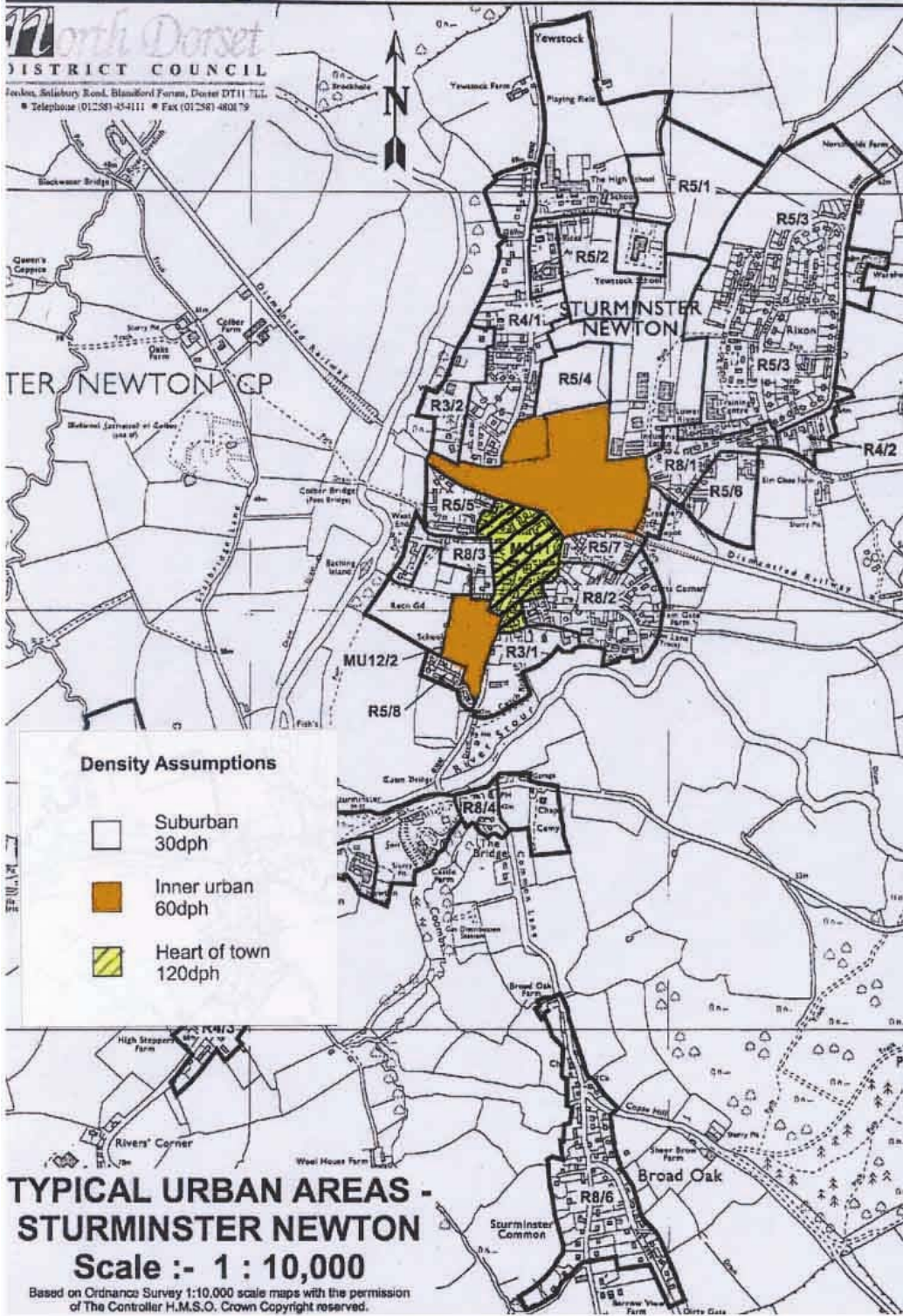
- 14.1 Vacant sites were identified during the site survey and density and discounting assumptions made as in categories 4 and 5. Land used for formal public open space, playing fields and allotments was excluded.











**URBAN POTENTIAL STUDY 2001  
SITE DATA SHEET**

Ref No: 2/	Date of survey:
------------	-----------------

SITE ADDRESS:

	OCCUPIED/VACANT
<b>EXISTING LAND USE(S)</b>	
Site .....	.....
Building GF .....	.....
FF .....	.....
SF .....	.....
OTHER FLOORS .....	
 <b>APPROX SITE / FLOOR AREA</b> (Hect/sqm)	
Site .....	
Building GF .....	100%
FF .....	%
SF .....	%
OF .....	%

**CONDITION OF SITE/BUILDING:**

GOOD  
AVERAGE  
RUNDOWN  
DERELICT

**NEIGHBOURING USES / DENSITY**

ACCEPTABLE /INTRUSIVE (give details)  
  
LOW (<10dpa) MED(10-25dpa)  
HIGH(>25)

**IS SITE ACCESSIBLE TO:**

VEHICLES	PEDESTRIANS
Existing / Potential	Existing / Potential

**CHARACTER OF AREA:**

GOOD  
AVERAGE  
RUN DOWN

**SITE CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITIES**

TREES  
OUTLOOK  
OVERLOOKED  
FLOOD RISK  
SLOPE OF SITE  
OTHER (specify)

**SERVICES WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE? (ie 400 METRES)**

SHOP(S)  
SCHOOL(S)  
EMPLOYMENT  
COMMUNITY FAC(S)  
HEALTH FAC(S)  
PUBLIC TRANSPORT

**WHICH CATEGORY OF DEV/REDEV DOES SITE FALL INTO?**

- VACANT LAND **NOT** PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED
- VACANT LAND, PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED
- INTENSIFICATION OF EXISTING RES AREA (not conversion)
- REDEV OF EXISTING HOUSING (knock down and rebuild)
- REDEV OF OTHER USES (not conversion)
- REDEV OF CAR PARKS
- CONVERSION OF COMMERCIAL OR OTHER NON-RES BUILDINGS

## APPENDIX B

Dear Sir/Madam,

### Survey of future housing land

NDDC is undertaking a survey to assess the potential for new residential development within the towns and villages of the District. This information will help inform future policy on land required for housing development.

The government requires that local authorities seek to make efficient use of the land and buildings within their urban areas so that future loss of green field land to development can be reduced. This can be achieved by, for example, the sub-division of existing large dwellings, utilising garden space, space over shops and underused buildings or converting vacant commercial units.

There will be three main stages to the survey

- identify **all** potential housing sites – or unconstrained yield
- make a **realistic** assessment of the suitability of the sites taking into account other policy priorities such as retaining a good mix of housing types, retaining land for employment uses and retaining open space to serve the community and
- make an **informed estimate** of the percentage of sites likely to come forward based on market influences and former trends – giving the discounted yield.

All the town and village settlements will be surveyed although the settlements of Blandford Forum, Shaftsbury, Gillingham, Sturminster Newton and Stalbridge will be the first priority.

Information from people and organisations with local knowledge will be especially helpful in identifying potential sites. Your help is therefore requested, particularly in the first stage of assessing **all potential** housing sites. I am therefore attaching a questionnaire which asks for information on a range of types of site. Please complete as much as possible.

I am attaching plans of the major towns. Please mark the sites which you have identified on these plans. If you need plans of any specific village settlements please let me know.

Your information will be treated confidentially. The identification of individual sites as having potential is no guarantee of planning permission being granted and no site specific details will be released.

**Please return by Friday 30th November** in the pre paid envelope provided.

Your help is greatly appreciated,

Yours faithfully

JANET PARFFETT

**Potential for new housing**  
Questionnaire

- Please answer questions relevant to your knowledge of the area, and
- Please indicate on the attached plans the sites to which you refer. Feel free to annotate the plans with any further information which you believe to be relevant.
- Thank you for your help

**1. subdivision of existing dwellings**

Are you aware of any existing large dwellings which are suitable for sub-division into smaller dwelling units? If yes please indicate Yes  No

Address & mark on plan	Constraints/marketability
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----

**2. flats over shops/offices**

Are you aware of any underused space over shops or offices which could be converted to residential use? Yes  No

Address & mark on plan	Constraints/marketability
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----

**3.empty homes**

Are you aware of any individual homes which are unnecessarily vacant and have been vacant for more than a year? Yes  No

Address & mark on plan	Constraints/marketability
-----	
-----	
-----	
-----	
-----	
-----	

**4. previously developed non residential vacant and derelict land**

Are you aware of any previously developed non residential land or Buildings which are now vacant, derelict or underused?

Yes  No

Address & mark on plan

Constraints/marketability

-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----

**5. intensification**

Are you aware of any opportunity to intensify existing residential use e.g. use of large gardens, communal garage courts or poorly used amenity space?

Yes  No

Address & mark on plan

Constraints/marketability

-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----

**6. redevelopment**

Are you aware of any individual or group of houses which would benefit from redevelopment?

Yes  No

Address & mark on map

Constraints/marketability

-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----

**7. car parks**

Are you aware of any underused car parking areas which could be developed wholly or in part for residential use? Please add comment on suitability for decking if appropriate and comment on why land is no longer required for parking.

Yes  No

Address & mark on map

Constraints/marketability



-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----

**8. conversion of commercial buildings**

Are you aware of any vacant/ under used commercial or industrial buildings, including guest houses and hotels which may be suitable for conversion to residential units?

Yes  No

Address & mark on map

Constraints/marketability

-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----

**9. vacant land not previously developed**

Are you aware of any land, not previously developed but contained within the town/village settlement boundary, which may be suitable wholly or in part for residential use? (eg small paddock or orchard)

Yes  No

Address & mark on map

Constraints/marketability

-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----
-----	-----

**10. other sources**

Are you aware of any other sources of potential housing sites not addressed in Q1-9 above?

Yes  No

Address & mark on plan

Constraints/marketability

-----	-----
-----	-----

**11. any other comments**

Do you wish to make any other comments?

.....

**12. personal details**

The information you have provided will be treated as confidential and no individual sites will be identified. However it would be helpful if you could provide the following details

12.1

Which of the following categories best describes your interest

- local resident
- town or parish council
- organisation involved in development industry eg estate agents developers
- general business interest

- land owner/financial interest – see question 12.3
- other .....

12.2

Would you be prepared to participate in future studies or expand on any of the information which you have provided?

Yes  No

12.3

It may be necessary to undertake more detailed discussions with landowners to establish the likelihood of sites coming forward for development. If you own or have a financial interest in any of the above sites please indicate which ones and whether you would be willing to explore the release of your land for housing development.

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

12.4 (optional)

Please fill out your name and address

Name.....Organisation.....  
 Address.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 Tel.....Fax.....email.....

Please return this form by **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November** in the pre paid envelope provided

Thank you for your assistance.

