

South East Dorset Multi-Modal Transport Study

Draft Preferred Strategy Consultation Report

March 2011

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The primary purpose of the South East Dorset Transport Study (SEDTS) is to provide an evidence base for advancing the initiatives and interventions required to ensure that the South East Dorset sub-region has an excellent transport system now and in the future. This report summarises the consultation on the Draft Preferred Strategy, which sought feedback on the types of measures that people would like to see delivered as part of the Recommended Strategy.

Consultation is a central element to the study as it is imperative that the general public and stakeholders share their valuable local knowledge and provide their views on potential changes to the transport system in South East Dorset. The main objectives of consultation and stakeholder engagement are:

- to inform people about the study and the work being undertaken;
- to enable those who have views on the study issues to express them; and
- to ensure that the views are captured in a way that contributes to the study outcomes.

There are two main levels for the target consultation population in the study. Firstly, the **general public** living within, working in or travelling through the study area, who are the main users of the transport system in the area and offer an important perspective on the potential solutions that could be implemented.

Secondly, **representatives of key groups and organisations** for whom transport in the study area is either a direct responsibility or an important issue; these organisations formed the Wider Reference Group and were invited to a specific consultation meeting. Additional meetings were held with members of the Strategy Advisory Group comprising local authority officers and members, and representatives of the Study partnership group. Furthermore, local planning authorities were asked to formally comment on the Draft Preferred Strategy.

The public consultation ran from 06 January to 28 February 2011 and was promoted and publicised widely. This included the quarterly publications prepared by the individual local authorities and delivered to every household across the study area, as well as through online links from each council's website. In addition, each of the individuals and organisations that had previously expressed an interest in the transport study consultations were contacted as well as relevant Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) contacts. Press releases, the study website (www.sedorsetmms.com) and social media (e.g. Facebook) have been used to generate as much public interest as possible in the consultation.

Public Consultation

As with previous consultations during the study, the consultation methodology included a questionnaire available in a newsletter format for the public to complete and return (postage free). Similar information with an online questionnaire was also available on the website. In the questionnaire, respondents were encouraged to express their level of support for, or opposition to, the short/medium term and long term strategy, and to identify their three favourite and three least favoured specific schemes and/or policies.

The response from the general public was 499 completed questionnaires (333 returned paper versions and 166 online).

The responses showed that:

- in the short term, there are no really strong preferences;
- in the long term, there is a strong preference for Dorset Area Rapid Transit System (DARTS);
- there is a strong dislike of increased parking charges;

- there is a polarisation of views on the proposed road link west of Bournemouth Airport, with the long term scheme being the second most favoured and also fourth least favoured; and
- there are differing views, although less marked, on Bus Showcase Corridors (BSC).

Local Authorities and Other Organisations

A briefing was provided on 03 March 2011 to interested members of the three local authorities involved directly in the study (Borough of Poole, Bournemouth Borough Council and Dorset County Council). In addition, the draft strategy and the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan were considered on 07 March 2011 by the South East Dorset Planning and Transportation Joint Committee comprising members from the three authorities.

Local Planning and Highway Authorities were also asked to formally comment on the strategy options identified for the South East Dorset area. Responses were received from the following authorities:

- Christchurch Borough Council;
- East Dorset District Council;
- New Forest District Council; and
- Purbeck District Council.

Written responses were also received from a number of organisations including:

- Environment Agency;
- Natural England;
- Manchester Airport Group;
- Dorset Wildlife Trust;
- East Dorset Community Partnership;
- Purbeck A351 Action Group; and
- West Christchurch Residents Association.

Other events were also held to inform people about the consultation process including briefings for the large public transport operators, presentations at the Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) transport theme group and sessions at various transport advisory groups.

Wider Reference Group

A consultation event with the Wider Reference Group (WRG) was held on 20 January 2011 at the Civic Centre, Borough of Poole. The WRG comprises of key stakeholders with a responsibility for, or an interest in, the transport system in the study area – for example, transport operators, emergency services, health organisations, education groups, business/tourism organisations, transport interest groups, sustainability groups and social inclusion forums. The purpose of the session was to provide an update on the study progress and to understand views and opinions on the various measures for the short/medium term (up to 2020) and the long term (beyond 2020) that will form the Recommended Strategy. A series of presentations were given, followed by a question and answer session.

Next Steps

The results from the consultation provide an important input into the finalisation of the contents of the Recommended Strategy for the study which in turn is a significant input into the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan. The development and refinement of the study's transport strategy continued in parallel with the work on the consultation. However, the consultation provides an important aspect for this

refinement from a number of perspectives – as a corroboration of some of the strategy components; as suggestions for changes to some elements of the strategy and as adjustments to the timing of individual measures within the implementation plan for the strategy.

Following the further refinement of the Recommended Strategy, the contents will then be formally presented to the local authorities for formal adoption as the way of taking forward the vision for the future transport system in the area. The implementation of the measures for the short term will then be included within the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan which the authorities will submit to the Department for Transport (DfT). The funding of additional measures will be sought through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) process, with information from the study providing the evidence to support the submission to the DfT. Beyond these immediate initiatives, the authorities will progress the other measures in the strategy within timescales appropriate to the availability of resources and funding.

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The Borough of Poole in partnership with Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council, the Highways Agency, Government Office for the South West, South West Councils, South West Regional Development Agency and the Department for Transport has commissioned a strategic transport study for South East Dorset.
- 1.2 The South East Dorset conurbation (covering Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole) is the second largest conurbation in the South West (with over 400,000 residents). Poole and Bournemouth were both designated within the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) as Strategically Significant Cities and Towns (SSCTs). The RSS identified Bournemouth and Poole for significant levels of housing and employment growth to 2026, yet this is the first strategic transport study to cover this area in recent years. Following the change in Government in May 2010, the coalition Government announced the abolition of RSS, resulting in a number of the councils in the study area deciding to revise their future land use scenarios to reflect local priorities. Although the magnitude of housing and employment growth may have been revised by the authorities, it nevertheless still represents a significant increase in the South East Dorset area and will bring with it significant additional stresses on the area's transport system.
- 1.3 The primary purpose of the study has been to provide an evidence base for advancing the initiatives and interventions required to ensure that the South East Dorset sub-region has an excellent transport system now and into the future. The challenge has been to address both the current and future issues and needs of the area.
- 1.4 Transport consultant Atkins was chosen to carry out the study of the transport system in South East Dorset, the South East Dorset Multi-Modal Transport Study. The study has comprised three stages; Stage 1 (Scoping Study) and Stage 2 (development of the transport model) have been completed. Stage 3, the development of the transport strategy, is reaching its completion, with the development of the emerging recommended transport strategy. This work has included an assessment of existing and future transport conditions, identification of strategy options, appraisal of strategies and the development of a Preferred Strategy with an implementation plan. The analysis has been facilitated by the development of a multi-modal transport model.

Consultation and Engagement

- 1.5 Consultation is a central element to the study as it is imperative that the general public and stakeholders share their valuable local knowledge. The main objectives of consultation and stakeholder engagement are:
- to inform people about the study and the work being undertaken;
 - to enable those who have views on the study issues to express them; and
 - to ensure that views are captured in a way which contributes to the study outcomes.
- 1.6 There are two main levels for the target consultation population in this study. Firstly, the **general public** living within, working in or travelling through the study area, who are the main users of the transport systems in the study area and provide an important perspective on the potential solutions that could be implemented.
- 1.7 Secondly, **representatives of key groups and organisations** for whom transport in the study area is either a direct responsibility or an important issue and who are aware of the implications of different policy options. This has included officers and members of local authorities, members of transport/environment groups, local community groups, and Parish Councillors.

- 1.8 Consultation has been an important aspect in the process and has been undertaken at three specific stages during the development of the strategy. These have been:
- Stages A and B – Problems and Issues and development of Long List of Options;
 - Stage C – Strategy Options and Appraisal; and
 - Stage D – Preferred Strategy and Implementation Plan.
- 1.9 This report concentrates on the consultation in Stage D on the Draft Preferred Strategy and Implementation Plan. However, before considering the Stage D consultation, the contents of the two preceding consultation exercises are outlined, in order to provide the context of the current work.

Stages A and B – Problems and Issues and Long List of Options

- 1.10 Consultation was undertaken in summer 2009 with the objective at this stage to consult on current and future problems, issues and opportunities on the transport network and to develop the “long list” of potential solutions.
- 1.11 For the general public, a newsletter with a questionnaire was produced and distributed across the study area allowing members of the public to input directly into the study. This was publicised through media briefings and press releases to announce the study consultation and encourage participation.
- 1.12 A website was also developed which included all materials related to the study. It allowed interested parties and members of the public to gain information on the study process and to feed back comments on relevant issues. This has been updated regularly throughout the study.
- 1.13 The stakeholder engagement process consisted of various meetings and workshops including:
- Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) involving local Councillors and council officers and representatives of organisations on the Project Management Group;
 - Wider Reference Group (WRG) included key stakeholders with a responsibility for, or an interest in, the transport system in the study area;
 - meetings with District Councillors; and
 - meetings with Statutory Environmental Bodies.
- 1.14 The Current Problems and Issues Report, which was issued in October 2009, reported on the outcome of the Stage A consultation. The subsequent Stage B, involving just the SAG, took place in January 2010 and considered technical aspects on the process to be followed in developing the preferred strategy.

Stage C – Strategy Options and Appraisal

- 1.15 Consultation for Stage C was undertaken in summer 2010 with the objective of seeking feedback on the potential solutions and initial preferred measures identified in the strategy development process. Outcomes from this stage of consultation were used to inform the Draft Preferred Strategy.
- 1.16 Building on the techniques used in the problems and issues consultation, a second leaflet with a questionnaire was produced and distributed across the study area, allowing members of the public to input directly into the study. There were further media briefings, press releases, radio and social media campaigns to publicise the study consultation and encourage participation.
- 1.17 The study website was updated to include the Stage C leaflet and questionnaire.

- 1.18 The **stakeholder engagement** process consisted of various meetings and workshops including:
- the second meeting of the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG);
 - Wider Reference Group (WRG) comprising key stakeholders attending a workshop to discuss the strategy options;
 - a series of exhibitions for Councillors, transport and planning officers and interested representatives of organisations from the Local Strategic Partnerships;
 - letters to MPs and Local Planning Authorities; and
 - letters to all Parish Councils and Residents Associations.
- 1.19 The Strategy Options Consultation Report was issued in October 2010 and included a description of the conclusions from the consultation.

Methodology for Stage D Consultation

- 1.20 The objective of consultation in this stage was to seek feedback on the measures, identified in Stage D, which together form the Draft Preferred Strategy. Outcomes from this stage of consultation were used to inform the refinement of the Draft Preferred Strategy to create the Recommended Strategy from the study.
- 1.21 As with previous consultations during the study, a leaflet with a questionnaire was produced and distributed across the study area, allowing members of the public to input directly into the study. There were media briefings and press releases to publicise the study consultation, and the study website and social media pages were updated including the online questionnaire.
- 1.22 Respondents were encouraged to express their level of support for, or opposition to, the short/medium term and long term strategy, and to identify their three favourite and three least favoured specific schemes and/or policies.
- 1.23 The **stakeholder engagement** process consists of various meetings and workshops including:
- the third Wider Reference Group (WRG) comprising of key stakeholders attending a workshop to discuss the Draft Preferred Strategy;
 - a series of meetings with Councillors, transport and planning officers letters to Local Planning Authorities;
 - letters to all Parish Councils and Residents Associations;
 - emails/web alerts sent via each relevant authorities Local Strategic Partnership forum e.g. Bournemouth 2026; Poole Partnership and Dorset Community Partnership; and
 - email notification to business forum contacts and liaison with Multi Area Agreement Transport Theme Group.

Document Structure

- 1.24 This report concentrates on the consultation process and response generated. It does not include any technical work on the development of the Recommended Strategy. This will be reported separately.
- 1.25 The main purpose of the document is to report the findings of the consultation activities. Following this introductory chapter, the report is structured around each of the consultation activities.
- 1.26 Further details are provided in the appendices. Appendix A presents copies of the press articles relating to the consultation process. Appendix B contains the leaflet and public questionnaire.

Appendix C provides the detailed comments from the Local Authorities and Appendix D sets out the minutes from the Wider Reference Group.

2. Public Consultation

Introduction

- 2.1 Consultation methods can take on a number of forms ranging from questionnaires to small focus groups to online marketing. It is important to ensure that the methods used can meet the objective of the consultation, which for this consultation stage is to seek people's opinions on the Draft Preferred Strategy for the short/medium term and the long term.
- 2.2 For the purpose of the consultation, the main elements of the Draft Preferred Strategy for the short/medium term (2011 –2020) were:
- promoting greener travel options (car sharing, teleworking, work and personal travel plans);
 - improvements to Broadband;
 - comprehensive cycle network improvements, and improvements to walking routes;
 - development planning to encourage walking and cycling, and link to public transport corridors;
 - improvements to bus services through smart ticketing, real time information, express buses to outlying areas and urban corridor improvements (though to Christchurch);
 - increased rail frequency Wareham to Brockenhurst, and through trains to Swanage;
 - creation of an integrated transport authority for the conurbation;
 - creation of a traffic control centre for the conurbation;
 - better driver information and signs;
 - increased parking charges in town centres and fewer long stay spaces;
 - Park and Ride sites developed at three locations; Riverside Avenue; Northbourne and Mannings Heath;
 - B3073 improvements Chapel Gate and Blackwater;
 - junction improvements at Canford Bottom; and
 - A31 widening at Ringwood.
- 2.3 The long term strategy beyond 2020 included:
- further develop strategy of travel planning and improved travel information;
 - continue strategy of locating development where best served by public transport and walking/cycling;
 - extension of Bus Showcase Corridors;
 - further Park and Ride sites at Bournemouth Airport and Creekmoor;
 - widening of A338 between Blackwater and Cooper Dean;
 - new east-west road link between Chapel Gate and Bear Cross, with new link to A31;
 - A31 Widening from Ameysford and Merley; and
 - development of Dorset Area Rapid Transit System (DARTS) light rail system Hamworthy to Christchurch using existing rail lines plus on street running in Bournemouth town centre.

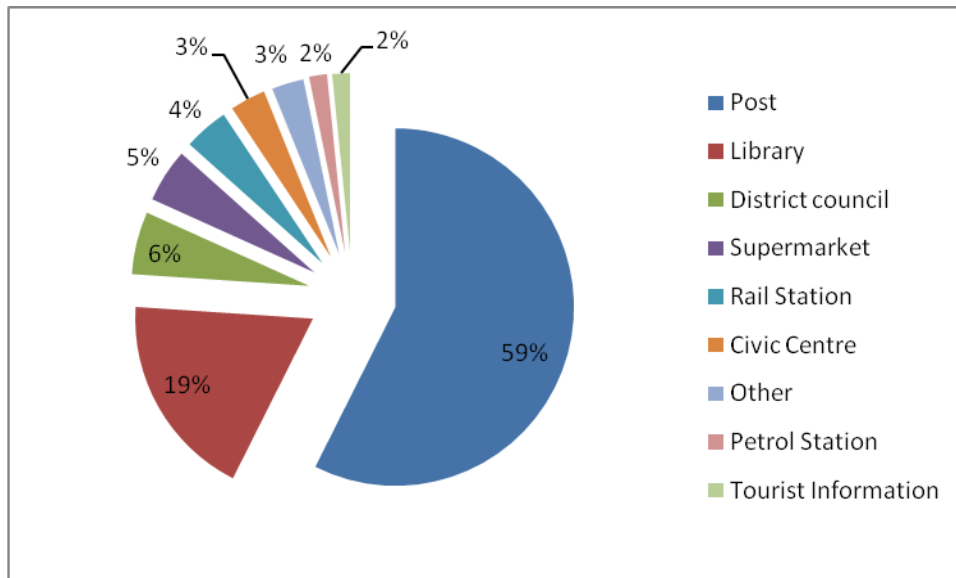
- 2.4 The strategies have been developed using feedback from the previous rounds of consultation alongside detailed technical work.
- 2.5 As this was the third round of consultation, many people had already been involved in the study. People who had previously responded to the consultation were automatically included in this consultation (unless they had specifically requested not to be).
- 2.6 In relation to the general public, following a press release, the Bournemouth Echo and other local media such as the Advertiser series (which includes the Stour and Avon Advertiser), ran stories publicising the consultation with details of the contents of the strategy and how the public could make their views known. The local authorities also used their own quarterly publications to publicise the study consultation; these are distributed to all homes in each local authority's area and hence provide extremely good coverage.
- 2.7 Two social media websites were used by Atkins in the previous round of consultation to promote the consultation process – Facebook and Twitter. Facebook is a social networking site enabling people to form virtual networks and connect with groups of friends to share information. It is also now commonly used by private sector businesses as a free marketing tool and by public sector organisations to share information with stakeholders. It was a successful tool for the strategy options consultation with 12% of people who completed the online questionnaire having heard of the consultation via Facebook and was therefore used again for this stage. Twitter is a 'microblogging' social networking site which enables users to post short text-based messages (known as 'tweets'), which are publicly visible. Previously, this was not as successful as Facebook and hence was not used for this consultation stage.
- 2.8 A leaflet was produced by Atkins containing information on the contents of the Draft Preferred Strategy, for the short/medium term and long term periods. The leaflet included a questionnaire (see Appendix B) which was designed to find out people's level of support for, or opposition to, the short/medium term and the long term strategies, and to identify their three favourite and three least favoured specific schemes and/or policies.
- 2.9 Five thousand copies of the leaflet were printed, and distributed within the study area as well as the surrounding areas of west Hampshire, East Dorset, and Purbeck. The distribution points included:
- libraries;
 - community centres;
 - leisure centres;
 - Tourist Information Centres;
 - Parish and town councils;
 - civic buildings;
 - supermarkets and shopping centres;
 - pubs (Wetherspoons);
 - petrol stations;
 - tourist destinations such as Moors Valley Country Park and Poole Museum;
 - higher and further education establishments;
 - hospitals and Primary Care Trust offices;
 - airport, rail/bus stations across the study area; and
 - public car parks.

- 2.10 Leaflets were also sent directly to everyone who had responded to earlier rounds of consultation.
- 2.11 Copies of the leaflet and questionnaire were also made available on the website, www.sedorsetmms.com. It was also possible to complete the questionnaire on line at the website. An email was sent to those who had responded via the website to previous consultations in order to inform them of the Stage D consultation and to encourage their participation.

General Public Response Rate

- 2.12 A total of 499 questionnaire responses were received from the general public. This consisted of 333 returned paper versions and 166 online responses submitted through the website.
- 2.13 Of the 333 paper questionnaire responses received 74% had information provided showing where they were obtained. The majority of respondents (59%) received the questionnaire by post, with the remaining 41% collected by residents from a variety of locations throughout the study area, as shown in Figure 2.1. This therefore suggests that many of the respondents had been involved in previous stage stages in the consultation and had been taking an active interest in the progress of the study and the contents of the transport strategy.

Figure 2.1 – Where offline respondents obtained a questionnaire



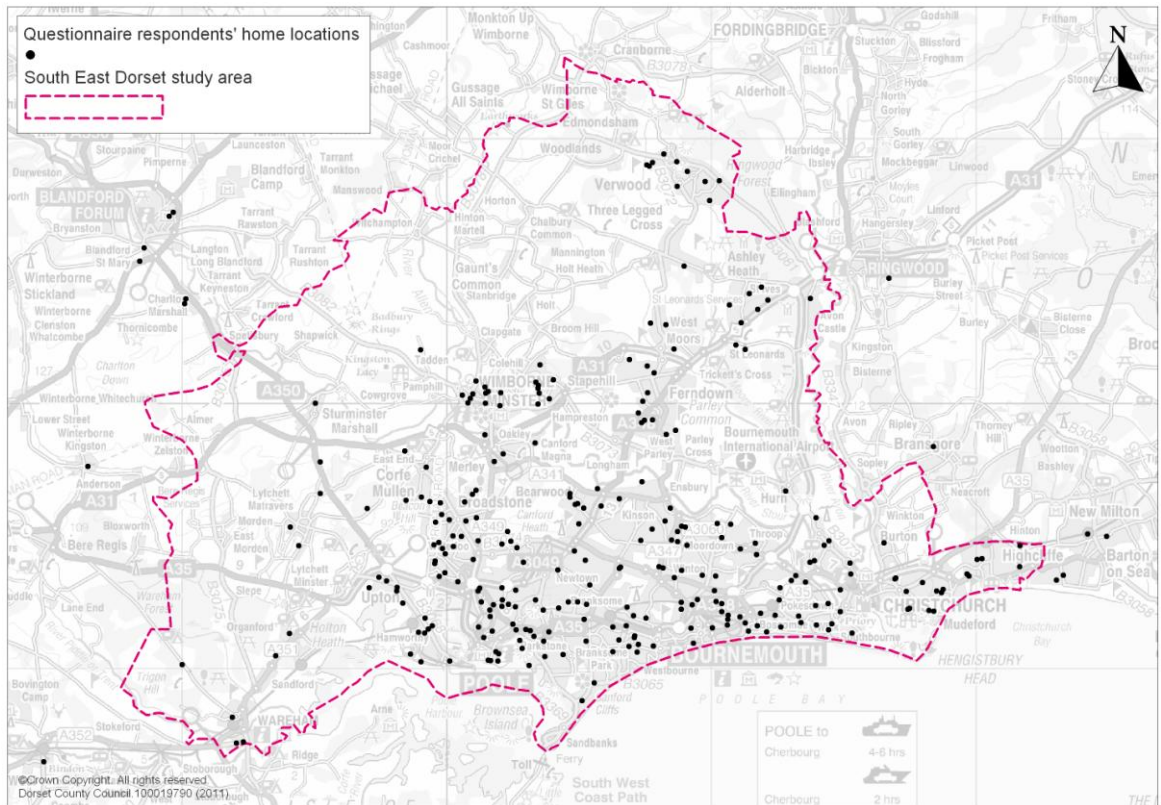
- 2.14 The following section describes the responses from the general public to the consultation. Quotations from the questionnaire are included in order to support the analysis.

Profile of the Survey Respondents

Characteristics of Respondents

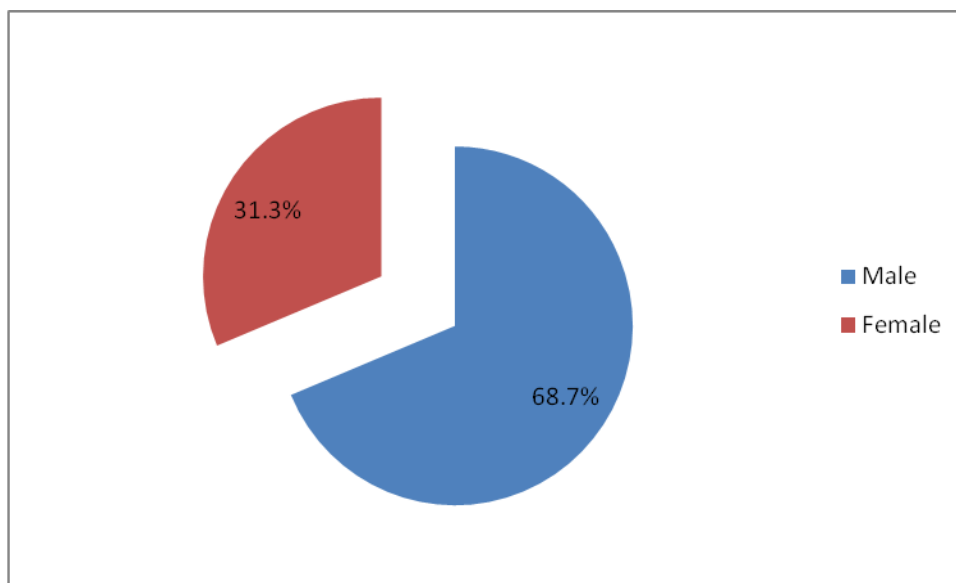
- 2.15 In analysing the responses to the questionnaire, it is important to establish the spread of coverage. Analysis of the postcode data provided by respondents' shows that 90.1% (316 of 348 able to be plotted) are residents of the South East Dorset study area, shown in Figure 2.2. Furthermore, the distribution of addresses shows good coverage across the study area. The questionnaire therefore is considered to have generated a good distribution of responses across the study area.

Figure 2.2 – Postcode location of respondents



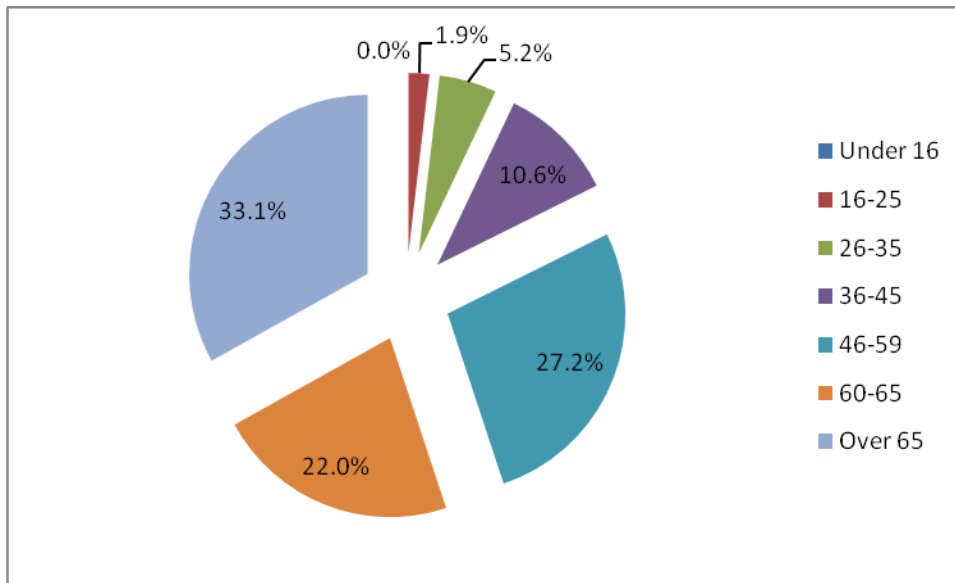
2.16 Of all respondents, for those who disclosed their gender (435), 68.7% were male and 31.3% female, as shown in Figure 2.3. This shows an increase in the proportion of male respondents compared to the previous public consultation conducted as part of the Strategy Options Consultation (October 2010), which had 64% male respondents. Furthermore, it differs from the study area’s gender split in the 2001 census data of 52% female and 48% male.

Figure 2.3 – Gender of Respondents



2.17 Figure 2.4 shows that the majority of respondents (55.1%) were ‘over 60’ years old (combination of ‘60-65’ years and ‘over 65’ years) but the individual age group with the largest proportion of respondents (33.1%), was the ‘over 65’ years group.

Figure 2.4 – Age of Respondents



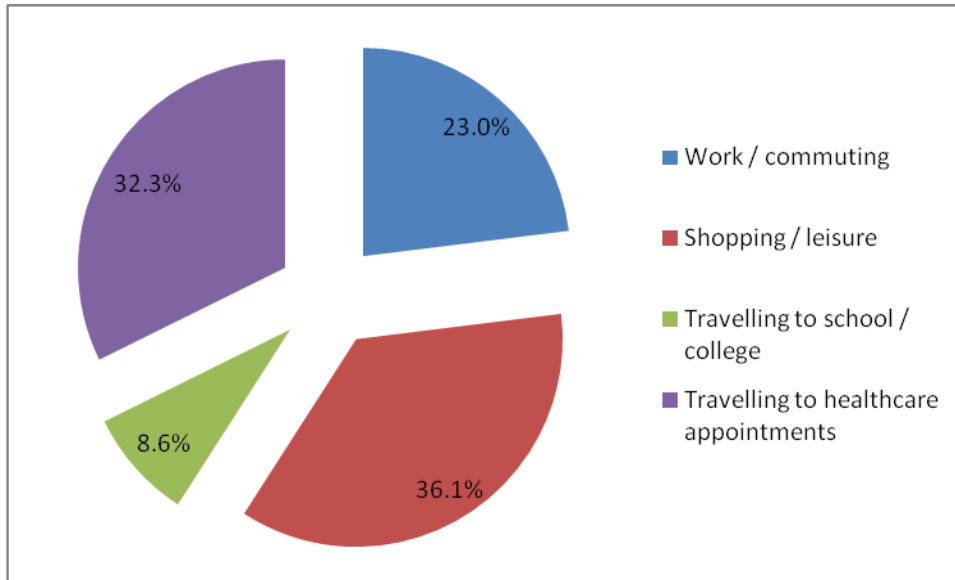
2.18 Table 2.1 lists the responses to the question on working status and identifies that the majority (49.4%) of respondents were in employment, either full or part time.

Table 2.1 – Working Status of Respondents

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Retired | 41.3% |
| Employed Full Time | 37.7% |
| Employed Part Time | 11.7% |
| Voluntary worker | 3.8% |
| Other | 3.3% |
| Unemployed | 1.0% |
| Student | 0.7% |
| Stay at home carer | 0.5% |

2.19 Figure 2.5 shows that the majority of trips that respondents use are car are for shopping and leisure (36.1%). The least number of trips involving a car reported by respondents is for travelling to school or college (8.6%).

Figure 2.5 – Respondents’ car use for trips



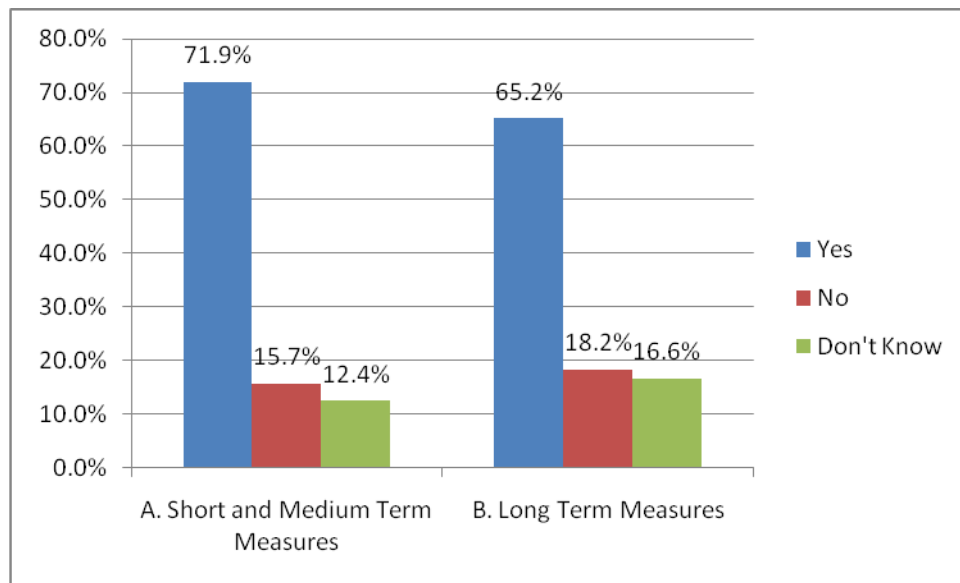
Attitudes to the Draft Preferred Strategy

2.20 The responses to the specific questions included in the questionnaire are analysed in turn. In Question Two, the respondents were asked to consider measures included in the strategy in the short/medium and long term and responses are considered separately in the analysis.

Question One: Do you support the strategies outlined in this leaflet?

2.21 Figure 2.6 shows that the majority of respondents support both the proposed short/medium term (71.9%) and the long term strategies (65.2%). For those who do not support the strategies, there is a fairly even split between the categories of 'no support' and 'don't know'.

Figure 2.6 – Do you support the strategies outlined in this leaflet?



Question Two: What three proposals do you think are most important in order to improve transport in the study area in the short/medium term?

2.22 Each respondent was asked to identify the three measures that they preferred. The distribution of preferences is shown in Table 2.2. 'Improved walking and cycling' (12.0%) and 'Bus Showcase Corridors' (10.7%) are felt to be the most important. When ranked, the measures that respondents do not consider to be the most important in the short/medium term are 'Better driver information through improved communications and Variable Message Signs' (3.4%) and 'Increased parking charges' (2.1%).

Table 2.2 – What three proposals do you think are most important in the short/medium term?

| | Total | % |
|---|-------|------|
| Improved walking and cycling | 173 | 12.0 |
| Bus Showcase Corridors | 154 | 10.7 |
| Junction improvements | 141 | 9.8 |
| Providing through trains to Swanage | 122 | 8.5 |
| Park and Ride | 115 | 8.0 |
| Widening A31 between Ameysford and Merley | 112 | 7.8 |
| Smartcards ticketing on buses and trains | 101 | 7.0 |
| Improvements to B3073 Chapel Gate, Airport, A338 | 79 | 5.5 |
| New highways link west of airport to Ringwood Road and Canford Bottom | 78 | 5.4 |
| Smartcard ticketing on buses and trains | 77 | 5.4 |
| Dorset Area Rapid Transit System (DARTS) | 74 | 5.1 |
| Greener travel options – travel plans, car clubs, car sharing, travel awareness campaigns | 71 | 4.9 |
| Increased rail frequency between Wareham and Brockenhurst | 63 | 4.4 |
| Better driver information through improved communications and Variable Message | 49 | 3.4 |
| Increased parking charges | 30 | 2.1 |

Question Two: What three proposals do you think are most important in order to improve transport in the study area in the long term?

- 2.23 Table 2.3 shows that respondents give the long term measure ‘Dorset Area Rapid Transit System (DARTS)’ (15.8%) strong support, with ‘New highways link west of airport to Ringwood Road and Canford Bottom’ (9.3%) and ‘Improved walking and cycling’ (9.1%) receiving good levels of support. When ranked, the measures that respondents do not consider to be the most important in the long term are ‘Increased parking charges’ (2.9%) and ‘Smartcard ticketing on buses and trains’ (3.2%).

Table 2.3 – What three proposals do you think are most important in long term?

| | Total | % |
|---|-------|------|
| Dorset Area Rapid Transit System (DARTS) | 200 | 15.8 |
| New highways link west of airport to Ringwood Road and Canford Bottom | 118 | 9.3 |
| Improved walking and cycling | 116 | 9.1 |
| Bus Showcase Corridors | 103 | 8.1 |
| Widening A31 between Ameysford and Merley | 101 | 8.0 |
| Junction improvements | 91 | 7.2 |
| Improvements to B3073 Chapel Gate, Airport, A338 | 90 | 7.1 |
| Park and Ride | 75 | 5.9 |
| Providing through trains to Swanage | 72 | 5.7 |
| Smartcards ticketing on buses and trains | 59 | 4.6 |
| Better driver information through improved communications and Variable Message Signs | 59 | 4.6 |
| Increased rail frequency between Wareham and Brockenhurst | 55 | 4.3 |
| Greener travel options – travel plans, car clubs, car sharing, travel awareness campaigns | 52 | 4.1 |
| Smartcard ticketing on buses and trains | 41 | 3.2 |
| Increased parking charges | 37 | 2.9 |

Question Three: What three proposals do you think are the least suitable for the South East Dorset area?

- 2.24 Table 2.4 shows that the respondents strongly consider the measure ‘Increased parking charges’ (21.4%) to be the least suitable for the strategy. Other measures which are not favoured are ‘Greener travel options’ (9.2%) and ‘Park and Ride’ (8.6%). Conversely, the measures that respondents do not consider to be the least suitable are ‘Smartcard ticketing on buses and trains’ (2.1%) and ‘Junction improvements’ (2.2%).

Table 2.4 – What three proposals do you think are least suitable?

| | Total | % |
|---|-------|------|
| Increased parking charges | 255 | 21.4 |
| Greener travel options – travel plans, car clubs, car sharing, travel awareness campaigns | 109 | 9.2 |
| Park and Ride | 102 | 8.6 |
| New highways link west of airport to Ringwood Road and Canford Bottom | 87 | 7.3 |
| Bus showcase corridors | 77 | 6.5 |
| Improved walking and cycling network | 76 | 6.4 |
| Better driver information through improved communications and Variable Message Signs | 76 | 6.4 |
| Dorset Area Rapid Transit System (DARTS) | 71 | 6.0 |
| Providing through trains to Swanage | 67 | 5.6 |
| Widening A31 between Ameysford and Merley | 66 | 5.6 |
| Improvements to B3073 Chapel Gate, Airport, A338 | 53 | 4.5 |
| Smartcards ticketing on buses and trains | 50 | 4.2 |
| Increased rail frequency between Wareham and Brockenhurst | 49 | 4.1 |
| Junction improvements | 26 | 2.2 |
| Smartcard ticketing on buses and trains | 25 | 2.1 |

- 2.25 The questionnaire included a section in which respondents could provide additional comments about the contents of the strategy. A selection of typical responses are summarised in the boxes. These demonstrate the breadth of attitudes towards the strategy and its contents. Separate responses are provided for Questions One and Two combined and for Question Three.

Supporting free text comments

The following are comments made in the open ended section and relate to Questions One and Two:

- “More space for bikes on trains and secure cycle parking at stations would be good.”
- “Better bus services to the northern suburbs please (more frequently). Corfe Mullen, Broadstone, Wimborne, Colehill, Merley into Poole and Bournemouth.”
- “Better bus/rail interchanges in Bournemouth and Poole.”
- “I consider that the number one priority should be to dual the A31 between Ferndown and Merley, preferably in the short term but if not in the long term.”
- “I think it's one of the most important things to improve and change the priority from the cars to other kinds of transport.”
- I think that what could make a big improvement without costing money is using public transport connection information and integration locally. I can get good info about either of the two main bus companies' routes but no single view.”
- “Make the electronic signs in bus shelters reflect what actually happens.”
- “Park and Ride can work very well for e.g. Bath often car park full by 10:30 or York.”
- “Transport integration in Poole would be better achieved if the railways station was relocated adjacent to bus station.”
- “Very exciting and challenging for us to make the right choices.”
- “Would it be better to extend DARTS to include the Park and Rail stations?”
- “Your policies seem to be anti-car. We need better roads and more bridges across rivers.”
- “Nothing is planned to improve links between Ferndown/Ringwood/Castlepoint/Christchurch. We could be living on the Moon! Everything is concentrating on Bournemouth, which is already well provided for.”
- “To reduce long term car parking, as well as, increasing the charges...will really encourage people to shop elsewhere and help the already declining state of our shopping centres.”
- “A relief road would reduce the volume of traffic through Christchurch and consequently the congestion and the pollution creating cleaner air.”

Supporting free text comments

The following are comments made in the open ended section and relate to Question Three:

- “Road widening and new roads promote use of cars and lead to more congestion in the long term in my view.”
- “Park and Ride is not necessary – we need to encourage people to travel their entire journey by public transport.”
- “Road improvements are a costly predict and provide.”
- “I like the DARTS idea but wonder if it could pay for itself.”
- “I cannot see any reason for a better train service to Brockenhurst; surely it should run through to Southampton.”
- “Building a new road from Magna Road to Canford Bottom hardly seems to correspond to your objective of being deliverable, this would surely be hugely costly go against principles of reducing the need to travel and tackling climate change. There is no mention of the environmental impact on this, or the other schemes, how will the affect the character of the area?”

Conclusions

2.26 The following conclusions can be drawn from the consultation responses:

- in the short term, there are no really strong preferences;
- in the long term, there is a strong preference for Dorset Area Rapid Transit System (DARTS);
- there is a strong dislike of increased parking charges;
- there is a polarisation of views on the proposed road link west of Bournemouth Airport, with the long term scheme being the second most favoured and also fourth least favoured; and
- there are differing views, although less marked, on Bus Showcase Corridors (BSC).

3. Local Authorities and Other Organisations

Introduction

- 3.1 Local authorities were invited to comment on the Draft Preferred Strategy. The Borough of Poole, Bournemouth Borough Council and Dorset County Council, as partners in the study, were consulted throughout the process through the Project Management Group and Strategy Advisory Group, with joint presentations to the members of each council on 03 March 2011, as well as to the South East Dorset Planning and Transportation Joint Committee on 07 March 2011.
- 3.2 Many of the responses received from local authorities and other organisations were also in response to the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan. This chapter sets out the main comments regarding the South East Dorset Transport Study. Full responses can be found in Appendix C.

Local Planning and Highway Authorities

- 3.3 Local Planning and Highway Authorities were asked to comment on the Draft Preferred Strategy identified for the South East Dorset area. Responses were received from the following authorities:
- Christchurch Borough Council;
 - East Dorset District Council;
 - New Forest District Council; and
 - Purbeck District Council.
- 3.4 The comments have been included in full in Appendix C and a summary is provided below.

Christchurch Borough Council

- 3.5 Christchurch Borough Council responded to the consultation at a Community Services Committee on 02 March 2011. The full committee report was sent and can be found in Appendix C. The main comments included:
- the transport strategy broadly reflects the transport options set out in the Christchurch and East Dorset Options for Consideration which were consulted on in autumn 2010;
 - Bus Showcase Corridors are an important element of the strategy and extension of these to serve Christchurch, the airport and Highcliffe is welcome;
 - DARTS transit system should be extended to Hinton Admiral and New Milton to alleviate traffic through Christchurch from the east;
 - requirement to reopen the second Bournemouth railway station;
 - need to work with Hampshire County Council on the development of a Park and Rail facility at Hinton Admiral railway station;
 - light rail link from Christchurch rail station to the airport is needed;
 - junction improvements should not give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and buses;
 - clarification is required on the following:

- detailed route for the proposed east-west road link from Chapel Gate to Bear Cross and the impact on the Stour Valley; and
- the role of Park and Ride at Bournemouth Airport.
- concern is expressed regarding the omission of the Christchurch bypass, the Airport – A338 Link Road; and
- concern over an Integrated Transport Authority, particularly regarding the loss of control over setting public parking levels and pricing in Christchurch.

East Dorset District Council

- 3.6 East Dorset District Council provided feedback on the strategy via a letter on 16 February 2011. The Council sought more information on the purpose of the north-south and east-west link roads as well as more information on the routes, timing and assessments of their impacts. The Council would also like to know the reasons for the non-inclusion of the West Moors bypass and the Springfield Distributor Road. Bus Showcase Corridors should reflect the prime transport corridors which form part of the Christchurch and East Dorset Options for Consideration Document. Support is given for an Integrated Transport Authority.

New Forest District Council

- 3.7 New Forest District Council responded to the consultation on 15 February 2011 via an email. In general the short, medium and long term measures are supported. Specific points raised include:
- improvements to walking and cycling networks supported as are public transport improvements, but gaps and linkages to New Forest areas should be identified;
 - concern regarding Park and Ride at Bournemouth airport, as it may promote car usage;
 - a direct link to the A338 spur road should be included;
 - alternative measures to reduce the severe congestion problems on the A31 near Ringwood should be considered; and
 - estimated scheme costs appear to be significantly higher than possible funding, therefore there may be issues regarding the deliverability of the schemes.

Purbeck District Council

- 3.8 Purbeck District Council comments were recorded in a letter sent on 11 February 2011 and include the following main comments:
- many of the schemes proposed will bring benefits to Purbeck in both the short and long term and for this reason nearly all of them are supported;
 - Park and Ride schemes are supported, in particular for Holton Heath;
 - Purbeck is well served by railway stations, measures that encourage better usage are supported, in particular measures to improve walking and cycling access to all the stations;
 - smartcard ticketing on buses and trains is supported, provided that this includes the relevant areas of Purbeck such as Wareham and Swanage;
 - all the small-scale measures to improve bus reliability and passenger information within Purbeck are supported; and
 - modifications to the Bakers Arms roundabout with route management in Sandford should be included in the strategy as should be the reinstatement of train services through to Swanage from the national network.

Town and Parish Councils

- 3.9 Town and Parish Councils, mainly from the rural areas, have responded directly to the LTP3 consultation.

Statutory Organisations

- 3.10 The three statutory organisations, English Heritage, Environment Agency and Natural England have been consulted throughout the study via an invitation to the Wider Reference Group. They have also been formally consulted upon through the LTP3 Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) process.

Environment Agency

- 3.11 The Environment Agency (EA) commented via a letter dated 28 February 2011. The main response was supportive of any transport option that minimises car use and seeks to reduce carbon emissions and the potential impact on climate change. The EA consider schemes should be assessed to determine their potential environmental impact and what opportunities there may be to enhance the environment and would not wish any transport scheme to impact on enhancement projects, such as the Stour Valley Green Infrastructure project.

Natural England

- 3.12 Natural England responded to the consultation via a letter dated 28 February 2011.
- 3.13 Natural England raised a number of concerns, in particular the proliferation of road schemes proposed for the long term strategy. They also identified that a stage 2 of the Habitats Regulation Assessment process is still required. Other comments include:
- the Stour Valley has been identified as being potentially an important area for the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), a key element in mitigating effects of new housing. The proposed new road along the Stour Valley has the potential to disrupt and reduce the effectiveness of SANGS (either existing by 2020 or planned) and therefore in turn to affect the integrity of the internationally designated sites;
 - The potential for traffic increases resulting in increasing nitrogen deposition on heathlands has been underplayed;
 - potential impacts on the SSSI at the Moors River from both the Parley Road – Blackwater Junction improvements and the east-west road link have not been properly explored;
 - there are a number of policies in sections covering alternatives to car use that we support. For example the provision of cycling and walking infrastructure is welcome but, in contrast to proposed road schemes, there are no specific proposals, only general aspirations;
 - the contrast between the investment proposed in road schemes and in this area (cycling and walking) is marked. The view is that unless specific schemes are identified and funds raised for their implementation then little is likely to get done; and
 - strongly recommend that priority is given to taking forward these types of initiative in the Implementation Plan and would be happy to provide examples of specific schemes, linking to Green Infrastructure, which could be included.
- 3.14 Meetings have been held subsequently with Natural England (11 March 2011 and 21 March 2011) to discuss these concerns and clarify the level of appropriate assessment required.

Other Organisations

- 3.15 Other organisations were also invited to respond to the consultation by completing a questionnaire or by attending the Wider Reference Group outlined in Chapter Four. Individual responses which were received are summarised below.

Manchester Airport Group

- 3.16 The Manchester Airport Group, which owns Bournemouth Airport, attended the Wider Reference Group but also responded by letter. This letter set out the following main points in response to the Draft Preferred strategy consultation:
- there appears to be an inference that the B3073 will become formalised into an east-west northern Bournemouth relief road. In discussions it has become clear that developments along the corridor of this route might be stifled until such time that it is possible to deliver the scheme that has, at best, questionable deliverability. It is clear that the current funding environment would not support such a capital intensive scheme and it is highly unlikely that the transport contributions scheme could generate sufficient monies to deliver such an ambitious project;
 - supportive of the mix of measures outlined in the rest of the Draft Preferred Strategy. Neither the business park nor the Airport is served by public transport networks. The only bus link is that which is funded by the Airport Company from the town centre/interchange to the airport. A key priority should therefore be the development of bus routes along Parley Lane and pleased to see that the strategy recognises this in the development of the bus priority corridors; and
 - active and keen to develop access to both aspects of our site by alternative means with cycling in particular represents a significant opportunity to access the Business Park.

Dorset Wildlife Trust

- 3.17 Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT) responded to the consultation via an email on 28 February 2011. In general, there is much support to the plan in terms of encouraging sustainable transport, and promoting green infrastructure. There is a need to look for more environmentally sustainable alternatives and more effort is needed for traffic reduction through demand management, improvements to public transport and recognising that fuel prices are likely to make private car use less attractive in future.
- 3.18 DWT supports the following key measures:
- minimising the need to travel;
 - public transport alternatives to the car;
 - active travel and 'greener' travel choices; and
 - manage demand for private car use.
- 3.19 DWT has objections to the following schemes:
- the B3073 improvements (Chapel Gate to Blackwater) include a new road crossing the Moors River System SSSI;
 - north-south road link (Magna Road to Canford Bottom); and
 - east-west road link (Chapel Gate to Magna Road).
- 3.20 In addition, DWT raises the following concerns about other proposals:

- A31 westbound widening at Ringwood could have an adverse impact on the Avon Valley SSSI and SPA and River Avon System SAC. Any scheme designed would have to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations and UK legislation protecting SSSIs;
- the proposed Park and Ride site at Riverside Avenue due to the potential impacts on veteran trees, hedgerows and other biodiversity interests. It has yet to be shown that these can be mitigated satisfactorily;
- the A31 between Ameysford and Merley lies immediately adjacent Slop Bog and Uddens Heath SSSI, part of Dorset Heathlands SPA and Ramsar site and Dorset Heaths SAC. Any widening scheme would have to meet the requirements on the Habitats Regulations and UK legislation protecting SSSIs; and
- A338 widening (Blackwater to Cooper Dean) crosses the River Stour, which though undesignated does provide a vital wildlife corridor in the urban area, and supports the European protected otter.

Dorset Fire and Rescue Service

3.21 Dorset Fire and Rescue Service (DFRS) attended the Wider Reference Group but also responded by letter. This letter set out the following main points in response to the Draft Preferred Strategy:

- DFRS supports any scheme that aids the flow of traffic and consequently reduces or removes traffic congestion;
- DFRS supports any scheme that increases public safety on the roads by reducing risk, such as speed cameras, permanent signage indicating high risk areas of road, vehicle messaging boards and improvements to road junctions and known 'black spots'; and
- DFRS supports any scheme that allows the opportunity to reduce carbon emissions from its own fleet of vehicles.

East Dorset Community Partnership

3.22 In the response from the Environment Themed Action Group, part of the East Dorset Community Partnership, there are a number of points raised which include:

- support the emphasis on smarter travel choices and the general approach but regret that none of these will benefit East Dorset in the period to 2020;
- the large scale highways schemes proposed will reduce traffic congestion and air pollution by smoothing traffic flows and allowing vehicles to achieve more efficient engine speeds in the short to medium term only;
- strongly recommend that other programmes, policies and plans for the area are fully investigated before proceeding with any plans for new road alignment;
- the purpose of the east-west link (Chapel Gate to Magna Road) and the north-south link (Canford Bottom to Magna Road) has not been identified in the documentation;
- welcome the omission of the West Moors Bypass from the plans and recognition of the extent of the environmental damage that this new road would cause;
- concern that the provision of enhanced bus services up to 2020 is restricted to the conurbation. Improved services are needed now in East Dorset;
- welcome the proposal to reconsider the provision of Park and Ride;
- support the principle of the light rail proposal but the north-south public transport routes must be equally promoted; and

- there is a need to reduce traffic in town centres, to generally reduce car parking in town centres and make the centres more attractive and pleasant for users.

The Purbeck A351 Action Group

- 3.23 The Purbeck A351 Action Group in relation with Sandford and Holton Heath Residents Association responded to the consultation via a letter dated 27 February 2011. The main comments related to the congestion on the A35/A31 junction and A351 Bakers Arms Roundabout to Wareham, the blight of heavy traffic through Corfe Castle and the problems associated with the entrance into Swanage.

West Christchurch Residents Association

- 3.24 The West Christchurch Residents Association responded to the consultation via a letter dated 23 February 2011. The main views include:
- the proposals are somewhat over ambitious considering the current financial situation which is unlikely to improve in the near future;
 - a simple and cost effective way of improving traffic flow would be to allow two lanes of traffic to exit junctions where space permits to reduce 'pinch points';
 - whilst bus lanes are useful at peak times – off peak use by other traffic could reduce driver frustration and abuse as well as improving traffic flow;
 - Park and Ride needs to be easily accessible via major road links and the bus service into the centre of towns frequent and cost attractive; and
 - Difficulty in envisaging the practicality of the DARTS light rail system.

Other Events

- 3.25 The following events were also used to inform people about the consultation process and provide information:
- Network Rail briefing (6 December 2010);
 - Yellow Bus/Wilts and Dorset briefings (8 December 2010);
 - South West Trains briefing (9 December 2010);
 - Bournemouth Airport (10 December 2010);
 - East Dorset Transport Advisory Group (20 January 2011);
 - Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) Transport Theme Group (1 February 2011);
 - Environmental Advisory Group (16 February 2011);
 - Townsend and Muscliffe Area Forum (24 February 2011); and
 - Christchurch Transport Advisory Group (3 March 2011).

Summary

- 3.26 Local Planning and Highway Authorities were also asked to formally comment on the strategy options identified for the South East Dorset area. Responses were received from the following authorities:
- Christchurch Borough Council;
 - East Dorset District Council;

- New Forest District Council; and
- Purbeck District Council.

3.27 Written responses were also received from a number of organisations including:

- Environment Agency;
- Natural England;
- Manchester Airport Group;
- Dorset Wildlife Trust;
- East Dorset Community Partnership;
- Purbeck A351 Action Group; and
- West Christchurch Residents Association.

3.28 Other events were also held to inform people about the consultation process including briefings for the large public transport operators, presentations at the MAA transport theme group and sessions at various transport advisory groups.

4. Wider Reference Group

- 4.1 The third Wider Reference Group (WRG) for the South East Dorset Transport Study (SEDTS) was held on 20 January 2011 at the Civic Centre, Borough of Poole.
- 4.2 The WRG comprises of a number of organisations representing a wide range of interests in the South East Dorset area. These organisations include:
- transport operators;
 - emergency services;
 - health organisations;
 - education establishments;
 - business/tourism operators;
 - transport interest groups;
 - statutory environmental groups;
 - sustainability groups; and
 - social inclusion forums.
- 4.3 One hundred and sixty organisations were invited and, on the day, 26 stakeholders attended the event. A list of attendees is available in Appendix D.
- 4.4 The purpose of the session was to provide an update on the development of the transport strategy; highlight the current funding arrangements and outline the contents of the Draft Preferred Strategy. In advance of the meeting, the attendees had been sent a link to the consultation leaflet and questionnaire.
- 4.5 The meeting involved a number of presentations from Rick Clayton (South East Dorset Transport Study Client Project Manager) and Rob Thompson (Atkins Project Manager) which set out the following:
- previous consultation results;
 - strategy development process;
 - potential sources of funding;
 - draft strategy; and
 - next steps.
- 4.6 Attendees were invited to ask questions or make comments throughout the session. The questions focused primarily on funding and political arrangements for the region and elements of the Draft Preferred Strategy including DARTS, sustainable highway schemes and community transport.
- 4.7 The full set of questions and associated responses are set out in Appendix D.

5. Summary of Draft Preferred Strategy Consultation

Background

- 5.1 Two levels of the population have been consulted during this stage of the South East Dorset Transport Study. Firstly, the general public living within, working in or travelling through the study area, and secondly representatives of key groups and organisations for whom transport in the study area is either a direct responsibility or an important issue and are aware of the implications of different policy options. This includes officers and members of local authorities, members of transport/environment groups, local community groups and Parish Councillors.
- 5.2 This report provides a record of consultation feedback on the Draft Preferred Strategy from all the various activities. These include a wide range of comments from the different sources. The emphasis in the report is on the analysis of the responses from the two groups in order to direct the content of the Recommended Strategy. At the same time, it is important to develop an audit trail in which there is a clear linkage between the schemes and measures in the Recommended Strategy and the responses of the consultation groups to them. The consultation responses are not the only factors to be considered when taking forward the strategies; other factors including economic appraisal, environmental impact, carbon consumption, the availability of finance/funding, operational feasibility, play significant roles in the overall decision of the Recommended Strategy for the South East Dorset Transport Study.

Next Steps

- 5.3 The results from the consultation provide an important input into the finalisation of the contents of the Recommended Strategy for the study which in turn is a significant input into the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan. The development and refinement of the study's transport strategy continued in parallel with the work on the consultation. However, the consultation provides an important aspect for this refinement from a number of perspectives – as a corroboration of some of the strategy components; as suggestions for changes to some elements of the strategy and as adjustments to the timing of individual measures within the implementation plan for the strategy.
- 5.4 Following the further refinement of the Recommended Strategy, the contents will then be formally presented to the local authorities for formal adoption as the way of taking forward the vision for the future transport system in the area. The implementation of the measures for the short term will then be included within the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan which the authorities will submit to the Department for Transport (DfT). The funding of additional measures will be sought through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) process, with information from the study providing the evidence to support the submission to the DfT. Beyond these immediate initiatives, the authorities will progress the other measures in the strategy within timescales appropriate to the availability of resources and funding.