

# Chard

Let us know your views!

Chard should be identified as a **Market Town** because:

- ✓ It is a traditional centre of employment and manufacturing
- ✓ It is South Somerset's 2<sup>nd</sup> largest town with a population of nearly 13,000
- ✓ It is well connected on the A30 and A358 with the A303 nearby and train connections are available at nearby Axminster
- ✓ It has a wide range of shopping and services for residents and surrounding villages
- ✓ It's in an important location in Somerset close to the Devon and Dorset borders and many people come into the town to work from the surrounding areas

## CURRENT ISSUES

- Significant demand for housing pushing up house prices and making them unaffordable for some people
- Piecemeal growth and the failure of larger sites to come forward has limited the investment in roads and community facilities
- Traditional industries have declined, sites have been lost and there is a shortage of readily available employment sites
- Traffic problems and congestion in the town centre
- A low-skill, low-wage employment profile with pockets of deprivation
- Shopping and leisure facilities struggle to compete with centres like Taunton and Yeovil

## STRENGTHS

- Set in wonderful countryside including the Blackdown Hills to the west and north. Rolling farmland and 12 miles from the sea
- A strong heritage of innovation and manufacture. It is an important centre for jobs and over 60% of people are able to live and work in the town
- Attractive town centre shopping around the High St & Fore St area with some out of town stores meeting people's everyday needs
- Visitor attractions including Cricket St Thomas Wildlife Park and Chard reservoir/nature reserve
- Cultural heritage

## Vision and proposals for 2026:

- Because of its importance within the district, a different scale of growth is proposed for Chard. A Regeneration Framework has been developed in conjunction with the local community, with 3 main aims:
  1. To build on its tradition of innovation and manufacturing excellence to develop and attract businesses that offer well paid, skilled jobs.
  2. Regeneration and investment to make the town increasingly self sufficient with services and facilities to make it a great place to live.
  3. Enhance its urban environment to match its stunning natural setting and rich cultural heritage

### Options for growth

4 options for the future growth of Chard have been developed. Each has been assessed in detail, read more about each on the following display boards:

## Option 1: Town Centre Regeneration



Chard Regeneration Plan (LDA, 2009)

This development option would focus on regenerating the town centre and only deliver low levels of housing growth. This option would include:

- Implementing the regeneration initiatives in the town centre such as the Back Plots/Boden Mill, Green Heart, East End and public realm enhancements to High Street/Fore Street;
- The relocation of the football club to the north of the town and associated employment development;
- Some development of the eastern growth area to fund traffic signalling improvements in the town centre, option for the location of this development are indicated on the Phase 1 development plan;
- Housing development on the vacant football club site;
- This option would consist of approximately 410 dwellings.

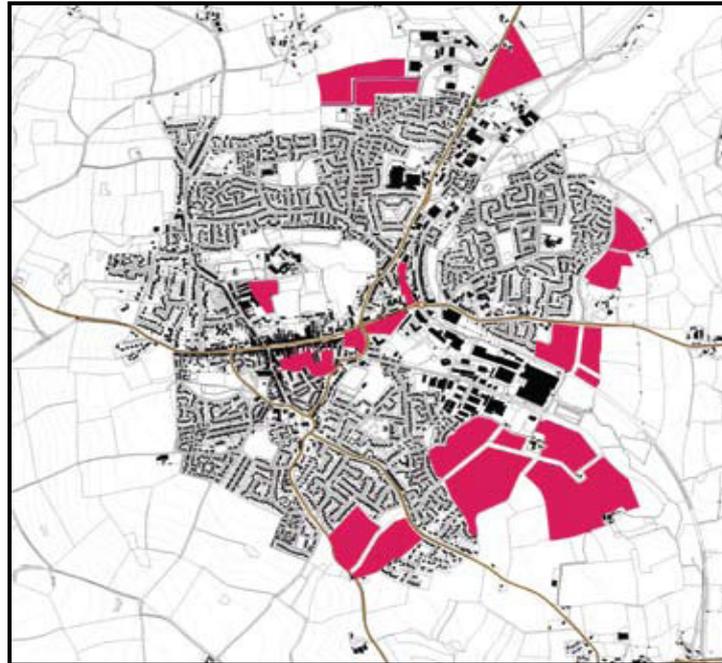
### Positive Impacts:

- Movements within the town centre and access to local facilities will be improved.
- Historic environment will be maintained
- Potential reduction in town centre traffic
- Minimal impact on existing habitats and ecological areas
- Sports and open space provision

### Negative Impacts:

- Range and quality of housing in the town centre will be improved but will not make adequate contributions towards meeting current and future need identified needs of various social groups
- Will not deliver enough housing to release funding to reduce fuel poverty in existing residential areas as part of any potential 'Allowable solutions' (for climate change)
- Only moderate improvements to education and skills provision
- Will not increase the physical capacity of the highways network whilst increasing the number of trips and potentially congestion

## Option 2: Eastern Growth Area Part 1



Chard Regeneration Plan (LDA, 2009)

This option would follow on from the town centre improvements and continue the development of the eastern growth area, creating a new district centre in the Millfield area and delivering some additional highways links to the east of the town to improve highways. This option would include;

- Creating a highways link from the A30 to the Millfield Industrial Estate with additional housing growth immediately south of the A30;
- Improving the Millfield road from the town to the new mixed use district centre south of Millfield
- Completing the highways link from the A30 to the A358 plus associated housing development;
- This option will deliver approximately 1366 dwellings.

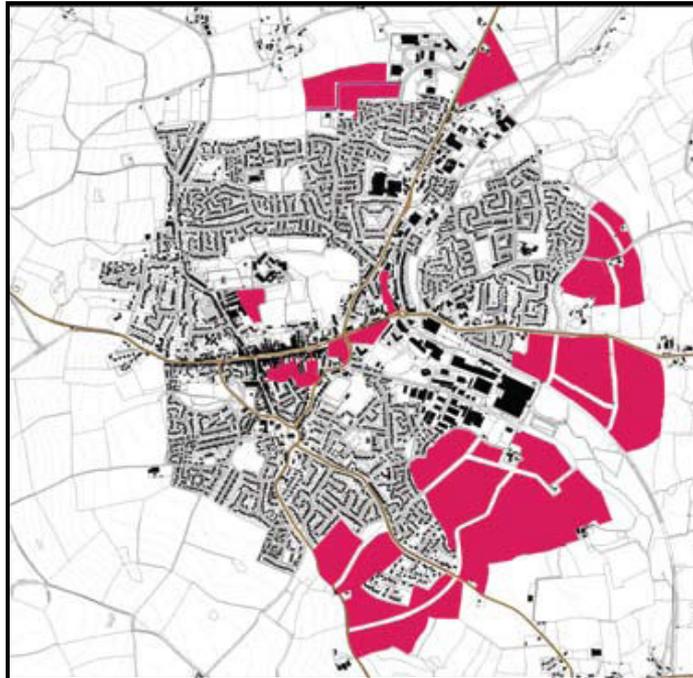
### Positive Impacts:

- Making the area more accessible and improving connections to the town centre and access to local facilities
- Range and quality of housing will be improved - option will deliver roughly the same amount of housing as the Key Site including affordable housing
- Promotion of economic growth - scale of town will be increased and potentially attract larger employers and retailers
- Some improvement to traffic signal efficiency and improved road safety. Potential reduction in town centre traffic
- Highways capacity of the network will increase through delivery of a new link road on the eastern side of town
- Historic environment will be maintained and townscape enhanced
- Sports and open space provision

### Negative Impacts:

- Some negative impacts upon existing residential areas - Oaklands Ave and Henderson Drive due to increased traffic along these routes
- Some encroachment onto greenfield and agricultural land to the east of the town
- Some impact on existing wildlife habitats and sites of ecological conservation leading to the need for mitigation

### Option 3: Eastern Growth Area Full Build Out



Chard Regeneration Plan (LDA, 2009)

This option would continue from options 1 and 2 and complete the growth to the east of the town, creating a second highways link and deliver maximum housing growth to the east of the town. This option would include:

- Delivering additional housing to complete the new communities at Holbear and Millfield;
- Fill out final development plots around Avishayes and;
- Complete the second highways link around the eastern edge of the town;
- This option would deliver approximately 2716 dwellings.

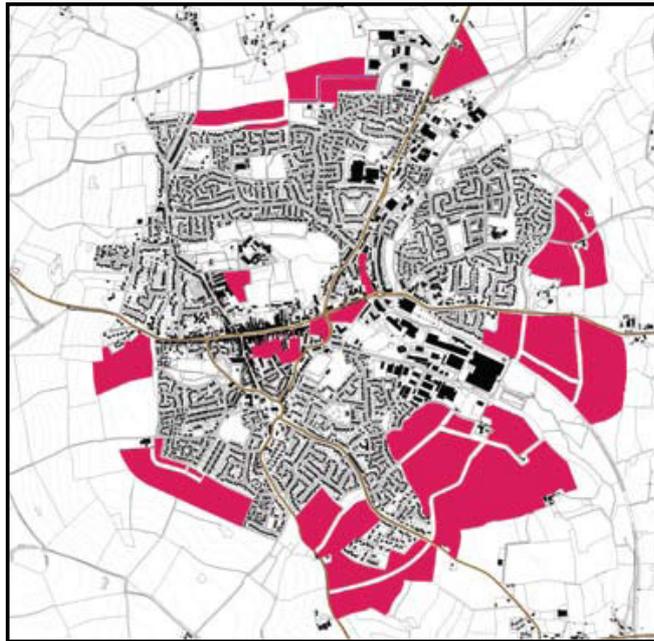
#### Positive Impacts:

- Movements within the town centre will be improved and access to local facilities improved including access to Millfields neighbourhood centre
- Improvements to physical, social and economic environment of the town centre providing opportunities for start-up businesses and revitalised retail offer
- Range and quality of housing in the town will be improved including affordable housing - option will deliver roughly twice the amount of housing as the Key Site over the plan period and beyond
- Promotion of economic growth - scale of town will be increased significantly to attract larger employers and retailers
- Delivery of 2 new primary schools
- Historic environment will be maintained
- Additional link roads around the east of the town will ease the levels of traffic dependent on Oaklands Ave and Henderson Drive
- Sports and open space provision

#### Negative Impacts:

- Significant encroachment onto greenfield and agricultural land to the east of the town
- Some impact on existing wildlife habitats and sites of geological conservation leading to the need for mitigation

#### Option 4: Growth to 'Natural Limits'



Chard Regeneration Plan (LDA, 2009)

This option takes the level of development to the full build out scenario of the masterplan and delivers additional housing sites to the north and west of the town. This option would deliver approximately 3485 dwellings.

#### Positive Impacts:

- Movements within the town centre will be improved and access to local facilities improved including access to Millfields neighbourhood centre
- Improvements to physical, social and economic environment of the town centre providing opportunities for start-up businesses and revitalised retail offer
- Range and quality of housing will be improved delivering significantly more housing than the local plan including affordable housing
- Promotion of economic growth - critical mass of town will be increased significantly to attract larger employers and retailers
- Delivery of 2 new primary schools
- Historic environment will be maintained
- Additional link roads around the east of the town will ease the levels of traffic dependent Oaklands Ave and Henderson Drive
- Sports and open space provision

#### Negative Impacts:

- Levels of growth attributed to this option will require additional employment sites to be identified
- Level of growth results in significant increase in traffic congestion on several key junctions and would need further masterplanning
- Significant encroachment onto greenfield and agricultural land to the east, north and west of the town
- Significant increases in congestion leading to air and noise pollution
- Some impact on existing wildlife habitats and sites of ecological conservation leading to the need for mitigation and results in highest potential negative impact

- **Option 3 is the preference**

- Regeneration of the town centre including enhancement of High St and Fore St
- Relocation of the football club to the north of the town, employment development and housing on the old site
- Highways improvements including traffic signaling in the town centre, a number of new highway links between the A30 & A358 including a second highway link around the eastern edge of the town
- Substantial housing growth completing new communities at Holbear and Millfield and extension of housing around Avishayes, maximising housing growth to the east of the town. This option will provide 2,716 dwellings in total (1,700 in the plan period)\*
- 13 hectares of new employment land
- 1 new primary school within the plan period (up to 2026)
- 2 neighbourhood centres (local shopping) at Holbear & Millfield

The preferred option also has further phasing of growth after 2026

- **Overall the preferred proposal should deliver these benefits**

- Improved town centre and retail facilities
- An improved range and quality of housing in the town centre including affordable housing
- Movements within the town centre will be improved by better roads
- More employment opportunities – additional land and jobs
- Improved leisure provision with new open spaces and facilities
- Improved public transport provision
- New education facilities
- With a bigger size and status the town will be able to attract some larger employers and retailers

\*Other housing is also committed in Chard, a full summary is contained in the draft core strategy.

**Do you agree that Chard is a Market Town?**

**Do you agree with the level and type of growth being planned?**

**Have we got this right? Have we got this wrong? If so, please tell us why.**

**We need your views**

