

A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Scheme TR010036

9.24 Land Use and Economic Development Topic Paper

Planning Act 2008

April 2019

Volume 9.0



Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling
Scheme**

Development Consent Order 201[X]

**Land Use and Economic Development
Topic Paper**

Regulation Number:	
Planning Inspectorate Scheme Reference	TR010036
Application Document Reference	9.24
Author:	A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Scheme: Environmental Planning Team, Mott MacDonald

Version	Date	Status of Version
Rev A	April 2019	Submission to the Planning Inspectorate for Deadline 5.

Table of Contents

1	Summary	4
2	Local planning framework context (in 2015)	5
3	Development sites linked to the scheme	8

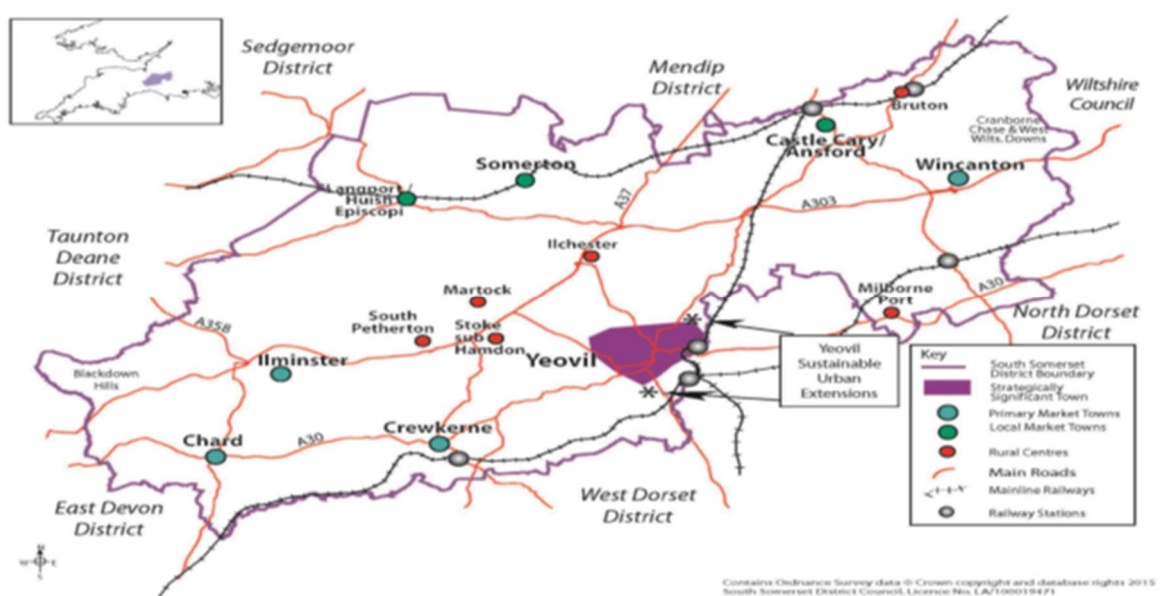
1 Summary

- 1.1.1 The commentary in paragraph 12.19.57 of Chapter 12 People and Communities of the Environmental Statement (APP-049) draws on earlier work that was undertaken for the scheme to assess potential land use and economic development impacts. This was not submitted as part of the Applicant's evidence, but it is the most appropriate source of information to answer the Examining Authority's Second Written Question 2.6.4. It should be noted that the work was carried out in 2015 so local planning information will have evolved since then, but current development information would not materially affect the commentary in the Environmental Statement and the conclusions drawn from this work.
- 1.1.2 This topic paper sets out the local planning framework context in Chapter 2 for the scheme, including the Local Plan and the South Somerset District Council's Employment Land Review and was developed using engagement with local stakeholders including the District and County Councils and the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- 1.1.3 A number of key development sites were identified, shown in Chapter 3, as strategically linked to the scheme including sites in Wincanton, Lufton, Yeovil, and Ilminster. Each of these sites is identified as delivering a combination of B1, B2 and B8 employment uses and are therefore anticipated to deliver employment opportunities in the District (which the People and Communities ES chapter (APP-049) identifies as the Wider Impact Area (WIA), used for the assessment of effects on the local economy). The scheme will deliver improved connectivity and journey time savings along the A303, which would support delivery of employment growth at those sites.
- 1.1.4 It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the scheme will result in increased indirect employment opportunities for people living in the WIA, related to reduced congestion and improved journey times. In the absence of explicit job numbers and Gross value Added (GVA) values associated with the scheme, it is reasonable to conclude that these effects will be beneficial, but not necessarily significant.

2 Local planning framework context (in 2015)

- 2.1.1 South Somerset District Council's (SSDC's) Local Plan (2006 – 2028) sets an employment growth target of 11,250 by 2028. At the heart of this Yeovil has been identified as the prime economic driver within the District followed by the Market Towns of: Chard; Crewkerne; Ilminster; Wincanton; Somerton; Langport / Huish Episcopi; Ansford / Castle Cary.
- 2.1.2 South Somerset is predominately rural in nature with a large proportion of land used for agricultural purposes. It has a dispersed settlement pattern with approximately one quarter of the population living in the District's principal town, Yeovil, and the remainder residing in smaller towns, villages and hamlets with fewer than 2,500 residents. Key employment centres are concentrated along the A303, most notably, Yeovil, Wincanton, Ilminster, Crewkerne and Chard. The District has a significant proportion of land that is of high nature conservation value so development will be constrained by this.
- 2.1.3 Under the principles of sustainable development, the Local Plan states that future development will be managed following a settlement hierarchy to ensure that development comes forward in the most sustainable areas. Yeovil will remain the Principal Centre, followed by the Market Towns, see Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Development locations in South Somerset



Source: South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028)

- 2.1.4 The District Council's Employment Land Review (ELR) indicated that total supply of employment land within the district is 110.69 hectares. Table 2.1 provides an overview of total land requirements and the supply of land in each settlement. Based on predicted demand within the ELR, it appears that there is an adequate supply of employment land to meet growth requirements at a District level up to 2026; however, some settlements have a shortage of suitable employment land, particularly at Yeovil, Milborne Port and South Petherton. In contrast, some settlements could deliver more employment land over the plan period than is required.

2.1.5 The remaining requirement for 38.82 hectares of land – up to 2028 - is identified in the Site Allocations DPD and the revised ELR, both of which were in development at the time of the review undertaken in 2015.

Table 2.1: Supply of employment land in South Somerset

	Local Plan jobs growth (B use) ¹	Employment land requirements (hectare)	Supply of available employment land per settlement (hectare)	Deficit (+/-) (hectare)
Yeovil and Yeovil urban extensions	5,513	51	38.20	-12.8
Ansford & Castle Cary	273	0	10.09	
Chard	1,083	13	16.39	+3.39
Crewkerne	577	10.53	10.83	+0.3
Ilminster	419	19.4	23.59	+4.19
Somerton	307	1.0	1.91	+0.91
Wincanton	599	1.5	5.81	+4.31
Bruton	156	1.0	0.56	-0.44
Ilchester	433	1.0	0.44	-0.6
Langport & Huish Episcopi	284	1.5	0.69	-0.81
Martock	163	1.0	2.14	+1.14
Milborne Port	77	2.0	0.04	-1.96
South Petherton	141	-	0.0	-1.0
Stoke Sub Hamdon	43	0.5	0.0	-0.5
Other Rural Settlements	1181		-	-
Total	11,249	107.3	110.69	

Source: Adapted from South Somerset Employment Land Review, Stage Three Report (2010)

2.1.6 The Local Plan also has provision for 15,950 new dwellings over the plan period. This translates into an annual growth rate of 725 additional dwellings per year. South Somerset Local Plan Authorities Housing Monitoring Report April 2012 – March 2013 highlighted that up to the period 31st March 2013, 4,096 dwellings within Yeovil and 6,968 dwellings throughout the rest of the district were either granted planning permission, were under construction or were completed.

2.1.7 The Local Plan states that all new development needs to be accessible by all forms of transport wherever practical while acknowledging that the District has existing transport infrastructure capacity issues.

2.1.8 The A303 is a key road within South Somerset that connects the area to the South East and South West regions. However, inadequate road capacity is a major issue that affects parts of the plan area, particularly at towns such as

¹ Housing growth figures are obtained from South Somerset's Local Plan. The ELR has based employment land calculations on household growth

Chard, Ilminster, Yeovil and Wincanton that are particularly reliant upon the A303 for accessing neighbouring districts and regions.

- 2.1.9 The Heart of the South West of England LEP², SSDC³ and Somerset County Council (SCC)⁴⁵ all show support for the need for improvements to the key transport corridors in Somerset and believe that doing this can encourage economic growth across the key sectors of the local economy. The importance of road transport to the county is clear due to the geographic landscape and Somerset's position on the periphery of the country, a significant distance from the key markets local businesses want to access.
- 2.1.10 This proposal to enhance the A303 between Sparkford to Ilchester corresponds with the local economic development objectives of the relevant local councils and the LEP, as well as the expressed needs of business leaders across the area. This will help to address the existing transport infrastructure capacity issues identified in the Local Plan and therefore have a beneficial impact on local business.

² Heart of the South West LEP, (March 2014) "Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2030"

³ SSDC, "South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) p.60

⁴ SCC, (March 2011) "Transport Policies Evidence base, goals and challenges"

⁵ SCC, "Somerset's (February 2011) Future Transport Plan 2011-2026"

3 Development sites linked to the scheme

- 3.1.1 Primary research was undertaken in 2015 for Highways England which included a targeted number of stakeholder consultations. These were held with representatives from SSDC, SSC and Heart of the South West LEP. The consultees identified the opportunities and barriers to bringing forward economic development for the area and shared further evidence with the study team to support the analysis.
- 3.1.2 The development sites identified as being linked to the road improvement have been sourced from the Local Plan, a site visit and from consulting with the planning team at SSDC. Sites were identified along the A303 corridor, especially those close to strategic junctions, which would benefit from increased connectivity and faster journey times as a result of implementation of the scheme. This includes sites at Wincanton, Ilminster and within South Petherton and Martock.
- 3.1.3 Sites in and around Yeovil town will also benefit from journey time savings to and from the A303 via the A37. Yeovil is the key location for sustainable employment growth within the district and the road improvement will strengthen the overall investment prospects for this area.
- 3.1.4 The development sites identified from the Local Plan that would benefit from the scheme are mapped in the figure below whilst the table provides a summary of each site in terms of location, size, current status and linkages to the scheme. It can be seen from the table below that the scheme, through improving transport infrastructure and journey times, would have a beneficial impact on local business.

Figure 3.1 Development sites linked to the scheme

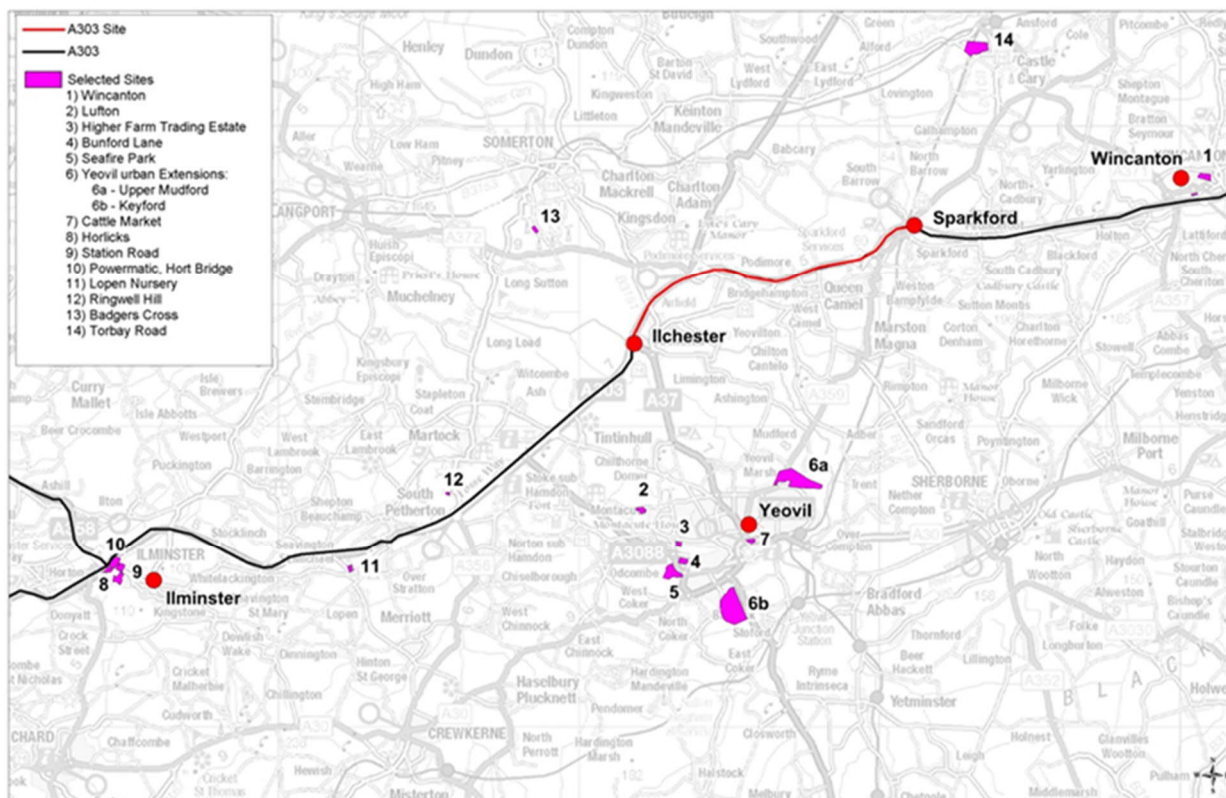


Table 3.1: Development sites identified as linked to the scheme

Name of site (map key, Figure 3.1)	Location	Size (ha)	Development plans and status	Rationale for including in economic impact assessment
Wincanton sites (1)	Wincanton	4.38	B1, B2 and B8 365 B Use jobs anticipated (Local Plan)	<p>The A303 trunk road defines the south edge of Wincanton and gives the town good road links to London and the South West of England. Demand for land is quite high, due to the good transport connections and being the eastern outpost of South Somerset. Other parts of the county rely more on the M5 and routes to the Midlands and the North. The dualling of the A303 will improve Wincanton's connectivity 'offer' to potential inward investors.</p> <p>Policy SS3 of the Local Plan sets out a total of 7.94 ha of land for economic development in Wincanton over the Local Plan period; 3.56 ha of this is already committed, leaving 4.38 ha to be located for strategic employment growth to the south west of the town. This should provide around 365 jobs in traditional 'B category' use classes.</p>
Lufton (2)	Yeovil	7	Phase 3 of existing Lufton Business Park Available on plot by plot basis – market and land sales in progress Planning consent for B1, B2 and B8	<p>Yeovil is the principal settlement for growth in South Somerset – most new development is focused here. Road improvements will make sites more attractive to potential occupiers (for rental or freehold development) and future development likely to focus on the town as a sustainable location.</p>
Higher Farm Trading Estate (3)	Yeovil	1.5	B1,B2 and B8	<p>Given the emphasis on sustainable development the road improvements are likely to be more important in terms of improving business journeys and accessibility to the wider network rather than commuting journeys (as the aspiration is for more people to live and work within Yeovil, especially on the sustainable extensions).</p>
Bunford Lane (4)	Yeovil	14.35	B1 – High quality business park aimed at technology businesses	<p>There is an emphasis on creating jobs within high tech industries and supporting the diversification from the defence industry and traditional</p>
Seafire Park (5)	Yeovil	6	Outline planning consent for a mix of B1, B2 and B8 land uses. During extensive pre-application discussions with	

Name of site (map key, Figure 3.1)	Location	Size (ha)	Development plans and status	Rationale for including in economic impact assessment
			the Local Planning authority, SSDC, the principle of car dealership and trade counter uses on the site has been accepted	engineering to smaller, high-tech, IT driven development.
Yeovil urban extensions – Upper Mudford & Keyford (6a & 6b)	Yeovil	5.16	Sustainable urban extensions to Yeovil town centre that aim to act as an exemplar of the benefits of more sustainable living – along principles of Garden Cities. The aspiration is to provide a job for each economically active resident – just over 5 ha of land will be delivered. Predominantly B1 & B2 use.	
Cattle Market (7)	Yeovil	1.61	B2&B8 predominantly.	
Horlicks (8)	Ilminster	3	B1, B2 & B8 Currently awaiting planning application	Due to Ilminster’s proximity to the A303/A358 strategic employment growth is planned around the town in the Local Plan.
Station Road (9)	Ilminster	12.9	B1, B2 & B8 Currently awaiting planning application	Although sites are already coming forward through the planning process, the A303 is a key attractor for the business to the area and improvements are likely to make the area more attractive for developers and occupiers.
Powermatic, Hort Bridge (10)	Ilminster	5.1	B1, B2 & B8	
Lopen Nursery (11)	South Pethe rton	1.18	B1 & B2 Application in process for manufacturin g activity	Strategically located from the A303.

Name of site (map key, Figure 3.1)	Location	Size (ha)	Development plans and status	Rationale for including in economic impact assessment
Ringwell Hill (12)	Martock	1.17	B1, B2 & B8	Rural centre identified with potential for employment expansion given its proximity to the A303 / A356 interchange.
Badgers Cross (13)	Somerton	1.96	B1, B2 & B8 use	Somerton is a market town with extension planned to the West of the town. There is an emphasis on encouraging self-containment in the town – the road improvements should again encourage investment via improving connections to the network for businesses.
Torbay Road (14)	Castle Cary	2.0	Allocated for B1, B2 & B8 use	Castle Cary's major employers are based at the Torbay Road Industrial Estate. This site lies between the estate and Station Road which will also require a new link road.

Source: SSDC Local Plan