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West Wiltshire Core Strategy
Issues and Options Paper

Report on the Consultation Responses

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December 2007

to
February 2008

West Wiltshire
District Council

Issues and Options Consultation Paper
Executive Summary of Responses

Consultation process
- There was an eight week consultation period between December 2007 and February 2008
- The submission deadline fell on 29 February 2008 but late responses were accepted

Questionnaire
- 389 responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper were submitted
- Not all questions were answered by all the respondents
- A very large proportion of responses were opposing development in the Hilperton area.
- In some areas, comments were consistent giving clear opportunities to gauge opinion and agreement, whereas in others no clear direction for the Core Strategy emerged.

Spatial Strategy Options
- The most popular option for the distribution of new development in the District, supported by 38 respondents, was for Option 3:

  Category 'A' – Trowbridge;
  Category 'B' – Melksham, Warminster;
  Category 'C' – Bradford-on-Avon, Westbury and larger villages

- However, there was support for Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury to form a 'B2' category, which recognises the severe constraints on new development in these towns but also preserves their market town status and distinguishes them from the villages.

Spatial Growth Options
- There is a high level of opposition to new development in the Hilperton area of Trowbridge. However, there is no strong overall preference for or against particular new development around towns in the rest of the District, with the exception of Option 4 for Bradford-on-Avon, which proposes development in the Green Belt and is strongly opposed.

Other Topics:

(Percentage support refers to the percentage of respondents who answered that particular question and stated a preference for an individual option)

Areas of agreement with at least 70% support:
- 77% support the vision and objectives for West Wiltshire
- 77% support the vision for Trowbridge
- 71% support the visions for Bradford-on-Avon, Melksham, Warminster and Westbury
- 73% support district targets of between 30% and 60% affordable housing, with exact proportion and thresholds depending on local need and circumstances
- 70% support identifying site search criteria in the Core Strategy for gypsies and travellers and for travelling show people; working with local communities to identify new private sites meeting those criteria to be delivered through the planning system
- 79% support the main education needs identified in the Issues and Options paper
- 75% support identifying one or two strategic employment sites at Trowbridge to meet the town's employment land supply needs but also to seek to meet the remaining need through other sites located within the town's commute to work area

- 100% support encouraging links between business and local education facilities in order to develop the skills of the resident workforce
- 89% support the strategy for Trowbridge town centre
- 76% support the strategies for Melksham and Warminster town centres
- 75% support retaining the existing town centre areas in Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury but also introducing new traffic management measures and environmental enhancements in order to improve the retail environment
- 96% support the management objectives for the historic environment
- 100% support the design policy objectives
- 84% support the current policy approach towards planning for tourism
- 88% support safeguarding the preferred route for the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal
- 79% support maintaining the existing approach towards reducing the need to travel but prioritise the delivery of public transport service improvements, for both bus and rail, directly through the planned for growth. Requiring that all forms of growth contribute towards increasing the quality, capacity and frequency of public transport services.

Areas of agreement with at least 50% support:
- 58% see no exceptional circumstances to justify changing Green Belt boundaries
- 56% support a requirement of 50% market and 50% affordable housing on every site within a small settlement
- 50% support setting individual previously developed land and density targets for each town and setting one such target for rural areas based upon local characteristics, aiming to increase historic rates
- 65% support local authorities and healthcare providers ensuring their strategic plans are fully complementary and that local authorities should take the lead role in planning for provision of health facilities in the long term.
- 61% support the protection of key urban employment sites from redevelopment but not older and redundant sites that could be redeveloped for other uses, including housing
- 68% support the current approach of allowing all forms of economic rural diversification regardless of location or need
- 50% support prioritising new sites that cater for small businesses and start-up entrepreneurs in order to encourage the growth of the professional sector
- 69% of respondents would pay more for a zero carbon house
- 59% support the existing landscape policy giving enhanced protection only to AONBs and to Special Landscape Areas
- 66% support a transport strategy based on the A350 corridor

Areas of uncertainty:
- The distribution of new housing in the district
- The location of schools in Trowbridge
- Addressing declining pupil numbers in rural schools
- Tackling the continuing loss of rural shops and facilities
- Meeting the need for renewable energy
- Addressing the issue of sustainable construction
- Strategic transport network improvements

A number of comments were also received on a range of other topics, including infrastructure contributions, biodiversity and leisure and recreation.

List of Contents

1   Introduction

Background and Overview

1.1   The Issues and Options consultation paper was published in December 2007 and went out for public consultation between December and February 2008. The deadline for responses fell on the 29 February 2008 but the Council has continued to accept responses after that deadline had expired.

1.2   Over 80 questions were asked, however the key questions that guide the overall framework of the Core Strategy can be found in Chapters 2 and 3 of this report.

Spatial Strategy Options

1.3   The responses to the questions on the spatial strategy options for West Wiltshire can be found in Chapter 2. This section addresses the relative roles and functions of the settlements within West Wiltshire in terms of supporting both housing and employment growth over the 20 year period of the Core Strategy.

1.4   The Core Strategy is required to be in conformity with national and regional planning policy. The relevant regional planning policy document is the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South West, which was submitted to the Government in April 2006. After a period of public consultation in the summer of 2006, consultation responses were submitted to the independent Examination in Public (EiP) Panel. The Panel invited organisations and individuals to participate in an Examination in Public (EiP) of the draft RSS, held the following year. The Panel Report into the EiP of the draft RSS was published in January 2008 and submitted to the Secretary of State, who published her proposed changes to the Draft RSS in July 2008. Thereafter followed the start of a 12 week consultation period, which is due to finish in October 2008.

1.5   The draft RSS has already identified Trowbridge as a strategically significant city/ town (SSCT), which means that it is a sub-regionally significant employment, administrative and service centre where there is much potential for town centre expansion. Therefore, Trowbridge has been classified as a Development Policy/ Category A settlement. The draft RSS suggests that the regional significance of these settlements should be maintained and enhanced, including such areas as housing, employment, cultural, education, retail, and health. This means that Trowbridge will become the primary focus for growth within the district and fulfil its sub-regional role as the County Town.

1.6   However, respondents were asked to choose from a range of options relating to the relative roles of the other four market towns in West Wiltshire, Bradford-on-Avon, Melksham, Warminster and Westbury, and the surrounding villages.

Spatial Growth Options

1.7   The responses to the questions on the spatial growth options for West Wiltshire can be found in Chapter 3. This section looks at the broad locations for growth at each of the five market towns. Respondents were asked if they had any strong preferences for particular locations for urban extensions at each of the towns.

1.8   The remaining chapters of the report address a number of other topics that the Core Strategy will need to address, such as housing, employment, retail and the environment, as well as developing a vision and objectives for the Core Strategy.

Consultation Process

1.9   An eight week period of consultation for the Issues and Options paper was held between December 2007 and February 2008. The paper and forms were placed at the District Council offices, town council offices and the town libraries. A copy of the paper was also available on the website, along with information on how to respond. Responses could be submitted via the postal delivery system or by email.

1.10   Letters were sent to the Core Strategy Consultation Agent and Developer List, the Core Strategy Consultation Group, town councils, parish councils and Community Areas Partnerships (CAP). Stakeholders were informed by post, or by email, and key partners were sent copies (either in paper or electronic format) of the paper. For example, this applied to councillors, statutory consultees, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), CAP, and town and parish councils. Other stakeholders were provided with details of how they could obtain or view copies of the consultation paper.

1.11   The consultation paper and process was advertised through the local press (*Wiltshire Times* 14 December 2007) and on the Council website. Other promotional opportunities, such as West Wiltshire Matters (February 2008) newsletter, were also utilised.

1.12   Public exhibitions were held in the following locations during February 2008:

- Hilperton Parish Hall   18 February 2008
- Trowbridge: The Shires Shopping Mall   15/ 16 February 2008
- Bradford-on-Avon public library   21 February 2008
- Warminster: Three Horse Shoes Mall   22/23 February 2008

1.13   The following meetings and seminars were also held:

- Community Area Partnership Seminars:
  - District Council Offices   14 January 2008
  - District Council Offices   30 January 2008
- Rural Area Seminars:
  - Warminster: The Athenaeum   5 February 2008
  - Bradford-on-Avon public library   29 January 2008
- Local Strategic Partnership (LSP):
  - District Council Offices   28 January 2008
- One-to-One Stakeholder Meeting   8 February 2008
- Other meetings and seminars:
  - Steeple Ashton village hall   7 March 2008
  - Bradford-on-Avon Economic Group   26 January 2008
  - West Wiltshire Economic Partnership   13 February 2008
  - Melksham Town Council   4 February 2008
  - WWDC Members Seminar   10 January 2008

Chapter 2:   A Spatial Strategy for West Wiltshire

Spatial Strategy Options (*I&O: Q4, Q5*)

2.1   The spatial strategy will set out how we see the future role and function of all settlements. It must implement the wider regional spatial strategy for the South West, which in turn reflects national policies and priorities.

2.2   The draft regional spatial strategy for the South West categorises settlements into three Development Policies or Categories:

   A   Cities and large towns which are seen as having the most potential to accommodate new growth in a sustainable way.

   B   Market towns with a sufficient range of employment and services to accommodate locally significant development

   C   Small towns and villages with some facilities where small scale development may be appropriate.

2.3   Outside of these settlements, the assumption is that small villages, hamlets and open countryside are inappropriate locations for development, other than for the purposes of forestry, agriculture and farm diversification.

2.4   The draft regional strategy has identified Trowbridge as a sub-regionally significant employment, administrative and service centre, with much potential for town centre expansion. Trowbridge has therefore been classed as an 'A' type town with specific housing targets to meet regional growth. It will be the focal point for development in the future within West Wiltshire.

2.5   Respondents to the Issues and Options consultation paper were asked to choose between the following Spatial Strategy Options:
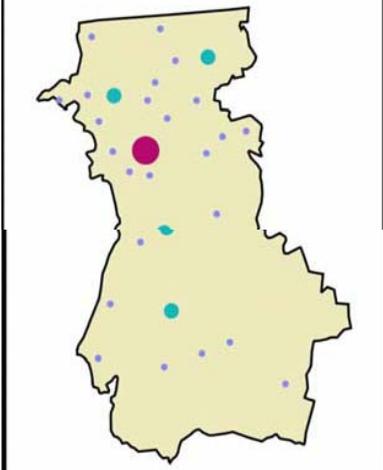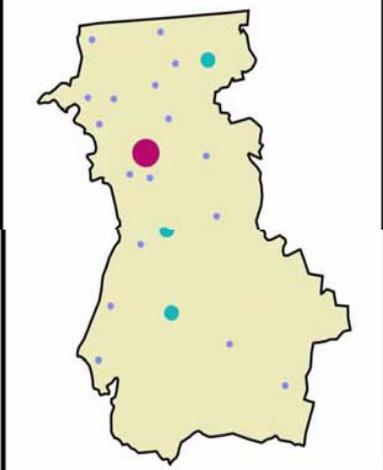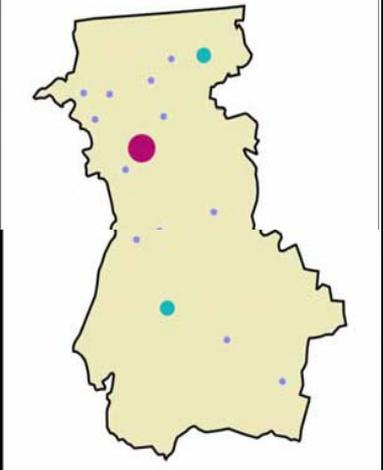
Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
'A' Trowbridge	'A' Trowbridge	'A' Trowbridge
'B' Bradford-on-Avon Melksham Warminster Westbury	'B' Melksham Warminster Westbury	'B' Melksham Warminster
'C' Atworth, Bratton, Broughton Gifford, Bulkington, Codford, Corsley, Dilton Marsh, Heytesbury, Hilperton, Holt, Horningsham, Keevil, Limpley Stoke, Longbridge Deverill, Monkton Farleigh, North Bradley, Semington, Southwick, Staverton, Steeple Ashton, Sutton Veny, Westwood, Wingfield, Winsley.	'C' Bradford-on-Avon, Atworth, Bratton, Broughton Gifford, Codford, Corsley, Dilton Marsh, Heytesbury, Hilperton, Holt, Horningsham, Monkton Farleigh, North Bradley, Southwick, Steeple Ashton, Westwood, Winsley.	'C' Bradford-on-Avon, Westbury, Bratton, Broughton Gifford, Codford, Dilton Marsh, Heytesbury, Hilperton, Holt, Southwick, Westwood, Winsley.

Table 1 – Spatial strategy options for West Wiltshire

2.6   There were 115 respondents who answered the question on spatial strategy options; 30% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Of these, 92 chose either one of the three above options, or another option within the limitations set out in the regional strategy. The following pie chart provides a breakdown of the responses to this question:
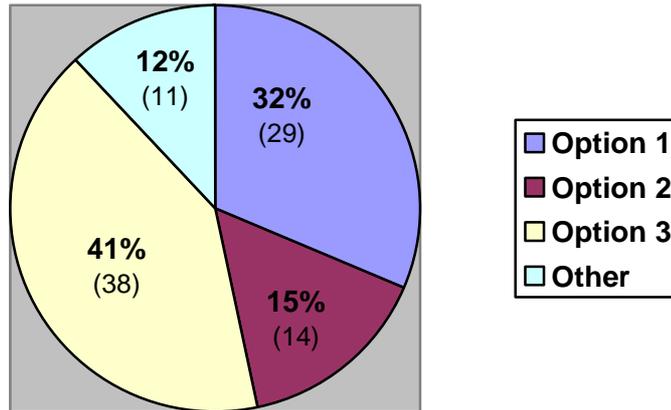
Figure 1 - Level of support for spatial strategy options for West Wiltshire

2.7   From the representations received, the most favoured spatial strategy option is **Option 3**, with 38 votes (41%). This is a more focused strategy looking at locally significant growth in only the few towns that currently meet the regional criteria for sustaining growth. In the remaining smaller towns and only the largest villages, small scale development should be focused on delivering specific objectives.

2.8   The general consensus of the alternative options given suggested that, firstly, Melksham and Warminster should be category B settlements, capable of supporting locally significant development. However, there is support for Westbury and Bradford-on-Avon to occupy a separate category between category 'B' and category 'C', effectively a category 'B2'. While the severe constraints on both are recognised, it is felt that their status as market towns needs to be distinguished from the villages. A category 'C' involving a limited number of the larger villages and those villages closely related to nearby towns is also supported.

Western Wiltshire Green Belt (*I&O: Q6*)

2.9   Part of the north west of West Wiltshire, between Trowbridge and Bath, has been designated Green Belt. The purpose of this designation is threefold:

- To maintain the open character of undeveloped land adjacent to Bath, Trowbridge and Bradford-on-Avon
- To prevent the coalescence of Bradford-on-Avon with Trowbridge or the villages to the east of Bath
- To protect the setting and historic character of Bradford-on-Avon

2.10   A strategic review of the Green Belts in the South West was undertaken as part of the production of the draft regional spatial strategy. While some changes were recommended at Bath and Bristol to accommodate urban extensions, no changes were proposed to the Green Belt in West Wiltshire.

2.11   Unless there are any exceptional circumstances, local planning authorities should not alter Green Belt boundaries. Respondents were asked whether there are any exceptional circumstances that would justify changes to the Green Belt boundaries.

2.12   There were 45 respondents who answered the question on Green Belt boundaries; 12% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.
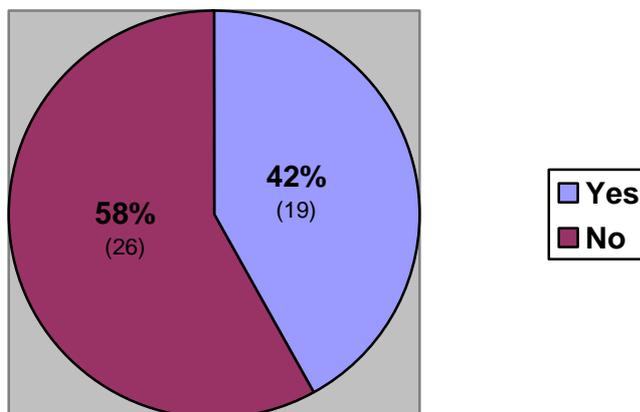

Figure 2 – Level of support for changes to the Green Belt boundaries

2.13   From the responses received, the majority of people believe that there are **no exceptional circumstances** that would justify changes to the Green Belt boundaries.

Summary

2.14   Option 3 is the most popular spatial strategy for West Wiltshire but less than half of respondents supported this option. Analysis of the comments received and other options put forward suggest that a slightly modified structure with Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury in a Category 'B2', which recognises that severe constraints will see a lower level of development than in Melksham or Warminster but also preserves their market town status, is preferable.

2.15   With regard to the Green Belt policy, a majority of respondents believe that there are no exceptional circumstances that would justify changing the boundaries in West Wiltshire. However, a significant minority of responses did suggest situations where such changes could be considered.

Chapter 3:   Spatial Growth Options

3.1   The spatial strategy will determine the overall level of development and how it will be distributed across West Wiltshire. The priority continues to be redeveloping previously developed land within existing urban areas and, in particular, regenerating the town centres. However, there will be a need at some, if not all of the towns, to provide for new urban extensions to meet future needs.

3.2   During the Issues stage of the Core Strategy consultation process, the Council invited landowners and developers to put forward land for consideration for future development. A series of options were put together, based upon these initial landowner and developer responses, which identified some broad, strategic locations for future urban extensions.

3.3   Some of these broad options are large and contain many individual parcels of land. Others are small and may contain only one site. The proposed uses are those put forward by landowners and developers and include housing, employment and mixed use development.

3.4   If sufficient sites for new development can be found and developed within urban areas, some or all of these will not be released for development. However, a constant supply of land for development is required by Government throughout the 20 year plan period.

3.5   Whichever town area options are chosen, the same overall level of development needs to be accommodated. Therefore, one solution may be a combination of development at a number of smaller sites, or one development at a large site.

3.6   Respondents to the Issues and Options Consultation were asked to comment on the following broad options at each of the five major towns in West Wilshire. Each option received both supporting and objecting comments. Both the number of responses in favour and the number against each option are displayed side by side on the following graphs for each town.

Bradford-on-Avon (*I&O: Q77, Q78*)

3.7   There were 31 respondents who answered the question on spatial growth options for Bradford-on-Avon; 8% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options Consultation Paper.
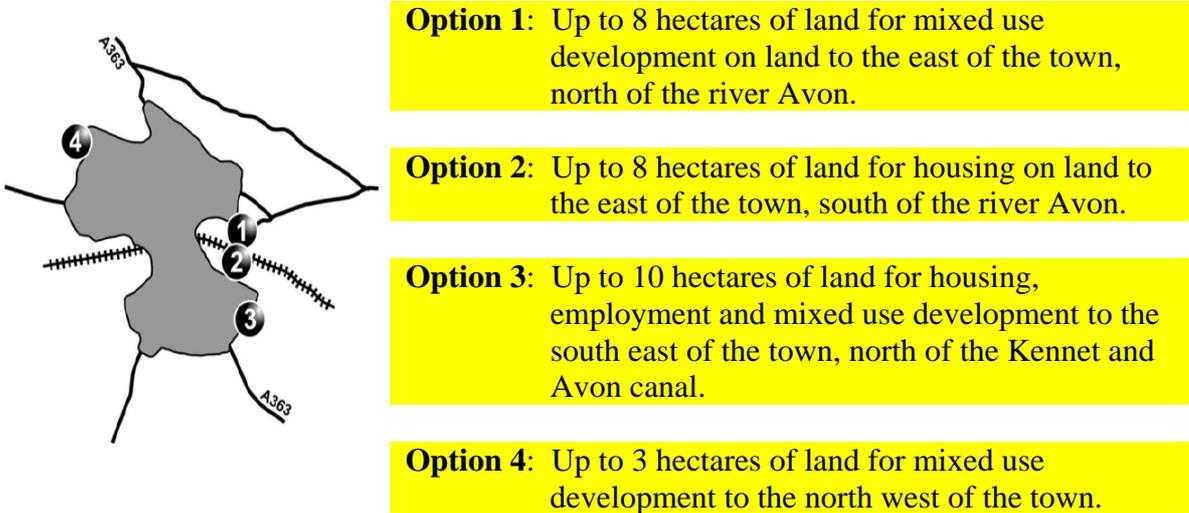

Option 1: Up to 8 hectares of land for mixed use development on land to the east of the town, north of the river Avon.

Option 2: Up to 8 hectares of land for housing on land to the east of the town, south of the river Avon.

Option 3: Up to 10 hectares of land for housing, employment and mixed use development to the south east of the town, north of the Kennet and Avon canal.

Option 4: Up to 3 hectares of land for mixed use development to the north west of the town.

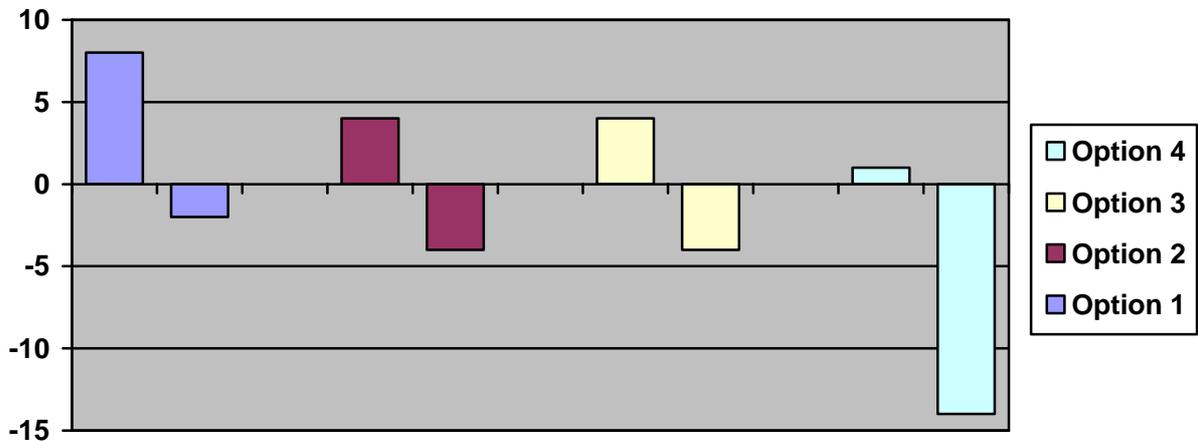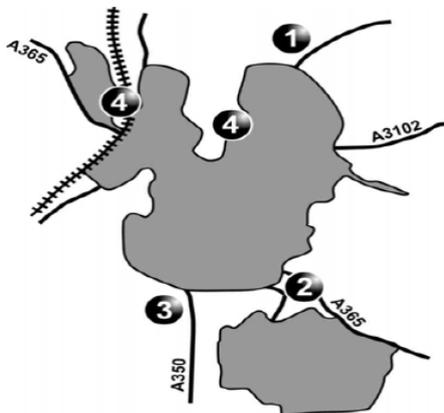**Table 2 – Spatial growth options for Bradford-on-Avon**

Figure 3 – Responses for and against each spatial growth option in Bradford-on-Avon

3.8   From the responses received, the most popular location for a future urban extension in Bradford-on-Avon is Option 1. The least favoured location for new development is Option 4. The other two options had an equal number of responses in support and against.

Melksham (*I&O: Q79, Q80*)

3.9   There were 29 respondents who answered the question on spatial growth options for Melksham; 7% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options Consultation Paper.

Option 1:	Up to 44 hectares of land for housing and community facilities on land to the north east of the town.
Option 2:	Up to 102 hectares of land for housing, employment and mixed use development on land to the south east of the town.
Option 3:	Up to 13 hectares of land for housing, employment and mixed use development to the south of the town.
Option 4:	Up to 9 hectares of land for housing and mixed use development on Greenfield land within the urban area to the north of the town.

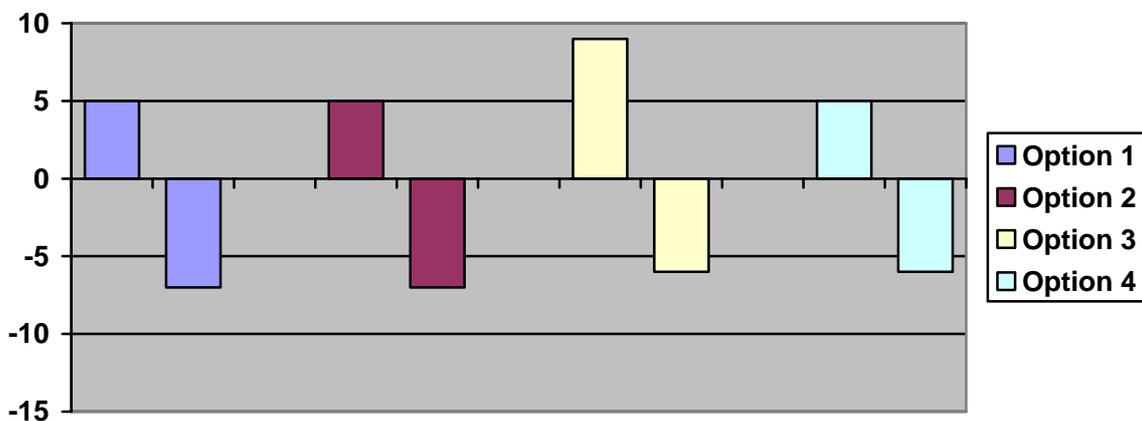**Table 3 – Spatial growth options for Melksham**

Figure 4 – Responses for and against each spatial growth option in Melksham

3.10   From the responses received, the most popular location for a future urban extension in Melksham is Option 3. The least favoured options for new development are Options 1 and 2, and, to a lesser extent, Option 4.

Trowbridge (*I&O: Q81, Q82*)

3.11   There were 256 respondents who answered the question on spatial growth options for Trowbridge; 66% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options Consultation Paper.
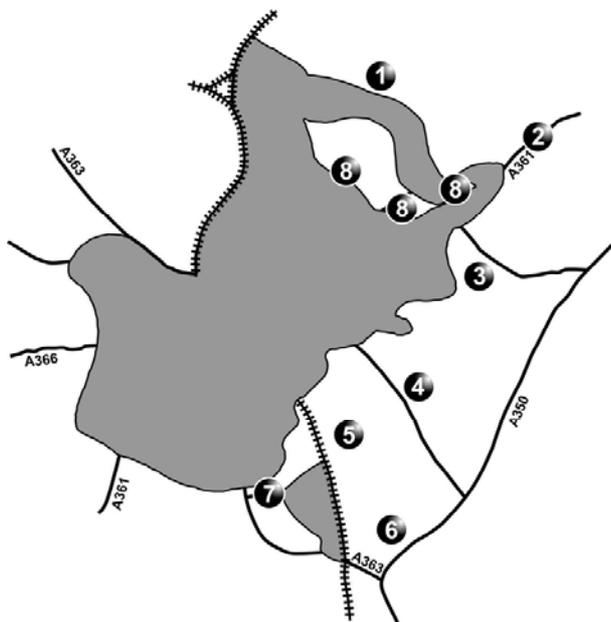
Option 1:	Up to 88 hectares of land for housing and other uses on land to the north of Hilperton.
Option 2:	Up to 110 hectares of land for development on land to the north east of Hilperton.
Option 3:	Up to 14 hectares of land for housing to the east of the town.
Option 4:	Up to 60 hectares of land for housing and mixed use development to the south east of the town, east of the River Biss
Option 5:	Up to 98 hectares of land for housing, employment and mixed use development to the south east of the town, west of the River Biss.
Option 6:	Up to 53 hectares of land for housing, employment and mixed use development to the south of the town.
Option 7:	Up to 40 hectares of land for housing, employment and mixed use development to the south of the town.
Option 8:	Up to 20 hectares of land for housing and mixed use development on land between Hilperton and Trowbridge.

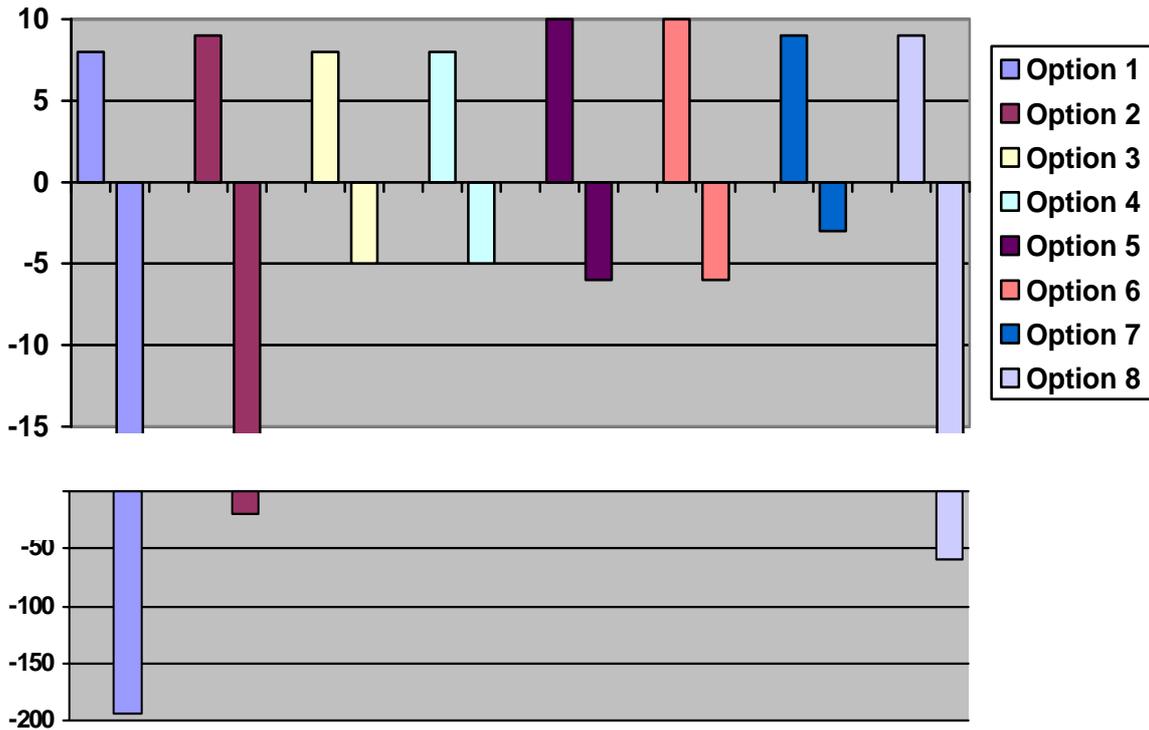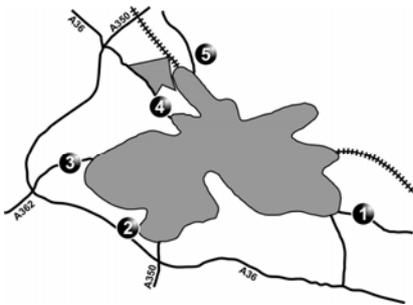**Table 4 – Spatial growth options for Trowbridge**

Figure 5 – Responses for and against each spatial growth option in Trowbridge

3.12   From the responses received, the most popular location for a future urban extension in Trowbridge is Option 7. Other broad options for new development receiving overall support among respondents are Option 5 and Option 6 and, to a slightly lesser extent, Option 3 and Option 4.

3.13   However, there is very strong opposition to Option 1, in particular, and to Option 8. The other broad location for new development that received a greater level of opposition than support is Option 2.

Warminster (*I&O: Q83, Q84*)

3.14   There were 23 respondents who answered the question on spatial growth options for Warminster; 6% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options Consultation Paper.

Option 1:	Up to 11 hectares of land for housing on land to the east of the town.
Option 2:	Up to 6 hectares of land for housing on land to the south west of the town.
Option 3:	Up to 33 hectares of land for housing, mixed use development and recreation to the west of the town.
Option 4:	Up to 42 hectares of land for housing, employment and mixed use development to the north west of the town.
Option 5:	Up to 2 hectares of land for housing to the north of the town.

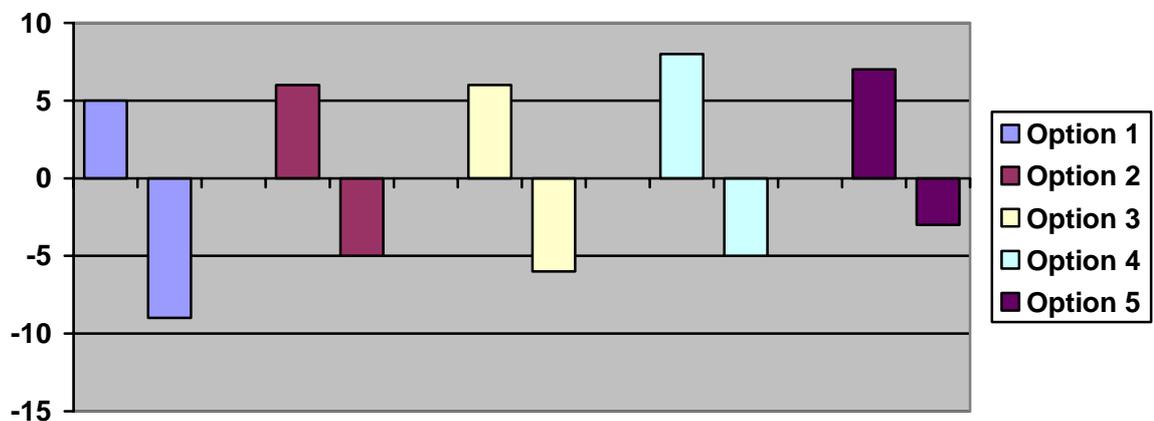**Table 5 – Spatial growth options for Warminster**

Figure 6 – Responses for and against each spatial growth option in Warminster

3.15   From the responses received, the most popular location for a future urban extension in Warminster is Option 5. Other broad locations for new development receiving overall support are Option 4 and, to a lesser extent, Option 2. Option 3 received an equal number of responses in favour and against. The least popular option for new development is Option 1.

Westbury (*I&O: Q85, Q86*)

3.16   There were 28 respondents who answered the question on spatial growth options for Westbury; 7% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options Consultation Paper.
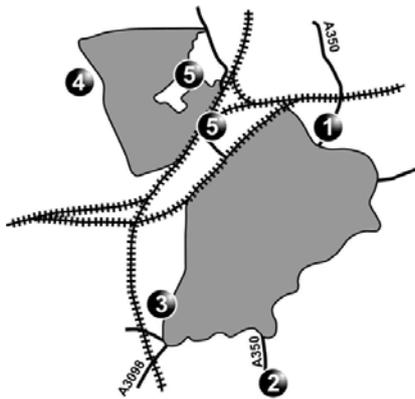
Option 1: Up to 23 hectares of land for housing and mixed use development on land to the north east of the town.

Option 2: Up to 21 hectares of land for road side uses on land to the south of the town.

Option 3: Up to 6 hectares of land for housing development to the south west of the town.

Option 4: Up to 40 hectares of land for employment development to the west of the West Wiltshire Trading Estate.

Option 5: Up to 15 hectares of land for housing, employment and mixed use development on sites between West Wiltshire Trading Estate, The Ham and Westbury.

Table 6 – Spatial growth options for Westbury
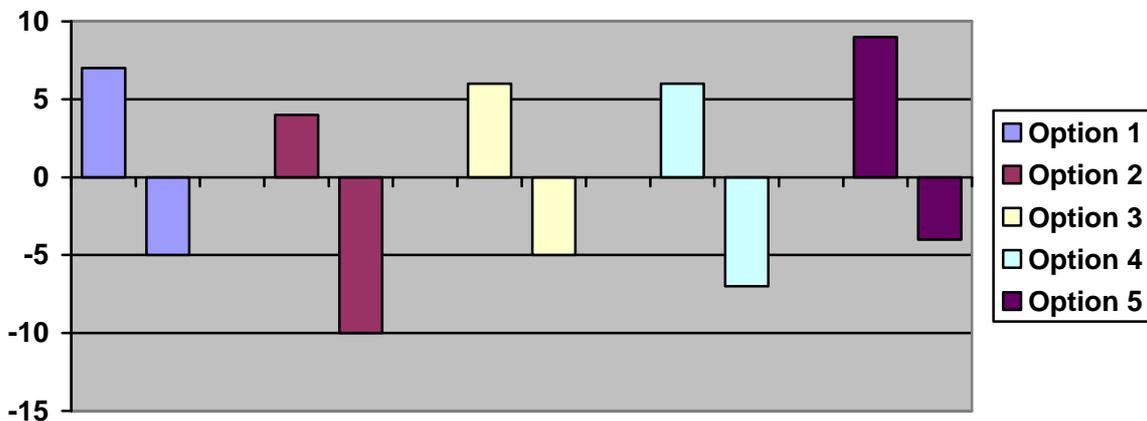

Figure 7 – Responses for and against each spatial growth option in Westbury

3.17   From the responses received, the most popular location for a future urban extension in Westbury is Option 5. Other broad locations for new development that received overall support are Option 1 and, to a lesser extent, Option 3. The least popular options are Option 2, in particular, and, to a lesser extent, Option 4.

3.18   <u>Summary</u>:   There is a high level of opposition to new development in the Hilperton area of Trowbridge. While there appears to be no strong overall preference for or against development in other areas of the District, with the exception of Option 4 for Bradford-on-

Avon, this is perhaps the strongest message to come out of the questions on spatial growth options, if not the whole Issues and Options consultation paper. More respondents answered the question on Trowbridge, in particular expressing their opposition to Options 1, 8 and, to a lesser extent, 2, than any other question.

3.19   However, it is likely that, in order to meet the housing supply targets contained within the draft RSS of which more details can be found in Chapter 5, the majority of sites within each of the broad locations for growth identified in the above options will have to be developed. This may mean a choice between making an unpopular decision and finding a suitable alternative.

Chapter 4:   Vision and Objectives

4.1   It is important that we develop a clear vision for how we would like the places in West Wiltshire to be in the next 20 years. From this spatial vision we can develop objectives, strategies and policies to make that vision come true.

4.2   Respondents to the Issues and Options Consultation Paper were asked whether or not they agreed with the spatial visions and objectives below. Positive comments were recorded as a YES vote and negative comments were recorded as a NO vote.

West Wiltshire (*I&O: Q1*)

4.3   There were 51 respondents who answered the question on a spatial vision and objectives for West Wiltshire; 13% of the total number of respondents to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Of the responses to this question, seven were neutral.

A Spatial Vision for West Wiltshire

By 2026 West Wiltshire will truly be a place to be proud of, where people can live, work and celebrate a shared cultural life within prosperous, safe, tolerant and inclusive communities. The network of towns and villages will provide a wide range of skilled jobs, affordable homes and diverse community facilities in close proximity to one another, helping to achieve more self sufficient, self contained communities and a more sustainable pattern of living. Each town will develop its own character whilst recognising and supporting the strengths of its neighbours. Our 5 market town centres will be vibrant, safe and clean, places that are attractive to businesses and visitors alike and will be easily accessible to all. Our rural areas will provide work and services for local people whilst retaining attractive and natural countryside for all to enjoy.

Spatial objectives

- To create balanced and sustainable communities within urban and rural areas
- To create safe, accessible places to live, work and play
- To meet the needs of people for new homes, employment, shopping, education and health provision, community facilities and essential infrastructure
- To deliver sufficient market and affordable homes of the size and type that are needed to meet the needs of the population
- To improve safe access to local recreation, sporting, cultural and other community
- facilities and to promote healthy lifestyles
- To support the economy both in terms of achieving business growth and higher skilled employment opportunities
- To enhance the vitality and viability of our town centres as places to shop, work, play and live
- To conserve and enhance the character of West Wiltshire's townscapes through better urban design and protection of our built heritage
- To protect and enhance our countryside, landscapes and environmental assets
- To reduce the impact of local people on climate change by reducing energy consumption and increasing energy production from renewable sources, by minimising waste, by recycling the use of urban and appropriate rural land and by encouraging more sustainable travel patterns

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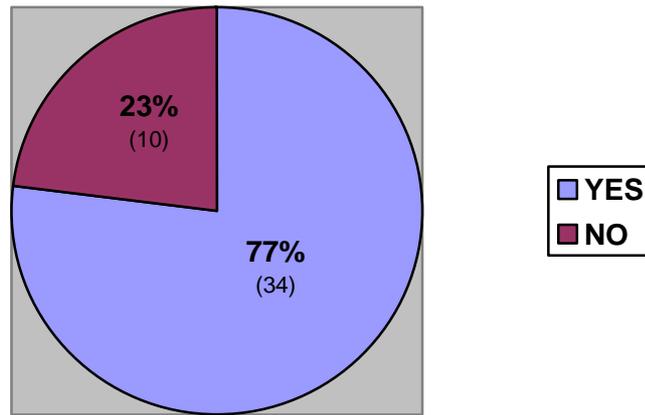**Table 7 – Spatial vision and objectives for West Wiltshire**

Figure 8 – Level of support for spatial vision and objectives for West Wiltshire

4.4   From the responses received, the majority of respondents **agreed** with the spatial vision and objectives for West Wiltshire.

Trowbridge (*I&0: Q2*)

4.5   There were 51 respondents who answered the question on a spatial vision for Trowbridge; 13% of the total number of respondents to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Of the responses to this question, four were neutral.

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A Spatial Vision for Trowbridge

Trowbridge 2026 will be the regenerated and expanding County Town of Wiltshire, home to a confident, vibrant and cohesive community. The thriving economy will be providing higher skilled jobs for local people and for the wider area. New jobs and affordable homes will be provided in balance and there will be excellent health, education and community facilities accessible locally to meet the needs of the area. The transformed town centre will include a wide range of shops, leisure and cultural facilities and the town will benefit from improved transport links with Bath and the network of western Wiltshire towns and villages. Trowbridge will be the leading town in the county for developing a sustainable approach to life including transport, energy, economy and services.

</div>

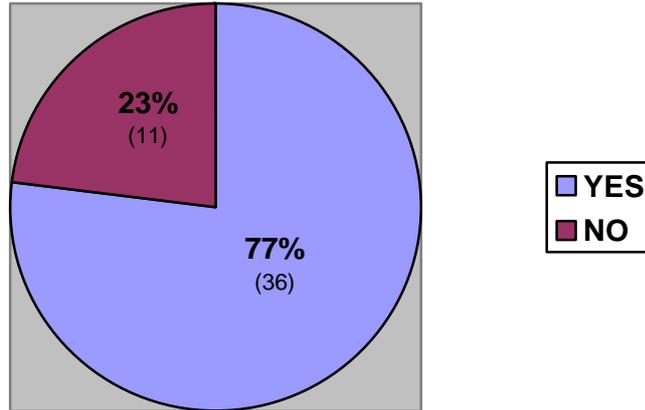**Table 8 – A spatial vision for Trowbridge**

Figure 9 – Level of support for the spatial vision for Trowbridge

4.6   From the responses received, the majority of respondents **agreed** with the spatial vision for Trowbridge.

Bradford-on-Avon, Melksham, Warminster and Westbury (*I&O: Q3*)

4.7   There were 48 respondents who answered the question on a spatial vision for Bradford-on-Avon, Melksham, Warminster and Westbury; 12% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Of the responses to this question, three were neutral.

A Spatial Vision for Bradford-on-Avon

In twenty years time Bradford on Avon will be a more attractive, people friendly, safe place to live and work. The town will be moving towards greater self sufficiency in terms of shopping, employment and community facilities for local people whilst providing an improved experience for touring visitors within a pedestrian friendly, clean and safe environment. The historic built townscape and natural landscape will be properly protected and enhanced. There will be reliable and accessible public transport helping to improve the links between the town, nearby villages and neighbouring Bath and Trowbridge. Local jobs in small scale businesses and affordable housing will have helped to retain young people within the town to achieve a more balanced community.

Table 9 – A spatial vision for Bradford-on-Avon

A Spatial Vision for Melksham

Melksham will be a thriving and accessible market town that respects its heritage and rural environment whilst welcoming the expansion of local and inward investment from new high quality businesses. It will achieve balanced and mixed housing development appropriate to the existing town and its surroundings. This will be supported by accessible and improved leisure and recreation provision, increased healthcare and education facilities, canal related developments and improved and integrated rail and bus links to Swindon and neighbouring towns and villages. The town centre will benefit from new investment and will promote its riverside location.

Table 10 – A spatial vision for Melksham

A Spatial Vision for Warminster

Warminster will be a vibrant, working and highly attractive town providing a range of employment and services for the wider rural area. A broad mix of housing and facilities to meet the needs of all including young people will be achieved together with a greater integration of the civil and military communities which will enable cross usage of sports/education/social facilities. Warminster will have close links with the surrounding network of highly attractive villages and countryside, which will support rural economic development and tourism.

Table 11 – A spatial vision for Warminster

A Spatial Vision for Westbury

In 20 years time Westbury will be an attractive and great place to live, benefiting from its enhanced regional rail links, its safe and pedestrian friendly streets and its historic and natural landscape setting. It will be a community served by an improved town centre environment, with viable local shops for local needs. There will be more affordable housing provided hand in hand with wider employment opportunities and with appropriate provision of community, healthcare and educational facilities serving all ages.

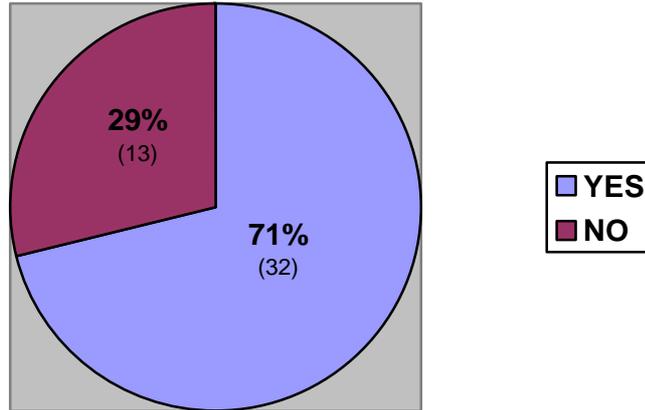**Table 12 – A spatial vision for Westbury**

Figure 10 – Level of support for the spatial vision for Bradford-on-Avon, Melksham, Warminster and Westbury

4.8 From the responses received, the majority of respondents **agreed** with the spatial visions for Bradford-on-Avon, Melksham, Warminster and Westbury.

4.9 <u>Summary</u>: The vast majority of respondents agreed with the broad thrust of the spatial visions and objectives, both for the District as a whole and for the individual towns. Suggestions were also made as to how the vision statements could be improved or amended and these will be taken into consideration in the further development of the Core Strategy.

Chapter 5: Housing

New Housing (*I&O: Q7, Q8 and Q9*)

Issue: Where should new housing be built?

5.1   The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West allocated 525 net new dwellings to West Wiltshire for the period up to 2026. 250 houses per annum were to be developed at Trowbridge, reflecting its identified role as a sub-regionally significant employment, administrative and service centre. The remaining 275 were to be spread across the rest of the district.

5.2   However, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has since proposed changes to the draft Regional Spatial Strategy. These are based on the recommendations of the Panel Report into the draft Regional Spatial Strategy, which increased the housing supply targets for West Wiltshire.

5.3   The number of net new dwellings for West Wiltshire is now 12,300 for the total 20 year period of the Core Strategy, which translates into 615 per annum. At least 6,000 of these are to be located in Trowbridge, working out at 300 every year, with the remaining 6,300, or 315 p.a., to be spread across the rest of the district.

5.4   Respondents were asked to choose from the following options, which were based upon the initial figures given in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy. The number of houses to be built in Trowbridge is a fixed figure because of its strategically significant sub-regional role. Therefore, the options differed only as to how the remaining houses were to be distributed across the rest of the district. The following housing supply options also reflect the spatial strategy options in Chapter 2 of this report.

Distribution	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
250 houses per annum	Trowbridge	Trowbridge	Trowbridge
Majority of the remaining 275 houses per annum	Bradford-on-Avon Melksham Warminster Westbury	Melksham Warminster Westbury	Melksham Warminster
A smaller number of houses reflecting local needs	Villages	Bradford-on-Avon Villages	Bradford-on-Avon Westbury Villages

Table 13 – Housing supply options

5.5   There were 62 respondents who answered this question on housing supply options; 16% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Four respondents chose different combinations of the options, while 14 respondents did not specify a preference.
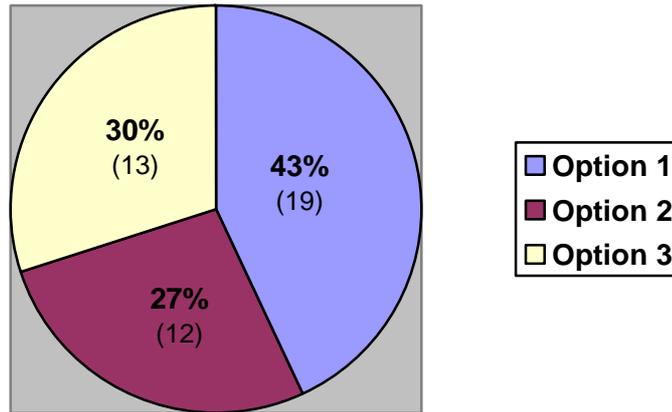
Figure 11 – Level of support for housing supply options

5.6 From the responses received, the most popular distribution of new housing is **Option 1**.

5.7 There was no clear preference among those who chose a combination of the above options either, with half opting for a mixture of Option 2 and Option 3 and the other half for a mixture of all three options.

5.8 Over a fifth of respondents who commented on this question did not specify a preference for any of the options.

Affordable Housing (*I&O: Q10, Q11*)

Issue: How can we most effectively meet the need for more affordable housing?

5.9 Affordable housing is defined as social rented and intermediate housing which is provided with subsidy to people whose needs are not met by the market. This is a result of the disparity between their incomes and their housing costs.

5.10 The Housing Market and Needs Assessment identified a need for 875 new affordable houses to be provided every year in West Wiltshire. However, the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the draft Regional Spatial Strategy allocate only 615 dwellings per annum for West Wiltshire. Based upon these figures, it is unlikely that all of the need can be met for affordable housing. Therefore, the supply of affordable housing must be maximised where viable.

5.11 The draft Regional Spatial Strategy states that at least 30% of all housing developments annually across each local authority area should be affordable. Authorities are also able to specify rates up to 60% or higher in areas of greatest need. National policy is for affordable housing to be required from all sites of 15 dwellings or above.

5.12 However, authorities can specify lower thresholds, including in rural areas, where viable and practical. Respondents were asked to choose between the following options:

Option 1:
- District target of up to 50% affordable housing from all suitable sites (i.e. no threshold); of which 75% social rent and 25% intermediate housing.
- Individual sites to be subject to targets taking into account existing supply, survey demand and other regeneration, planning sustainability and economic factors.

Option 2:
- District target of between 30% and 60% affordable housing
- Exact proportion and thresholds set per settlement depending upon local need for affordable housing, the supply and the relationship between incomes and housing costs.
- For example, housing costs are relatively high and supply likely to be very low in smaller settlements, such as Bradford-on-Avon and villages. Therefore, a higher proportion and low or no threshold would be required.

Option 3:
- District target of up to 50% affordable housing
- Applied to all suitable sites of 15 or more dwellings in the towns and 2 or more dwellings in the villages.

Table 14 – Affordable housing options

5.13   There were 55 respondents who answered this question on affordable housing; 14% of the total number of respondents to the Issues and Options consultation paper. One respondent chose a combination of all of the three options, while 17 respondents did not specify a preference.
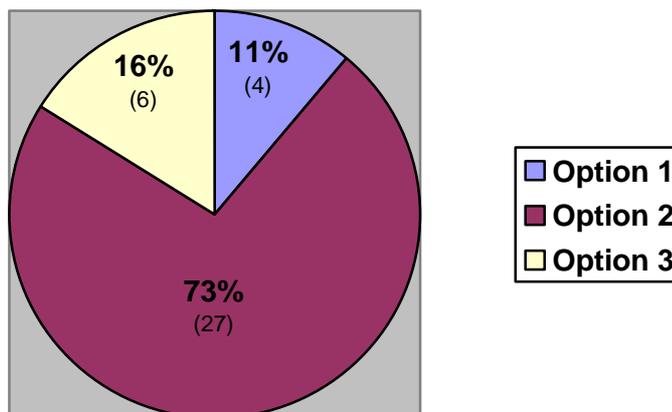

Figure 12 – Level of support for affordable housing options

5.14   From the responses received, the majority of respondents supported **Option 2**.

5.15   There was little support for combinations of the above option, with only one respondent choosing a mixture of all three.

5.16   Almost a third of respondents who commented on this question did not specify a preference for any of the above options.

Housing in Small Settlements (*I&O: Q12, Q13*)

Issue: How can we best meet local housing needs in small settlements?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Require 50% market housing and 50% affordable housing on every site within a small settlement.	Restrict market housing to local people only. The definition of local people to include: • Existing residents • People with longstanding links to the local community • People with local jobs • People who provide important services to the community who need to live closer.	Allocate sites for 100% affordable housing on the edge of villages.

Table 15 - Housing in small settlements options

5.13   There were 31 respondents who answered this question on housing in small settlements; 8% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Six respondents chose varying combinations of the options, while 16 did not specify a preference.
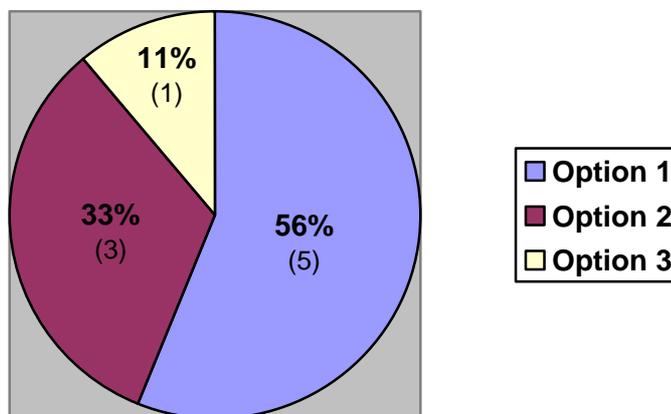

Figure 13 – Level of support for housing in small settlements options

5.14   From the responses received, the most popular approach to meeting local housing needs in small settlements is **Option 1**.

5.15   There was no clear agreement between those who opted for a combination of the above options; 50% (3) chose Options 1 and 3; 33% (2) chose Options 1 and 2; 17% (1) chose Options 2 and 3.

5.16   Over half of those respondents who commented upon this question did not specify a preference for any of the above options.

Housing on Previously Developed Land (*I&O: Q14, Q15*)

Issue: How can we make the most efficient use of land whilst protecting the environment?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Seek to achieve the following regional targets: • 50% of new housing on previously developed land • Over 30dph on all new housing developments (50dph in Trowbridge).	Seek to achieve 50% of new housing on previously developed land Set indicative density targets based upon type of location (e.g. town centre, urban, suburban, rural).	Set individual previously developed land and density targets for each town Set one previously developed land and density target for rural areas based upon local characteristics, aiming to increase historic rates.

Table 16 – Housing on previously developed land options

5.17   49 respondents answered this question on housing on previously developed land; 13% of the total number of response to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Nine of the responses did not specify a preference.
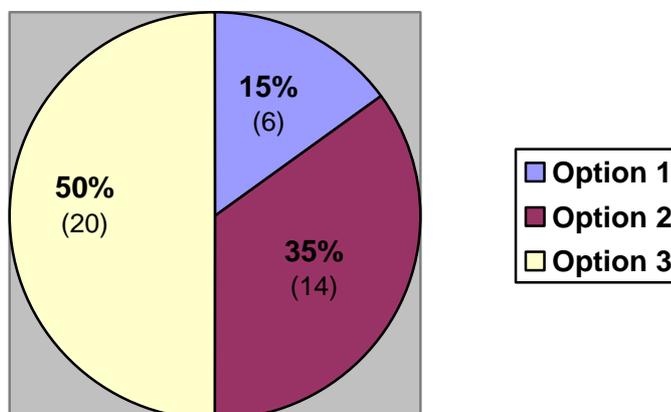

Figure 14 – Level of support for housing on previously developed land options

5.18   From the responses received the most popular approach to making the most efficient use of land whilst protecting the environment is **Option 3**.

5.19   There was no support for any combination of the above options

5.20   Just under a fifth of respondents who commented on this question did not specify a preference.

Summary

5.21   There was a mixed response to the question on the distribution of new housing. However, this question is linked to the spatial strategy options in Chapter 2. The response to that question on the distribution of new development in the district suggested that both Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury should have less development than either Melksham or Warminster but more than the villages. It is likely that the distribution of new housing in the district will follow the same pattern, both recognising the severe constraints for new housing in each of those settlements and preserving their market town status.

5.22   The vast majority of respondents, who chose an option, favoured a district target of between 30% and 60% affordable housing, with a greater flexibility in setting proportions and thresholds depending on local needs and circumstances. However, almost a third who commented did not specify any preference.

5.23   The majority of respondents, who chose an option, support a requirement for 50% market housing and 50% affordable housing on every site within a small settlement. However, almost a fifth opted for varying combinations of the options without an overall preference for a particular combination and over half of those who commented on the question did not specify any preference.

5.24   The majority of respondents, who chose an option, support individual previously developed land and density targets for each town and one for rural areas based upon local characteristics.

Chapter 6: Gypsies and Travellers

Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Show People (*I&O: Q16, Q17, Q18, Q19*)

Issue: How should we make provision for meeting the special needs of gypsies and travellers and of travelling show people?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Identify site search criteria in the Core Strategy for gypsies and travellers and for travelling show people Work with local communities to identify new private sites meeting those criteria to be delivered through the planning application system.	Identify site search criteria in the draft Core Strategy Bring forward, with other Wiltshire authorities, a parallel and specific site allocation development plan document allocating specific sites.	Identify site search criteria in the Core Strategy Allocate sites as part of the planned site allocation development plan document once the Core Strategy has been adopted.

Table 17 – Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people options

6.1 There were 12 respondents who answered this question on provision for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people; 3% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Two of the responses did not specify a preference.
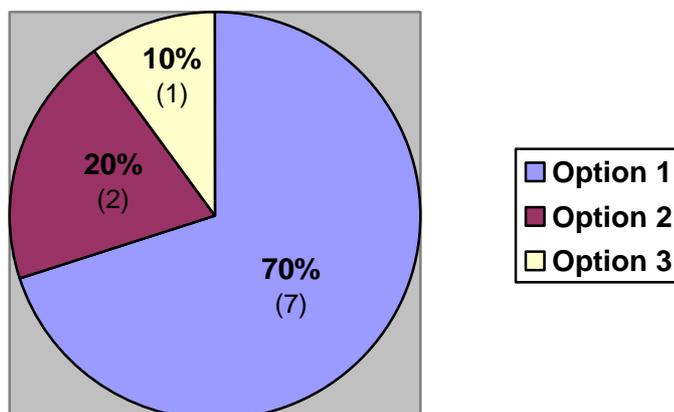
Figure 15 – Level of support for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people options

6.2 From the responses received, the most popular option is **Option 1**.

6.3 Respondents were also asked three specific questions regarding the identification of sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people:

6.4 Firstly, what do you think are the most important criteria to take into consideration when identifying sites for gypsies and travellers?

- Comments:
    - Views of local residents
    - Views of gypsies and travellers
    - Specific characteristics of sites
    - Service provision, i.e. shops, health centres, education facilities, refuse collection
    - Adequate infrastructure in place before occupation of site i.e. pedestrian routes, cycleways and public transport
    - Location with respect to existing settlements
    - Whether current sites are fully utilised
    - Need
    - Sites that have been occupied and developed without planning permission should be debarred from further and future consideration

6.5   Secondly, do you have any comments on the draft site search criteria set out in Appendix 1?

- Comments:
    - Raise limit to 500 metres beyond existing village, town or permanent gypsy & traveller site
    - Clarify what is meant by terms used, i.e. 'quality of local environment', 'quality/
    - attractiveness of site'
    - Status for all AONB sites should be changed to 'not considered'
    - Extend use of criteria to identify suitable sites for any future development
    - Revise wording for biodiversity criteria so that sites will not be located where they would have a significant impact on a BAP species or habitat that will not be resolved by a mitigation measure
    - Conflict between 'green criteria' in neighbours section, sites further than 100 metres away, and 'yellow criteria' for previously developed land in towns and village; surely should be 'red'

6.6   Finally, what do you think are the most important criteria to take into consideration when identifying sites for travelling show people?

- Comments:
    - Views of gypsies and travellers
    - Specific characteristics of sites
    - Service provision, i.e. shops, health centres, education facilities, refuse collection
    - Adequate infrastructure in place before occupation of site i.e. pedestrian routes, cycleways and public transport
    - Location with respect to existing settlements
    - Whether current sites are fully utilised
    - Need
    - They should occupy land that they own themselves with planning permission

Summary

6.7   The vast majority of respondents, who chose an option, prefer site search criteria to be identified in the Core Strategy and for the local authority to work with the community to identify new private sites meeting those criteria to be brought forward through the planning

application system. However, a relatively low number of respondents answered this question. Suggestions were also made about the criteria for site selection and these will be taken into consideration in developing the Core Strategy.

Chapter 7: Health

Health (*I&O: Q20, Q21, Q22*)

Issue: How can the Core Strategy influence the provision of health facilities?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
The core strategy to distribute housing and other development to complement the distribution of healthcare facilities envisaged by healthcare providers. Detailed proposals for healthcare facilities to be put forward by health providers and considered by the local planning authority on an individual site by site basis, recognising that the structure of provision is changing.	The core strategy to set the proposed distribution of new development which healthcare providers would then use to plan their provision and location of healthcare facilities. Local authorities to take the lead role in assessing the health needs of new populations and to actively plan for their provision in new developments.	Local authorities and healthcare providers to make sure that plans for new development and services are fully complementary. The core strategy would reflect the pattern of healthcare provision likely in the immediate future but local authorities to take the lead role in assessing the health needs of new populations and to actively plan for their provision in new developments.

Table 18 – Options for the provision of health facilities

7.1 There were 34 respondents who answered this question on health facilities; 9% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Three of the responses did not specify a preference.
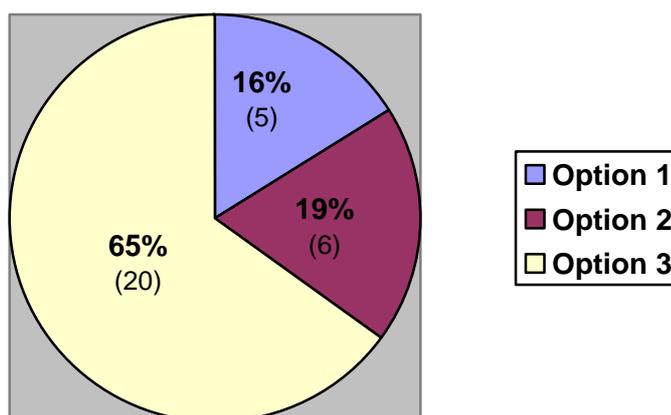

Figure 16 – Level of support for options for the provision of health Facilities

7.2 From the responses received, the most popular approach for the Core Strategy to take in order to influence the provision of health facilities is **Option 3**.

7.3 Respondents were also asked how healthcare provision can be better planned for in the future.

- Comments:

  - o Learn from past mistakes, such as the closure of community hospitals
  - o Work with other stakeholders, such as the PCT, from an early stage
  - o Consider needs of existing and future residents within planning process
  - o Consult users of the health services
  - o Integrate health facilities into development at the planning stage
  - o Ensure PCT meets minimum requirements before development goes ahead, such as having enough doctors and dentists for increased population
  - o Healthcare provision should be locally based according to need
  - o Provide transport for those without access to care locally
  - o Ensure PCT takes greater account of proposed development when they make proposals for the type of location and facilities to be provided than in the past
  - o Give local authorities the majority of influence over health services, with PCT accountable to the local authority
  - o Consider healthcare provision together with infrastructure, accessibility and sustainable neighbourhoods in planning for sustainable communities; not in isolation

Summary

7.4 The majority of respondents, who chose an option, preferred local authorities and healthcare providers working together to make sure that their strategies and services are fully complementary, with local authorities taking the lead role in planning for the provision of health facilities in the long-term.

Chapter 8: Education

Future Education Needs (*I&O: Q23*)

Issue: What are the likely future education needs which should be planned for?

Main education needs
- Relocation of the Wiltshire College, Trowbridge campus, to an edge of Trowbridge town centre site;   - Additional secondary school provision in Trowbridge, on a 12 hectares site, post 2016, located to reflect the general direction of housing growth;   - Relocation of Matravers School, Westbury;   - New 210 place primary schools located on 1.3 hectare sites should be planned for in association with greenfield areas of growth at Trowbridge;   - In other towns, if greenfield housing developments of 700 units or more are proposed, additional primary schools will be required;   - Developer contributions should be sought from developments to enhance current school facilities;   - More skills & learning opportunities for retired & out of work people;   - Use of school facilities for evening classes and for wider community use;

Table 19 – Main education needs

8.1 There were 32 respondents who answered this question on the main education needs for the Core Strategy to address; 8% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Three of the responses neither agreed nor disagreed.
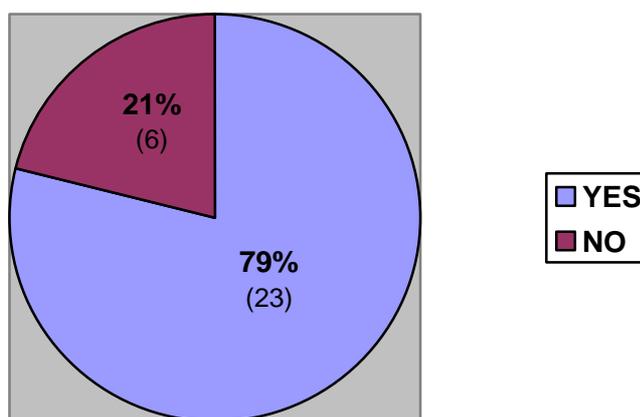

Figure 17 – Level of support for main education needs

8.2 From the responses received, the majority of respondents **support** the identified list of education needs that the Core Strategy needs to address.

Location of Schools in Trowbridge (*I&O: Q24, Q25*)

Issue: How do we achieve a better geographical spread of schools at Trowbridge?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Wait until further housing growth causes the need for a new secondary school to be provided (post 2016) and locate it to the eastern side of the town.	Find a new site on the eastern side of the town for one of the existing schools and relocate this school by 2016.	Restructure the existing schools and find a site to provide a new jointly governed educational establishment on the eastern side of the town for 14-16 year olds.	Another option, combining elements of the above.

Table 20 – Options for the location of schools in Trowbridge

8.5   There were 18 respondents who answered this question on the location of schools in Trowbridge; 5% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. One response did not specify a response.
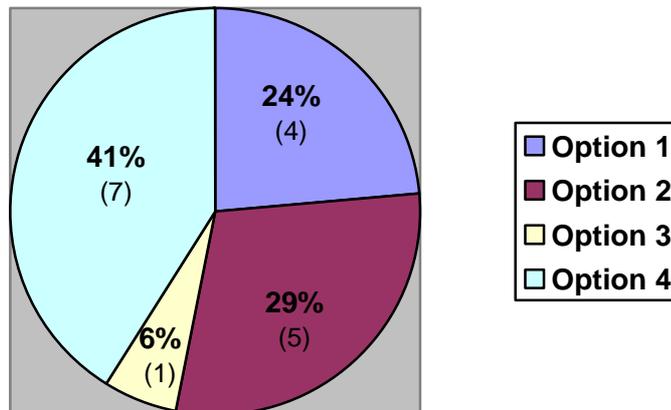

Figure 18 – Level of support for options for the location of schools in Trowbridge

8.6   From the responses received, the most popular option for the location of schools in Trowbridge is **Option 4**. From the other suggestions received, the most popular is for a new school to be built on the eastern side of Trowbridge now, rather than later.

Declining Pupil Numbers in Rural Schools (*I&O: Q26, Q27*)

Issue: What can we do about declining pupil numbers at rural schools?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Identify villages with low school rolls as key villages within the spatial strategy, requiring additional market and affordable housing.	Accept that some schools in remoter rural areas may have to close and concentrate resources on schools within larger villages.	Rearrange existing school catchments to ensure all schools have sufficient pupils to continue.

Table 21 – Options for addressing declining pupil numbers at rural schools

8.9   There were 29 respondents who answered this question on declining pupil numbers at rural schools; 7% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Six responses suggested varying combinations of the above options, while five responses did not specify a preference.
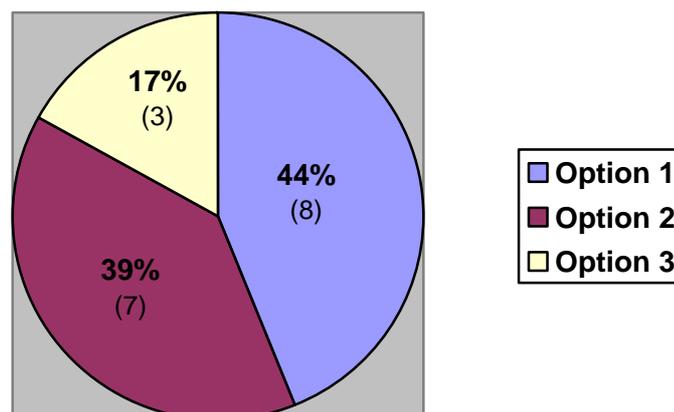

Figure 19 – Level of support for options for addressing declining pupil numbers at rural schools

8.10   From the responses received, the most popular approach towards addressing declining pupil numbers at rural schools is **Option 1**.

8.11   There was no clear agreement between those who opted for a combination of the above options; 50% (3) chose Options 1 and 3; 33% (2) chose Options 1 and 2; 17% (1) chose Options 2 and 3.

Summary

8.12   The vast majority of respondents supported the likely future education needs identified in the Issues and Options consultation paper.

8.13   The response to the question on the location of schools in Trowbridge was inconclusive, although there was some support for an alternative option involving a new school to be built on the eastern side of Trowbridge now, rather than later. However, a relatively low number of respondents answered this question.

8.14   The response to the question on declining pupil numbers in rural schools was also inconclusive. The most popular option was to identify villages with low school rolls as key villages within the spatial strategy, requiring additional market and affordable housing. Again, however, a relatively low number of respondents addressed this question.

Chapter 9: Leisure and Recreation

Leisure and Recreation

Issue: What can the Core Strategy do to meet leisure and recreation needs?

9.1   Respondents were asked the following questions:

9.2   Do you have any views on the current leisure centres in West Wiltshire? Which should be refurbished and which should be replaced?

- Comments:

    o   Refurbish or replace ALL of them
    o   Retain existing sites and look for additional sites
    o   Rather than provide facilities in each of the 5 towns, look at providing two high quality facilities in the north and south of the district, perhaps in conjunction with potential private sector partners
    o   Regular free bus service between town centre and out-of-town leisure facilities in order to encourage usage and reduce car travel
    o   Plan for leisure and recreation facilities in conjunction with large scale new development
    o   Need an independent quantitative and qualitative assessment of existing leisure facilities to establish need and priority requirements before deciding to replace or refurbish current leisure facilities
    o   Any new development should aim to build in a renewable energy source (e.g. CHP), both to save costs and provide example new technology in central location
    o   Replace Castle Place Leisure Centre and include a swimming pool and hydro pool (for health reasons); or retain it/ relocate within Trowbridge town centre – a sustainable location
    o   Relocate Christie Miller Sports Centre; possibly to old George Ward School site and allow a commercial leisure operator to occupy the site, along with other business uses and potentially incorporating some or all of the existing facilities (some against relocation and prefer refurbishment)
    o   Replace or refurbish Warminster Sports Hall and Swimming Pool; refurbish Warminster as a dual centre to encourage fitness in all age groups and provide services to all diverse needs
    o   Lack of sport and recreation facilities in BoA, especially gym facilities and floodlit artificial sports pitches created for free community use close to town centres; Provide leisure and recreational facilities in BoA, assisted by new development in BoA
    o   Need additional recreational greenspace, especially formal pitches and allotments in town

9.3   Are there any other leisure or recreation issues that are not being addressed in the Leisure and Recreation Development Plan Document?

- Comments:

    o   Services should reflect official drive to improve lifestyles and health behaviour (because of concerns about diabetes, obesity and CHD)
    o   General official policies on enhancing physical education for young people and of the provision of resources for physical exercise in general
    o   More informal recreational space for children and dog walkers
    o   Informal recreation, e.g. walking, cycling and running, and inter-village, inter-urban recreational routes
    o   Canal routes for Melksham, better links to Kennet & Avon Canal
    o   Golf courses
    o   L&R DPD not fully cover accessibility and services for those who have diverse needs
    o   Confirm the importance of green space and countryside in the district

9.4   There were 29 respondents who answered the questions on leisure and recreation; 7% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.

Summary

9.5   Several leisure centres were suggested for refurbishment or replacement, including Castle Place, Christie Miller and Warminster sports hall and swimming pool. Respondents also commented that the Leisure and Recreation DPD could have placed a greater emphasis upon, for example, healthy lifestyles and behaviour, and accessibility. These and other comments will be taken into consideration in the further development of the Core Strategy.

Chapter 10:   Infrastructure

Infrastructure

Issue: How do we achieve the right level of community infrastructure?

Infrastructure
- Affordable housing   - Education   - Leisure   - Open space   - Community facilities (places to meet and worship)   - Health   - Nature conservation   - Renewable energy   - Drainage and sewerage   - Waste recycling   - Public art   - Highways   - Walking, cycling and public transport

Table 22 – Forms of infrastructure towards which contributions will be sought from new development

10.1   Respondents were asked if there were any other types of infrastructure contributions, in addition to the above list, that they believe should be sought from new developments in order to create well planned and sustainable communities.

- Comments:

  o   Facilities for young people
  o   Fire hydrants
  o   Water conservation and recycling
  o   Wilts & Berks Canal restoration
  o   Cemetery expansion space (conventional or contemporary woodland nature)
  o   Small employment units
  o   Affordably priced shop/ post office
  o   Good quality landscaping
  o   Water cycle study (for areas subject to moderate to high levels of growth)
  o   First aid station within every centre of population (minor injuries unit)
  o   Facilities for the elderly, e.g. sheltered housing
  o   Facilities for skills development in a practical environment
  o   Green infrastructure; conserving and enhancing natural beauty in the AONB; Preservation of the countryside
  o   Discreet street lighting
  o   CCTV (from commercial developments)
  o   ITC trunking provision, i.e. provision of fibre to the house from the roadway (cope with increase in home working)
  o   Cultural infrastructure (arts facilities)

        o   Revenue based measures, e.g. car sharing, bus services, travel planning or health and social care initiatives, not just capital infrastructure

        o   Car parking spaces

10.2   There were 47 respondents who answered this question on infrastructure; 12% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.

Summary

10.3   The above suggestions made by respondents in relation to other types of infrastructure contributions that could be required from new development will be taken into consideration in the further development of the Core Strategy.

Chapter 11: Employment

Employment land supply needs for West Wiltshire (*I&O: Q31*)

Issue: How will we meet our employment land needs?

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Meeting employment land supply needs for West Wiltshire

The number of households and people living within West Wiltshire will rise over the next twenty years. This growth in population needs to be balanced by growth in local employment opportunities. We are seeking to provide this balance through our spatial strategy.

In addition to balancing our population growth with local employment uses, we also need to consider how we can become more self-sufficient in meeting our employment needs. Currently, about 7,000 of our residents commute out the District for their daily employment. This figure will rise unless we ensure a sufficient supply of new employment land.

The West Wiltshire Employment Land Assessment forecasts that employment demand across the whole district will rise, along with the resident population, from the current level of 51,000 persons, to 66,000 in 2016 (29% increase from 2001) and 71,000 in 2026 (8% growth from 2016).

In order to support the projected growth and provide an improved employment offer, the Employment Land Assessment identifies the need for at least an additional 41 hectares of employment land to 2016 and a further 11 hectares between 2016 and 2021 across West Wiltshire.

Whilst there is some scope for the future reinvestment and intensification of uses on existing employment sites, this will not, by itself, bring forward sufficient land or floorspace to meet the demand. Consequently, we will need to identify new strategic employment sites.

Future employment developments should be built where they are needed having regard to the overall spatial strategy and the availability of sites. We will seek a balanced distribution of new employment sites based upon our overall spatial strategy.

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Table 23 – Meeting employment land supply needs for West Wiltshire

11.1   Respondents were asked if they had an alternative view as to how employment land supply needs could be met in West Wiltshire.

- Comments:

    o   Encourage live/ work provision and other mixed-use development to reduce the need to travel
    o   Build employment sites more than one or two storeys high, as long as it is accessible, in areas where it will not overly affect the surrounding area, reducing the footprint, e.g. White Horse Business Park
    o   Research exactly where the "7000 residents" commute to because, for some of them, provision of new employment space within West Wiltshire would be irrelevant
    o   Assess land adjacent to thriving employment sites be assessed for further employment development

- o Ensure existing, modern purpose-built sites, e.g. Bowerhill, in Melksham, are fully occupied
- o Objectives of employment land creation must not take precedence over needs of people filling those jobs
- o Pragmatic approach that considers nature and intensity of other employment opportunities, such as A1 uses, and jobs that are created compared to traditional B1, B2 and B8 uses
- o Focus on Trowbridge as an SSCT and the Trowbridge/ Warminster TTWA
- o An Employment Land Review ? (Review existing employment land)
- o Take into account PPS4 – flexible employment land policies and sensitive to climate change
- o Consider under-utilised MOD sites
- o Let demand lead supply
- o Ensure appropriate sites are brought forward, that are already designated as employment land, to allow businesses to expand and attract inward investment
- o Low impact businesses in community areas; improve broadband links to encourage homeworking; reduce traffic to employment centres
- o All employment sites to be protected as employment sites unless strong reasons to the contrary
- o Remove employment allocation from sites that have seen no development
- o Provide employment land in balance with housing developments to reduce need to travel and ensure sustainable transport links
- o Key strategic employment site in Trowbridge and mixed use sites in other 4 towns
- o Allow for expansion of existing rural employment sites and creations of new ones
- o Ensure employment buildings blend in with the countryside
- o Employment land to be allocated, first and foremost, in Trowbridge as an SSCT, and then on a sequential basis in the remaining towns
- o Some employment land will be poorly located and development away from B class uses will need to be considered
- o Take a County-wide perspective and ensure that Trowbridge is not unnecessarily competing with, say, Chippenham and Salisbury, both also SSCT

11.2 There were 35 respondents who answered this question on employment land supply needs in West Wiltshire; 9% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.

Employment land supply needs for Trowbridge (*I&O: Q32, Q33*)

Issue: How should we meet Trowbridge's employment land supply needs?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Identify one or two large new strategic employment sites to accommodate all of the town's future employment needs.	Identify a number of smaller employment sites within new housing developments to accommodate some of the town's needs, with the remainder being met through the redevelopment and expansion of existing employment sites within the town.	Identify one or two strategic employment sites at Trowbridge but seek to meet the remaining need through other sites located within the town's commute to work area – i.e. well located sites at nearby towns.

Table 24 – Options for meeting employment land supply needs in Trowbridge

11.3   There were 23 respondents who answered this question on meeting employment land supply needs in Trowbridge; 6% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Six responses suggested varying combinations of the above options, while one response did not specify a preference.
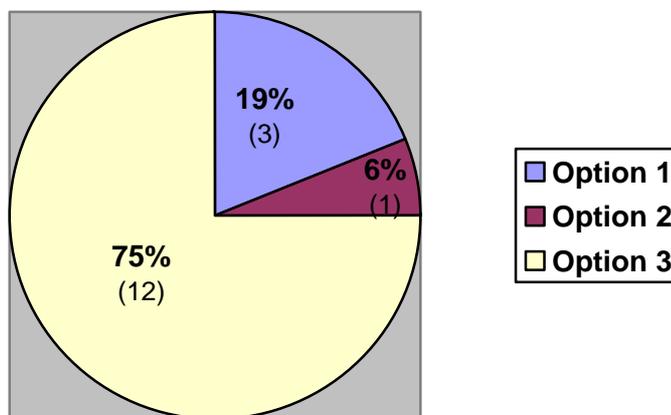

Figure 20 – Level of support for options for meeting employment land supply needs in Trowbridge

11.4   From the responses received, the most popular approach to meeting Trowbridge's employment land supply needs is **Option 3**.

11.5   There was no clear agreement between those who opted for a combination of the above options; 50% (3) chose Options 1 and 3; 33% (2) chose Options 1 and 2; 17% (1) chose Options 2 and 3.

Current urban employment sites (*I&O: Q34, Q35*)

Issue: How should we treat our existing urban employment sites?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Seek to protect all urban employment sites from redevelopment for other uses.	Seek to protect our key urban employment sites from redevelopment for other uses but seek to redevelop the older and redundant urban employment sites for a mix of employment and other uses, including housing.	Consider other uses on our urban employment sites, which meet local objectives but identify new employment sites, possibly on Greenfield sites, to make good the loss of these urban sites.

Table 25 – Options for treating existing urban employment sites

11.6   There were 40 respondents who answered this question on dealing with existing urban employment sites; 10% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Eight responses suggested a combination of the options, while four did not specify a preference.
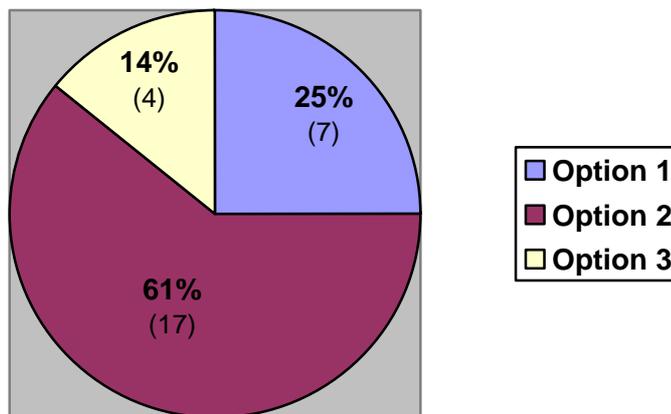

Figure 21 – Level of support for options for treating existing urban employment sites

11.7   From the responses received, the most popular approach to existing urban employment sites is **Option 2**.

11.8   There was a clear preference among respondents who chose a combination of the above options, with 100% (8) opting for Options 2 and 3.

Rural employment sites (*I&O: Q36*)

Issue: How should we protect our key rural employment sites?

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Protecting key rural employment sites

The District's rural settlements and areas provide a significant contribution towards maintaining our healthy and vibrant economy. Just like our five towns, there is an important need to balance our rural housing with local rural job opportunities.

Our rural settlements provide a home to many employers. Many of these are located within the smaller business, trading and industrial estates located within our larger villages, whilst others can be found on former farmyard sites. Our Employment Land Assessment provides a detailed survey of these key rural employment sites.

In order to help meet our future rural employment needs we will safeguard our existing key rural employment sites from loss to non-commercial uses, allowing the potential for limited expansion where it is appropriate and physically possible.

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Table 26 – Protecting key rural employment sites

11.9   Respondents were asked if they had an alternative view about the protection of key rural employment sites.

- Comments:

    - Encourage any suitable alternative use of redundant farm and other buildings, even for housing (no point protecting inefficient employment locations)
    - Encourage more home working
    - Key rural employment sites include tourist/ leisure facilities and the potential for their future expansion to safeguard/ create employment should be included in strategy
    - May be appropriate in some cases to relocate rural employment site to an urban area, e.g. attracting employees from urban areas without sustainable transport links or if it is a polluting industry (not all rural employment sites are appropriate for expansion or retention
    - Policy must cater for farm tenants to diversify with landlord consent
    - Distinction must be made between rural job opportunities that require a rural location and situations where jobs could be located virtually anywhere but are pushed out into rural areas; latter involve unsustainable travel and villages taken over by non-rural industries/ businesses
    - Reduction in community charge, rather than grants for these businesses
    - Tackle social inclusion in rural areas by recognising the need for local jobs backed up by detailed employment surveys, along with housing, services and facilities
    - Expansion should meet rural employment needs, not district-wide employment needs (unsustainable)
    - Flexibility for introduction of knowledge-intensive businesses and other non-intrusive or complementary diversification, such as creative workshops, country crafts or equestrian activity; run from home or from former farm or other industrial use buildings

      o   Apply protection of existing rural employment sites to all sites, not just key sites

11.10   There were 22 respondents who answered this question on protecting key rural employment sites; 6% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.

Farm/ rural diversification (*I&O: Q37, Q38*)

Issue: How should we plan for future farm/ rural diversification?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Restrict farm diversification employment uses to those that meet specific local employment needs or are directly related to local agricultural or rural activities.	Apply a sequential approach that seeks to direct general employment uses to key rural settlements, or to areas adjacent to the District's towns, where they can take advantage of higher levels of accessibility.	Maintain our current approach of allowing all forms of economic rural diversification regardless of location or need.

Table 27 – Planning for farm/ rural diversification

11.11   There were 29 respondents who answered this question on planning for future farm/ rural diversification; 7% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Four responses did not specify a preference.
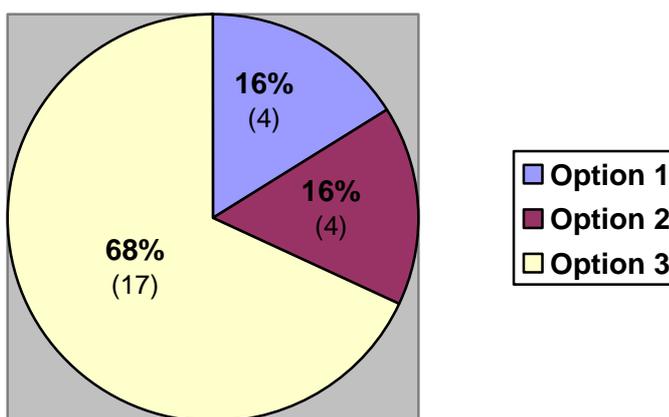

Figure 22 – Level of support for planning for farm/ rural diversification options

11.12   From the responses received, the most popular approach towards planning for rural diversification is **Option 3**.

Growth of the professional sector (*I&O: Q39, Q40*)

Issue: How should we encourage the growth of the professional sector within West Wiltshire?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Identify new sites for offices and business parks.	Prioritise new sites that cater for small businesses and start-up entrepreneurs.	Actively promote business relocation to professional sector employers.

Table 28 – Options for encouraging the growth of the professional sector

11.13   There were 36 respondents who answered this question on encouraging the growth of the professional sector; 9% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. 18 responses suggested a combination of the above options, while four did not specify a preference.
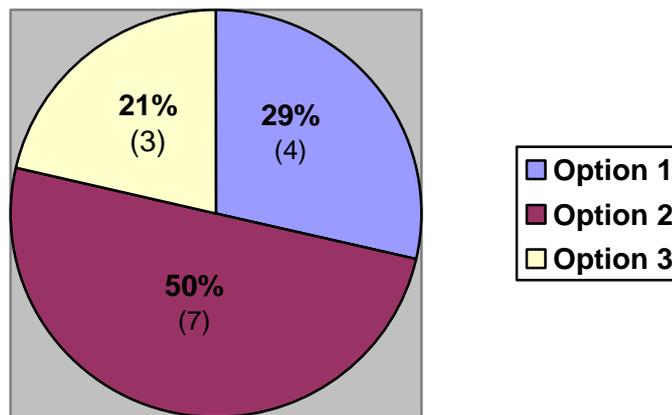

Figure 23 – Level of support for options encouraging the growth of the professional sector

11.14   From the responses received, the most popular approach towards encouraging the growth of the professional sector is **Option 2**.

11.15   There was a clear preference among those respondents who chose a combination of the above options, with 66% supporting the implementation of all three because they did not regard them to be mutually exclusive. In addition, five responses supported a combination of Options 2 and 3, and one supported a combination of Options 1 and 3.

Developing a skilled workforce (*I&O: Q41, Q42*)

Issue: How should we develop the skills of our resident workforce?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Encourage links between business and our local secondary and tertiary education facilities.	Promote specific training and employment opportunities to those residents that have experienced long-term unemployment.	Accept that our employment levels are already very high and that any residual labour market or skills needs will be met from outside of West Wiltshire.

Table 29 – Options for developing the skills of the resident workforce

11.16　There were 38 respondents who answered this question on developing the skills of the resident workforce; 10% of the total number of response to the Issues and Options consultation paper. 13 responses supported varying combinations of the above options, while 16 did not specify a preference.
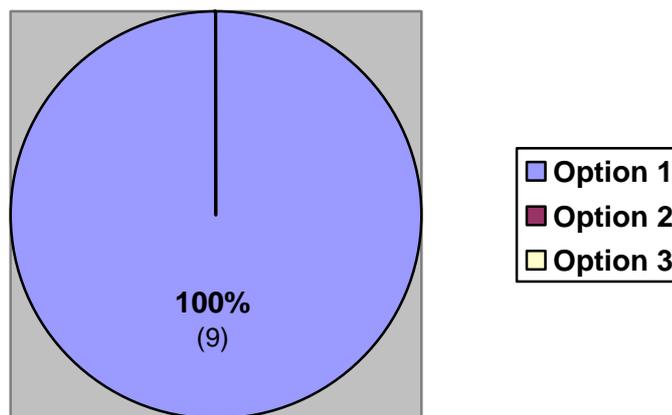

100%
(9)

- Option 1
- Option 2
- Option 3

Figure 24 – Level of support for options for developing the skills of the resident workforce

11.17　From the responses received, the most popular option for developing the skills of the resident workforce is **Option 1**.

11.18　There was a clear preference among respondents who chose a combination of the above options, with almost all (12) supporting a mixture of Options 1 and 2. One response supported a combination of all of the options.

11.19　Over 40% of respondents who commented on this question did not specify a preference for any option.

Summary

11.20 Suggestions as to how employment land supply needs could be met in West Wiltshire will be taken into consideration in the further development of the Core Strategy.

11.21 In order to meet Trowbridge's employment land supply needs, the vast majority of respondents, who chose an option, support identifying one or two strategic employment sites at Trowbridge and seeking to meet the remaining need through other sites located within the town's commute to work area. However, a relatively low number of responses were received for this question.

11.22 The majority of respondents, who chose an option, were in favour of protecting key urban employment sites from redevelopment but allowing older and redundant sites to be redeveloped for mix of employment and other uses, including housing. However, there was also support for a combination of this option and Option 3, which is to consider other uses on key urban employment sites but identify new employment sites to make good the loss of these sites.

11.23 Suggestions as to how key rural employment sites in West Wiltshire could be protected will be taken into consideration in the further development of the Core Strategy.

11.24 The majority of respondents, who chose an option, supported the current approach towards rural diversification of allowing all forms of economic rural diversification, regardless of location or need. However, a relatively low number of responses were received for this question.

11.25 The majority of those respondents, who chose an option, preferred prioritising new sites that cater for small businesses and start-up entrepreneurs in order to encourage the growth of the professional sector within West Wiltshire. However, there was very strong support for implementing all three of the options because respondents felt that they need not be mutually exclusive.

11.26 The vast majority of respondents, who chose an option, prefer encouraging links between businesses and local education facilities in order to develop the skills of the resident workforce. However, there was very strong support for a combination of Options 1 and 2. The latter involved promoting specific training and employment opportunities to those residents who have experience long-term unemployment.

Chapter 12: Retail

Trowbridge, Melksham and Warminster town centres (*I&O: Q43, Q44, Q45*)

Issue: What should we do about Trowbridge, Melksham and Warminster town centres?

Strategy for Trowbridge town centre
Trowbridge is identified as a Strategically Significant Town by the RSS and the county town for Wiltshire. Our emerging spatial strategy for Trowbridge will provide a balanced mix of residential and employment growth, which we believe will generate the retail demand needed to regenerate the town centre and help it become a stronger sub-regional centre. The development sites already coming forward through the Transforming Trowbridge project will deliver the new retail, leisure, employment and community facilities.

Table 30 – Strategy for Trowbridge town centre

12.1 Respondents were asked if they agreed with the above strategy for Trowbridge town centre.

12.2 There were 25 respondents who answered this question on the strategy for Trowbridge town centre; 6% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Seven of the responses did not specify a preference.
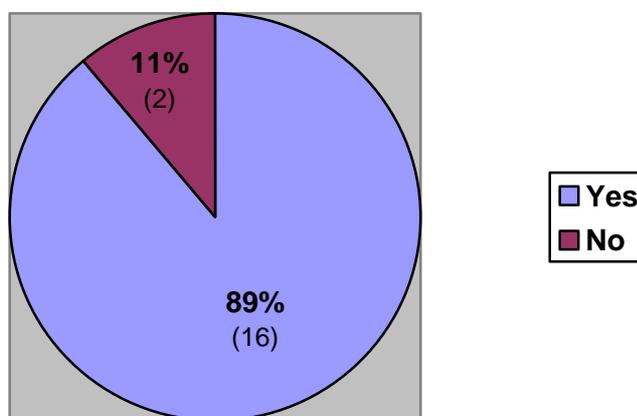

Figure 25 – Level of support for the strategy for Trowbridge town centre

12.3 The vast majority of respondents **agreed** with the strategy for Trowbridge town centre.

Melksham and Warminster are geographically more distant from Trowbridge than our other towns, with both towns serving a large rural hinterland. So whilst these settlements still look to Trowbridge for higher order retail and town centre facilities, their own town centres provide a second tier function serving both the communities within the town and the surrounding villages. Both town centres are the subject of regeneration projects, which are focused upon enhancements that will improve the shopping environment. As part of this process there may be opportunities to expand their core shopping areas to widen the non-food retail offer, which will assist in their overall regeneration.

Table 31 – Strategy for Melksham and Warminster town centres

12.4   Respondents were asked if they agreed with the above strategy for Melksham and Warminster town centres.

12.5   There were 19 respondents who answered this question on the strategy for Melksham and Warminster town centres; 5% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Two responses did not specify a preference.
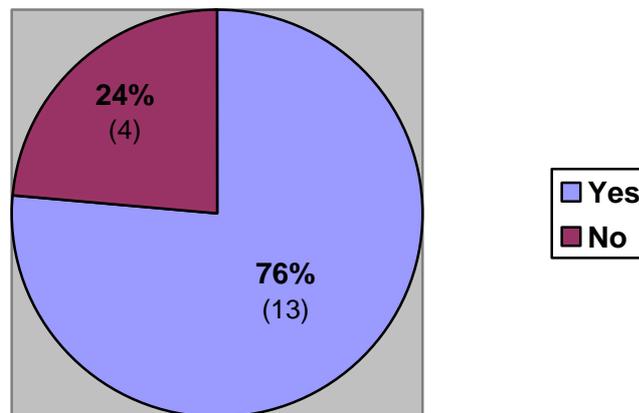

Figure 26 – Level of support for the strategy for Melksham and Warminster town centres

12.6   The majority of respondents agreed with the strategy for Melksham and Warminster town centres.

Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury town centres (*I&O: Q46, Q47*)

Issue: What should we do about Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury's town centres?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Accept that both towns will never have a full range of town centre facilities that sustain local needs, and therefore we should consolidate and concentrate retail activities within their core shopping areas and seek local enhancements when opportunities arise.	Retain existing town centre areas but also introduce new traffic management measures and environmental enhancements in order to improve the retail environment.	Retain the towns' existing primary retail frontages and commercial area boundaries and identify new development sites within these boundaries that introduce new retail and other commercial town centre uses.

Table 32 – Options for Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury town centres

12.7   There were 25 respondents who answered this question on Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury town centres; 6% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Five responses suggested varying combinations of the above options, while four did not specify a preference.
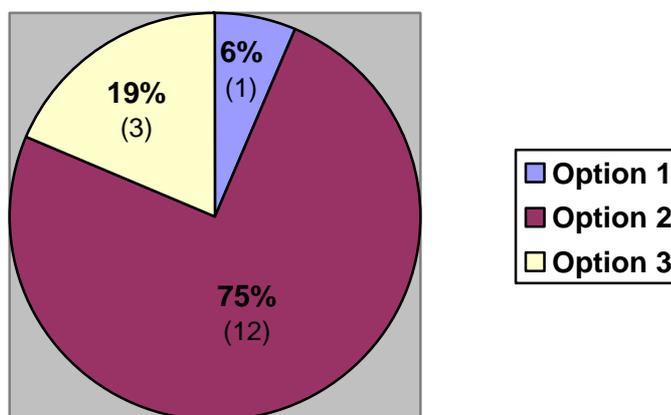

Figure 27 – Level of support for options for Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury town centres

12.8   From the responses received, the most popular option for Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury town centres is **Option 2**.

12.9   There was a clear preference among respondents who chose a combination of the above options, with 100% (5) supporting a mixture of Options 2 and 3.

Loss of rural shops and facilities (*I&O: Q48, Q49*)

Issue: How should we react to the continuing loss of rural shops and facilities?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Accept that this trend is inevitable but strengthen the accessibility and links, such as the internet/ ICT facilities, between our rural settlements and their adjoining towns, particularly in terms of public transport provision.	Seek to prevent the loss of existing rural shops and facilities even if they are underused or vacant.	Encourage local not-for-profit rural community run enterprises.	Support modest housing only if delivers retail development.

Table 33 – Options for addressing the continuing loss of rural shops and facilities

12.10 There were 49 respondents who answered this question on the continuing loss of rural shops and facilities; 13% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. 14 responses suggested varying combinations of the above options, while 15 did not specify a preference.
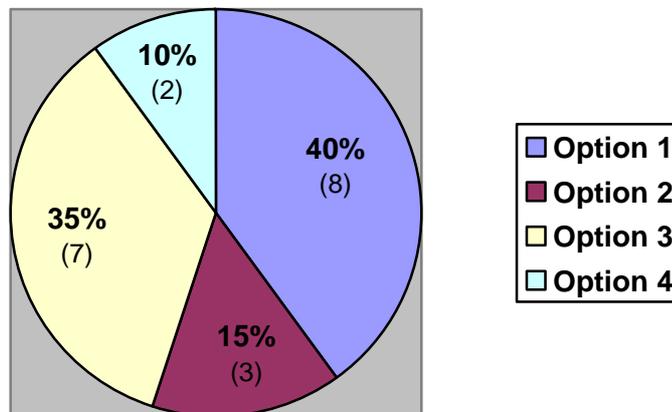

Figure 28 – Level of support for options for addressing the continuing loss of rural shops and facilities

12.11 From the responses received, the most popular approach towards addressing the continuing loss of rural shops and facilities is **Option 1**.

12.12 There was no clear preference for a particular combination of the above options, although a high number of respondents opted for an array of combinations.

12.13 Almost a third of respondents who commented on this question did not specify any preference.

Summary

12.14   The vast majority of respondents support the town centre strategies for Trowbridge, Melksham and Warminster. Many made suggested amendments and these will be taken into consideration during the further development of the Core Strategy.

12.15   In the case of Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury town centres, the vast majority of respondents support retaining the existing town centre areas but also introducing new traffic management measures and environmental enhancements in order to improve the retail environment. However, a relatively low number of respondents answered this question and there was some support for a combination of the preferred Option 2 and Option 3, which is to retain the existing retail environment but, also, identify new development sites within it in order to introduce new retail and other commercial town centre uses.

12.16   The response to the question on dealing with the continuing loss of rural shops and facilities was inconclusive. Although the most popular option was to accept that this trend is inevitable and simply seek to strengthen accessibility and links between rural settlements and the nearby towns, this was only by one response. No clear preference could be discerned from the responses either for one option individually or for a particular combination of options. Almost a third of respondents who commented on this question did not specify any preference.

Chapter 13:   Renewable Energy

Renewable energy (*I&O: Q50, Q51, Q52, Q53*)

Issue: How should the district meet the need for renewable energy?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Large developments (10+ houses, commercial sites of more than 1 hectare) should be producing more than 10% of on-site renewable energy.	All developments to be producing at least 10% of on-site renewable energy.	All developments should be producing more than 10% of on-site renewable energy.	Energy requirements of new and existing developments to be met by renewable energy sources produced on a larger scale away from specific developments.

Table 34 – Options for meeting the need for renewable energy

13.1   There were 48 respondents who answered this question on meeting the need for renewable energy; 12% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. 7 responses suggested varying combinations of the above options, while 14 did not specify a response.
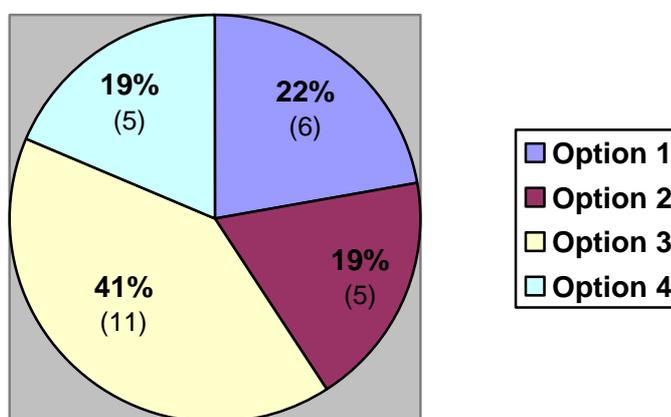

Figure 29 – Level of support for options for meeting the need for renewable energy

13.2   From the responses received, the most popular approach to meeting the need for renewable energy is **Option 3**.

13.3   No clear preference could be discerned from the responses received for a particular combination of the above options.

13.4   Around 30% of respondents who commented on this question did not specify any preference.

13.5   Respondents were also asked what is the most appropriate and realistic method, from a choice of the four options below, of producing renewable energy on-site on new developments.
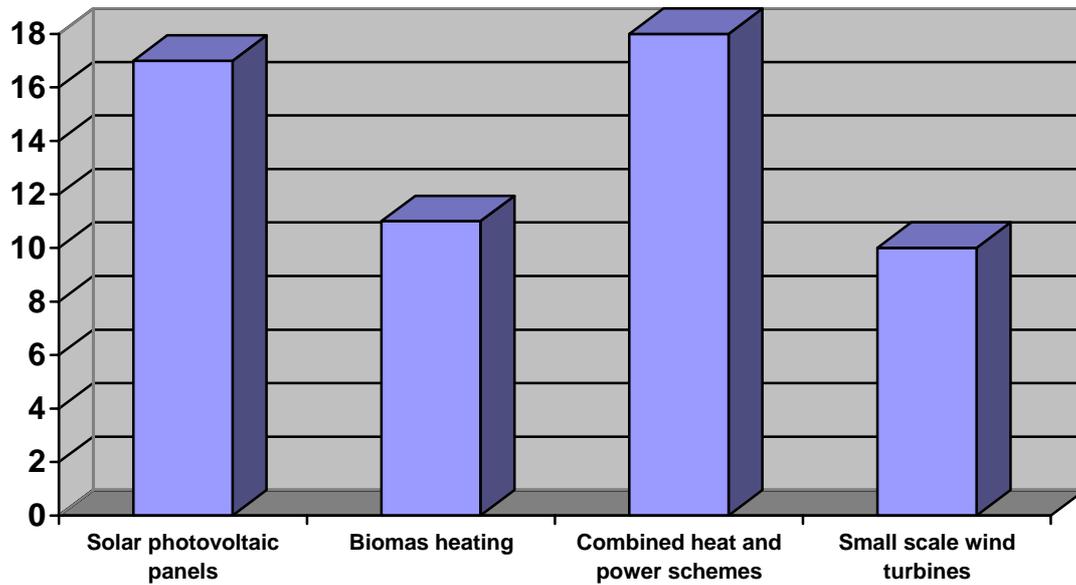

Figure 30 – Level of support for methods of producing renewable energy on-site on new developments

13.6   There were 31 respondents who answered this question on methods of producing renewable energy on-site on new developments; 8% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.

13.7   The responses reveal that there is a broad level of support for all of the potential methods for producing renewable energy on-site in new developments.

13.8   Respondents were also asked to choose the most appropriate method(s) of producing renewable energy on a larger scale, from the options below:
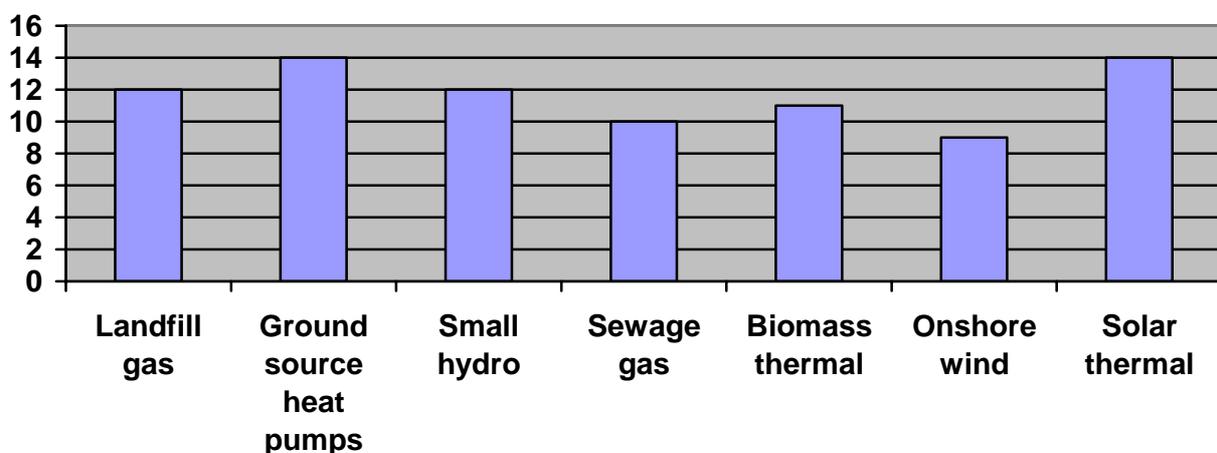

Figure 31 – Level of support for options for producing renewable energy on a larger scale

13.9   There were 28 respondents who answered this question on producing renewable energy on a larger scale; 7% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.

13.10 Again, the responses show a broad level of support for all of the above methods of producing renewable energy on a larger scale.

Summary

13.11 The response to the question on meeting the need for renewable energy in the district is inconclusive. While the most popular option is that all developments should be producing more than 10% of on-site renewable energy, there is scattered support for the other options and for varying combinations. The lack of a clear message may partly be due to the fact that Options 2 and 3 are similar and, indeed, several respondents made comments to this effect. Also, around 30% of those who answered this question did not specify any preference.

13.12 There is broad support for all of the methods both for producing renewable energy on-site in new developments and for producing renewable energy on a larger scale. Some respondents commented that they lacked the knowledge to comment on whether a particular method was best suited for these purposes. Although one response did query whether onshore wind was the best method of producing renewable energy on a larger scale in West Wiltshire.

Chapter 14: Sustainable Construction

Sustainable Construction (*I&O: Q54, Q55, Q56*)

Issue: How should the district address the issue of sustainable construction?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Meet the Government's target for all new homes to emit 25% less carbon by 2010, 44% by 2013 and all new residential development to be zero carbon by 2016.	Meet the zero carbon targets for all new development by 2016.	Meet the zero carbon target for all new residential development before 2016.	All new residential development to meet the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 6 by 2016.

Table 35 – Sustainable construction options

14.1   There were 35 respondents who answered this question on sustainable construction; 9% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Four responses suggested varying combinations of the above option, while six did not specify a preference.
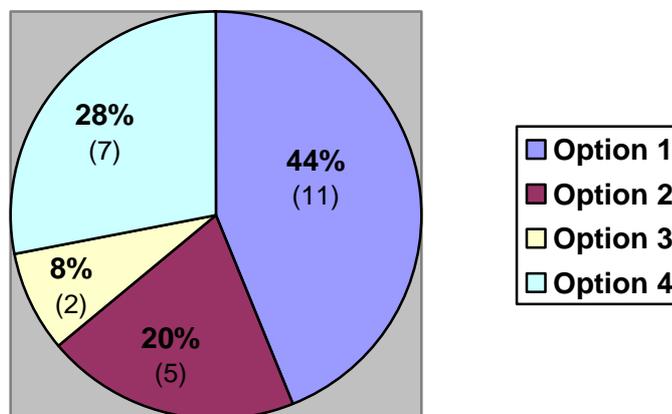

Figure 32 – Level of support for sustainable construction options

14.2   From the responses received, the most popular option for addressing the issue of sustainable construction is **Option 1**.

14.3   No clear preference could be discerned from the responses received for a particular combination of the above options.

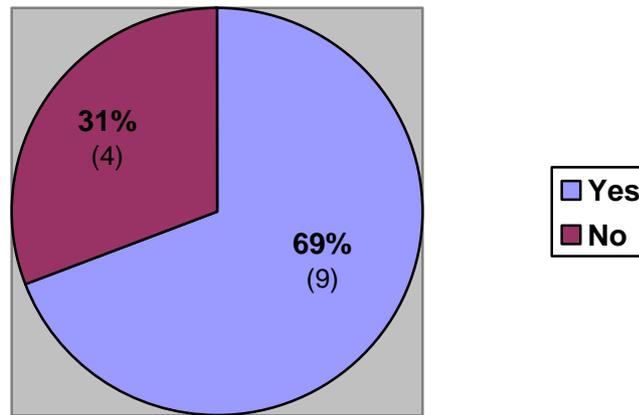14.4   Respondents were also asked if they would be prepared to pay more for a zero carbon house.

Figure 33 – Level of support for paying more for a zero carbon house

14.5   There were 18 respondents who answered this question on paying more for a zero carbon house; 5% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Five responses did not specify a preference.

14.6   From the responses received, the majority of people **would pay more** for a zero carbon house.

Summary

14.7   The response to the question of how to address the issue of sustainable construction was inconclusive. The most popular option was to meet the Government's targets for all new homes to emit 25% less carbon by 2010, 44% by 2013 and all new residential development to be zero carbon by 2016. However, there was scattered support for most of the other options and, also, for varying combinations.

14.8   The majority of respondents said that they would pay more for a zero carbon home. However, relatively few respondents answered this question and a fair number did give an answer.

Chapter 15: Biodiversity

Biodiversity (*I&O: Q57, Q58*)

Issue: How should we address biodiversity in our district?

15.1 Respondents were asked to suggest how biodiversity could be integrated into new developments.

- Comments:

    o Have less development
    o Protect green areas and natural hedgerows, and reduce pollution
    o Choice of site and arrangement of development within the site
    o Taking expert advice early in the planning process
    o Ensure least disruption to wildlife and habitat already present
    o Provide diverse habitat within site and preserve/ construct wildlife corridors
    o Involve, inform & educate developers, construction site workers and new householders of the importance of biodiversity/ wildlife
    o Involve schools, children & youth clubs etc.
    o Biodiversity should be the top consideration in development; low in terms of economic success, the main driver today – need biodiversity 'champion'
    o Find out which biodiversity habitats best suit developed areas; maintain areas for biodiversity and manage large areas
    o Garden type areas around all structures; these should incorporate local nature features
    o Stress role of trees and other planting in new developments
    o Good design and implementation of appropriate landscaping design
    o Require land to be provided for increased biodiversity associated with any significant development, e.g. tree planting, creation of wetland habitat
    o Plenty of connecting hedges, footpaths/ cycleways to allow wildlife safe passage, more use of open blocks for drives and paths instead of solid concrete to allow natural drainage of rain water
    o Keep floodplains and wildlife corridors free from development and then there will be less conflict with existing uses
    o Plant more mature deciduous trees and shrubs through enforcing planning conditions more efficiently
    o Protect and enhance existing biodiversity in development area; prevent habitat fragmentation, use South West Nature Map to highlight important areas, identify ways of restoring habitats and creating corridors (especially in urban areas)
    o Wiltshire Biodiversity Partnership (WWT a member) has 2 steps for biodiversity protection in the planning process; 1. site specific negotiations to ensure no net loss of habitats and species where development will cause specific loss to biodiversity; 2. Use CIL to offset the loss of the common place (non-designated biodiversity areas/ species) and fund improvements to biodiversity
    o Urban extensions provide opportunity to enhance biodiversity by providing and maintaining wildlife corridors
    o Follow the advice of the experts, e.g. WWT
    o Need something measurable to put in place, otherwise all platitudes

  o Green links preserve biodiversity along with statutory protection for key sites
  o Produce plan of the District that highlights all areas of high biodiversity value to provide baseline evidence for identifying habitat creation opportunities and to understand impacts of site allocations
  o Consider impacts of climate change on biodiversity and wildlife; provide corridors and landscape scale conservation initiatives
  o Restrict building on private gardens

15.2 Respondents were also asked if they had any further comments to make regarding biodiversity in the district.

- Comments:

  o Protect the Hilperton Gap in order to preserve biodiversity
  o Protect the Wellhead Valley, area of high biodiversity, from the building of the Westbury bypass
  o Undesignated sites may have important habitats and deserve consideration
  o Many biodiversity habitats in Melksham where people interact with wildlife; new developments poor in wildlife
  o Emphasis green infrastructure linkages include canals and river corridors; Kennet and Avon Canal
  o Embrace biodiversity within all aspects of decision-making
  o Consolidate existing development by greater focus on protecting existing natural habitats, promote local conservation initiatives in neighbourhoods
  o Eat more red meat, link up nature reserves, reduce cat numbers, ensure sufficient green areas in developments
  o Statutory protection – observe in spirit as well as in law
  o A wildlife climate change adaptation plan should complement the core strategy; analysing potential for creation of wildlife corridors and landscape scale conservation, including relationship to wider objectives, such as flood management and woodfuel supply

15.3 There were 37 respondents who answered these two questions on biodiversity; 10% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.

Summary

15.4 Respondents contributed a host of suggestions both on how biodiversity could be incorporated into new developments and, also, on other biodiversity issues in the district. These will be taken into consideration during the further development of the Core Strategy.

Chapter 16: Landscape

Landscape (*I&O: Q59, Q60, Q61*)

Issue: How should we address the issue of West Wiltshire's landscape?

Option 1	Option 2
Continue with existing policy giving enhanced landscape protection only to AONBs and to Special Landscape Areas.	Identify key landscape features within each landscape character area which need protecting and conserving.

Table 36 – Landscape Options

16.1 There were 36 respondents who answered this question on landscape in West Wiltshire; 9% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Three responses suggested a combination of both options, while six did not specify a preference.
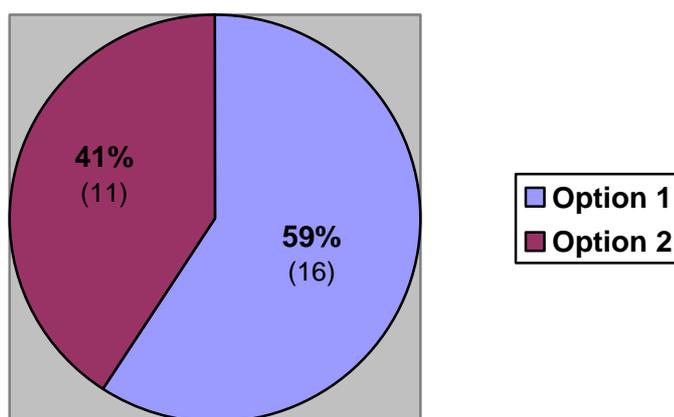

Figure 34 – Level of support for landscape options

16.2 From the responses received, the most popular approach to addressing the issue of West Wiltshire's landscape is **Option 1**.

16.3 Respondents were also asked if they had a high quality, locally distinctive landscape feature that they would like to see given special protection.

- Comments:

  o The Hilperton Gap – 42%
  o The Avon Valley, near Bradford, and its river/ canal setting – 11%
  o Green belt – 11%
  o Other – 36%

16.4   There were 19 respondents who answered this question on identifying a specific landscape area for special protection; 5% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.

Summary

16.5   The majority of respondents, who chose an option, supported continuing with the existing policy giving enhanced landscape protection only to AONBs and to Special Landscape Areas.

16.6   When asked if there was a high quality, locally distinctive landscape feature that they would like to see given special protection, the most popular response was 'the Hilperton Gap'. This answer links back to the spatial growth options for Trowbridge, in Chapter 3, to which there was very strong opposition to new development around Hilperton.

Chapter 17:   Historic Environment

Historic Environment (*I&O: Q62, Q63*)

Issue: How should we manage the historic environment?

Historic environment management objectives
• To protect and enhance the historic environment. • To ensure that existing conservation areas are reviewed and character appraisals and management plans prepared for them. • To identify and designate new conservation areas. • To promote good practice for historic building maintenance through the successful administration of the grant system. • To encourage the appropriate reuse of redundant buildings and brown field regeneration in historic settlements. • Promote high quality new development in the context of the historic environment. • Promote discreet energy saving technology for historic buildings and encourage local skills and materials from sustainable sources. • Introduce a streamlined database of historic assets in advance of the Heritage Protection Regime.

Table 37 – Management objectives for the historic environment

17.1   Respondents were asked if they agreed with the above management objectives.

17.2   There were 24 respondents who answered this question on management objectives for the historic environment; 6% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. One response did not specify a preference.
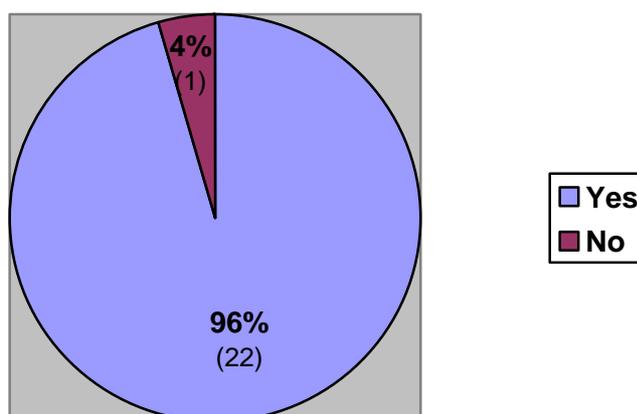

Figure 35 – Level of support for the management objectives for the historic environment

17.3   From the responses received, the majority of respondents **support** the management objectives for the historic environment.

17.4   Respondents were also asked if there were any conservation areas that they considered require reviewing, or if they considered designating new conservation areas a priority.

- Comments:

    o   The Spa (Melksham) – 33%
    o   Other comments:
        ▪   Protection work cannot begin until management plan for Bradford on Avon's conservation areas is completed and agreed
        ▪   Greater input into protection of individual buildings rather than reviewing or implementing conservation areas is required
        ▪   Hilperton Conservation Area kept the same
        ▪   Creation of new conservation areas a priority

17.5   There were 6 respondents who answered these two questions on the historic environment; 2% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.

Summary

17.6   The vast majority of respondents support the management objectives for the historic environment and the most popular response to the question about protecting particular conservation areas or designating new areas was 'The Spa', in Melksham. However, there were a relatively low number of responses to this question.

Chapter 18:   Design

Design (*I&O: Q64, Q65, Q66*)

Issue: How should we ensure that all new development achieves a high quality of design?

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Design policy objectives

- Ensuring that new development creates and reinforces local distinctiveness;
- Promoting an attractive, safe and usable public realm;
- Promoting sustainable forms of development.

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Table 38 – Design policy objectives

18.1   Respondents were asked if they agreed with these objectives.

18.2   There were 29 respondents who answered this question on design policy objectives; 7% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. One response did not specify a preference.
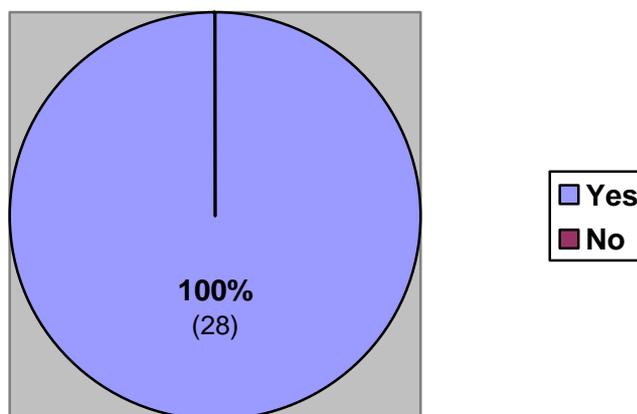

Figure 36 – Level of support for design policy objectives

18.3   From the responses received, the majority of respondents **support** the design policy objectives.

18.4   Respondents were also asked if there were any other objectives that should be looked at in order to achieve a high standard of design.

- Comments:

    o Employ good designers
    o Refuse housing applications that do not achieve a high standard of design

- o Architects must comply with conservation policy retaining visual conformity with the use of modern materials, especially where energy conservation is applicable
- o Tougher planning policies; assist parish councils to create local parish plans; stop developers using cheap materials; design affordable housing to the same standard as market housing so that it blends in
- o More explicit reference to Landscape Character Assessments
- o Local distinctiveness should be considered as a planning issue
- o Greater priority to linking individual developments, i.e. to make walking and cycling easier between different parts of town and between town centre and edge of centre developments
- o Cost-effective, energy saving designs
- o Design should reflect location and place, embracing modern construction methods, styles and materials, and not necessarily mimic the past
- o 6 principles of mixed use sustainable development:
- o engender social interaction
- o make places
- o allow movement logically and legibly
- o sustain land value
- o use natural harmonics
- o result beautiful buildings
- o Increase density, best use of development land and encourage contemporary design
- o Broaden definition of sustainable development because design has impact on a wide variety of topics, e.g. transport, health, crime, biodiversity, sense of place, climate change adaptations etc.
- o Reference to green infrastructure, e.g. networks of multi-functional greenspace provide range of environmental and quality of life benefits, designed into new development from the start and supported by CIL

18.5 Respondents were also asked to consider the key design characteristics of their town or village and whether they should inform proposals for new development.

- • Comments:

   - o To maintain design within the rural character of buildings, in Broughton Gifford
   - o Maximum two storey buildings; materials should match existing build and should incorporate energy saving elements discreetly, in Hilperton
   - o Improve Warminster town centre layout using Malls or pedestrian area with seating and landscaped open plan areas
   - o Bowerhill – open amenity between houses, mature trees, no telegraph poles; Beanacre – spatial gaps between housing; Whitley – old, mature Bath stone dwellings
   - o Semington – stone, with Georgian-style apertures and windows

Summary

18.6 The overwhelming majority of respondents support the design policy objectives and the many suggestions made in answer to the other questions will be taken into consideration during the further development of the Core Strategy.

Chapter 19:   Tourism

Tourism (*I&O: Q67, Q68*)

Issue: How should we meet our future tourism needs?

Table 39 – Current policy approach towards planning for tourism

19.1   Respondents were asked if the existing policy approach towards planning for new tourist developments should continue.

19.2   There were 21 respondents who answered this question on planning for tourism; 5% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Two responses did not specify a preference.
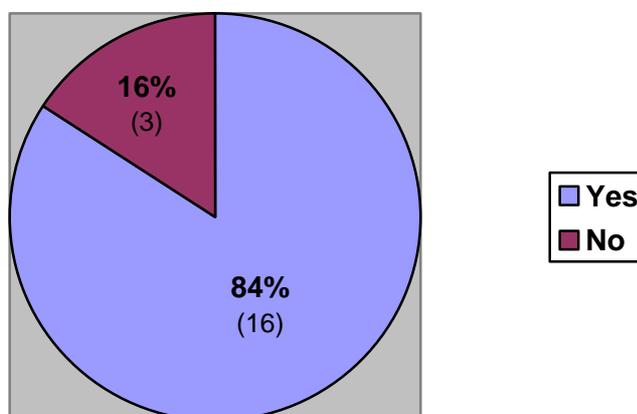

Figure 37 – Level of support for current policy approach towards planning for tourism

19.3   From the responses received, the majority of respondents **support** a continuation of the current policy approach towards planning for new tourist developments.

Summary

19.4   Despite the relatively low number of responses to this question, the vast majority of respondents who did provide an answer to this question support the current policy approach towards planning for tourism.

Chapter 20: Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal Restoration

Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal Restoration (*I&O: Q69, Q70*)

Issue: How should we plan for the restoration of the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Seek to safeguard the preferred route option, which uses the River Avon to pass through Melksham from the south before rejoining the historic line of the Canal to the north.	Explore the viability and deliverability of alternative route options.	Withdraw support for the restoration of the canal but continue to promote the line of the historic canal line for interpretive and recreation purposes.

Table 40 – Options for the restoration of the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal

20.1   There were 28 respondents who answered this question on the restoration of the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal; 7% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Three responses did not specify a preference.
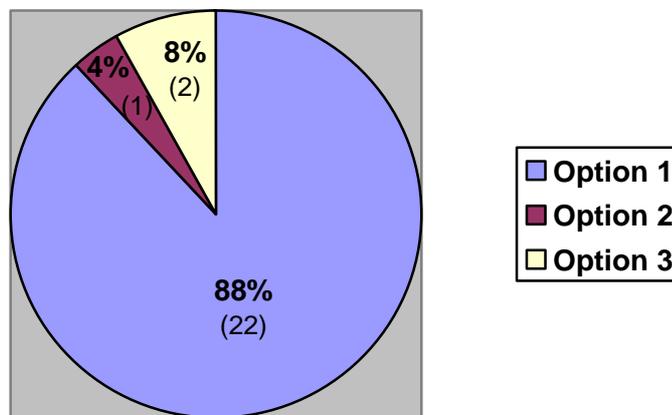

Figure 38 – Level of support for the options for the restoration of the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal

20.2   From the responses received, the most popular option for the restoration of the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal is **Option 1**.

Summary

20.3   The vast majority of respondents support safeguarding the preferred route option for the restoration of the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal.

Chapter 21:   Transport

Travel Strategy (*I&O: Q71, Q72*)

Issue: The Travel Strategy

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Transport Strategy

The District Council has worked with the local transport authority to improve the transport network along the A350 corridor, between Junction 17 of the M4 and Warminster, as a way of maintaining and enhancing our economic prosperity. It is the strategy's principal objective to make West Wiltshire a more accessible location for employers and their customers. We believe that this approach will make the area more self sufficient and help reduce the need to travel beyond its boundaries. Our options for a spatial strategy reflect the importance of the A350 transport corridor.

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Table 41 – Transport Strategy

21.1   Respondents were asked if they agreed with the above transport strategy, which is based around the A350 corridor.

21.2   There were 36 respondents who answered this question about a transport strategy based on the A350 corridor; 9% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper.
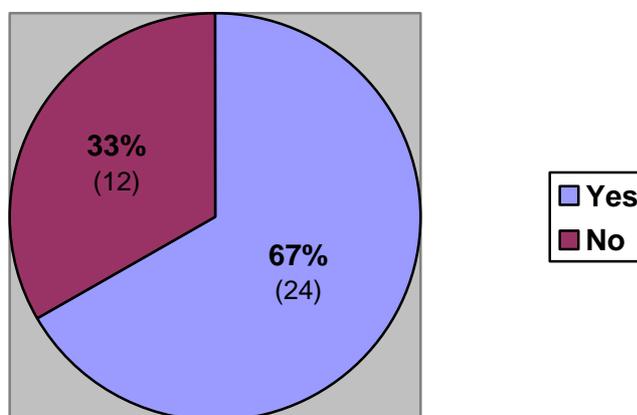

Figure 38 – Level of support for transport strategy

21.3   From the responses received, the majority of respondents **support** a transport strategy based around the A350 corridor.

Strategic Transport Network (I&O: Q73, Q74)

Issue: What strategic transport network improvements do you think are needed to support the growth being planned for West Wiltshire?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Maintain a balanced approach to future transport network improvements – providing a range of improvements that meet the future demands of public transport, pedestrians, cyclists and road users.	Prioritise the delivery of local strategic highway improvements that improve access to West Wiltshire's commercial and employment centres. For example, providing direct local link roads from the A350 to adjoining trading estates.	Concentrate on providing and enabling transport improvements that provide a viable alternative to travel by motor car. For example, delivering safe urban and inter-urban pedestrian and cycle networks.

Table 42 – Options for strategic network improvements

21.4   There were 35 respondents who answered this question on strategic network improvements; 9% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Six suggested varying combinations of the above options, while one did not specify a preference.
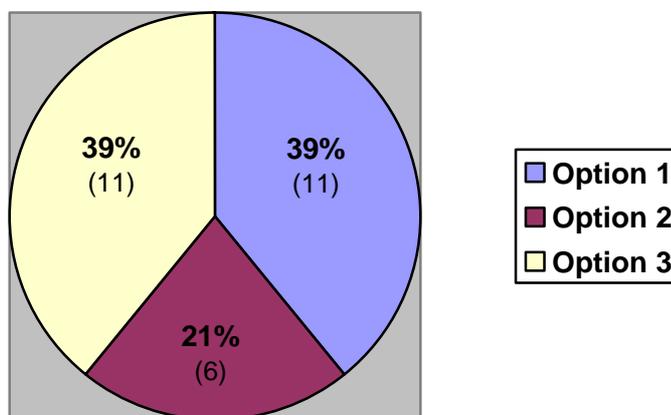

Figure 39 – Level of support for strategic network improvements

21.5   From the responses received, both Option 1 and Option 3 have an equal number of responses in favour and, therefore, the responses are **inconclusive** as to the best option for providing the local strategic network improvements needed to support the growth of West Wiltshire.

21.6   There was a fair degree of support for a combination of Options 1 and 3, which might be expected given that there was equal backing for the options on an individual basis. Two-thirds (4) of respondents who opted for a combination of the above options supported Options 1 and 3, while the remaining third chose a combination of Options 1 and 2.

Reducing the need to travel (*I&O: Q75, Q76*)

Issue: How can we reduce the need to travel?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Maintain our existing approach of planning for balanced future growth in the right location supported by travel demand management measures that incorporate a balanced mix of incentives and disincentives.	Maintain our existing approach but place an increased emphasis upon introducing new control measures such as fewer and more expensive long stay car parking spaces in town centres and workplace measures that require cars to be left at home.	Maintain our existing approach but prioritise the delivery of public transport service improvements, for both bus and rail, directly through the planned for growth. Requiring that all forms of growth contribute towards increasing the quality, capacity and frequency of our public transport services.

Table 43 – Options for reducing the need to travel

21.7   There were 35 respondents who answered this question on reducing the need to travel; 9% of the total number of responses to the Issues and Options consultation paper. Two of the responses suggested varying combinations of the above options, while five responses did not specify a preference.
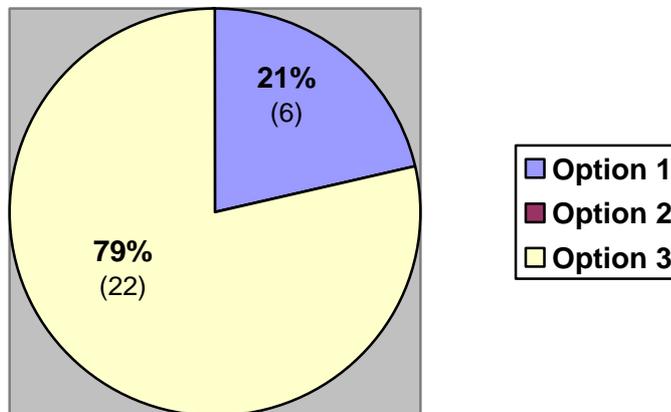

Figure 40 – Level of support for options for reducing the need to travel

21.8   From the responses received, the most popular approach towards reducing the need to travel is **Option 3**.

Summary

21.9   The majority of respondents support a transport strategy based around the A350 corridor.

21.10 The responses to the question on strategic transport network improvements suggest equal support for Options 1 and 3. This would suggest an approach combining a balanced approach to future transport network improvements, catering for the demands of not only public transport and pedestrians but also for road users, with encouraging transport improvements that provide a viable alternative to using a motor car.

21.11 With regard to reducing the need to travel, the vast majority of respondents support maintaining the existing approach but prioritising public transport improvements and, also, requiring that all forms of growth contribute towards improving the public transport system.

22.   Conclusion

22.1   The response to the Issues and Options consultation paper provides a wealth of information that can be used to inform the next stage of the Core Strategy. On many issues a clear preference emerges, either for a particular option or in support of a strategy or list of needs, identified through previous stages of the consultation process.

22.2   The clearest message to come out of this exercise is that there is very strong opposition to new development in the Hilperton area. Unfortunately, it is likely that the majority of development sites already identified, including sites in the Hilperton area, will be needed in order to meet the housing targets set out by the draft RSS. The implication of this is likely to be a choice between making an unpopular decision and finding a suitable alternative(s).

23.3   The question that invited respondents to choose from a selection of options relating to the distribution of new development in the District, the spatial strategy options, received an inconclusive response. The most popular option was for Melksham and Warminster to be Category 'B' settlements, with Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury to join the larger villages in Category 'C'. Trowbridge, identified by the draft RSS as a sub-regional centre for growth, is in Category 'A'.

23.4   However, comments on other options suggested that this option could be modified so that Bradford-on-Avon and Westbury occupy a separate 'B2' category. This recognises the severe constraints upon new development at these towns but also preserves their market town status and distinguishes them from the larger villages.

22.5   However, a number of questions received a low number of responses and it was often the case that the overall response to particular questions was inconclusive. In addition to recording the preferences for individual options, this report has also analysed the preferences for particular combinations of options. This recognises that, in many cases, the individual options were not mutually exclusive and, often, not too dissimilar.

22.6   Both the preferences for particular options and the comments received on the variety of issues addressed by the consultation paper will be taken into consideration in the further development of the Core Strategy.