

**South Somerset's settlement hierarchy workshop discussion paper**  
**March 2011 – REPORT 1 Review of Chard, Wincanton and Milborne Port status**

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The Settlement Role and Function study recommended the following:

- Chard and Wincanton should be considered as Market Towns
- Milborne Port should be considered as a Rural Centre

There were no objections to the status of Wincanton and Milborne Port although comments in support were received. There was an objection to Chard, which has been summarised and considered below.

### **Chard**

#### **Issue:**

- Approximately 5 representations have been received in support of Chard's identification as a Market Town.
- Chard should be identified as a Primary Market Town as in Policy HG2.

#### **Response:**

It is mostly likely that this comment has arisen as a result of a typing error. The table accompanying Policy HG2 uses the description "Primary Market Towns" this description was used for Market Towns at an earlier stage in the Core Strategy process. Members subsequently agreed on the use of the term Market Towns however, during the process of editing "Primary Market Towns" in Policy HG2 was not amended as it should have been.

Chard is the second largest settlement in the District with a population 12,983<sup>1</sup> closely followed by Crewkerne with a population of 6,882<sup>2</sup> and Wincanton with a population of 5,034<sup>3</sup>; Yeovil is significantly larger with a population of 43,235<sup>4</sup> (includes the parishes of Yeovil Town, Yeovil Without and Brympton). Given that the gap between the size of Yeovil, together with its economic, housing and community role and function, compared with the settlements identified as Market Towns in Policy SS1, it would seem unnecessary to have an additional "Primary Market Town" category within the settlement hierarchy. The difference between Chard and the other Market Towns, which are all strong functional centres, in terms of the level of jobs and facilities as identified in the Settlement Role and Function Study<sup>5</sup> does not justify another level of settlement within the settlement hierarchy. From an economic perspective Wincanton for example shows a higher employment density ratio than Chard and levels of self -containment between the two are not dissimilar (Chard 61.2% and Wincanton 52.9%).<sup>6</sup> The classification of Chard as a "Primary Market Town" would not bring about any enhanced status or role than that already identified in the Draft Core Strategy.

The identification of Chard as a Market Town has been supported and complies with RSS Policy Development Policy B, which is currently a material planning consideration.

**Recommendation:** No change.

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<sup>1</sup> ONS, Civil parish population estimates in South Somerset – mid 2007

<sup>2</sup> ONS, Civil parish population estimates in South Somerset – mid 2007

<sup>3</sup> ONS, Civil parish population estimates in South Somerset – mid 2007

<sup>4</sup> ONS, Civil parish population estimates in South Somerset – mid 2007

<sup>5</sup> South Somerset Settlement Role and Function Study Final report April 2009

<sup>6</sup> Table 3.4 South Somerset Settlement Role and Function Study Final report April 2009.

### **Wincanton**

**Issue:** The role of Wincanton as a Market Town is recognised and 1 representation in support of its classification has been received.

**Response:** Noted.

**Recommendation:** No Change

### **Milborne Port**

**Issues:** 2 representations have been received in support for Milborne Port's identification as a Rural Centre.

**Response:** Noted.

**Recommendation:** No change