

South Somerset District Council

Settlement Profile: Ilchester

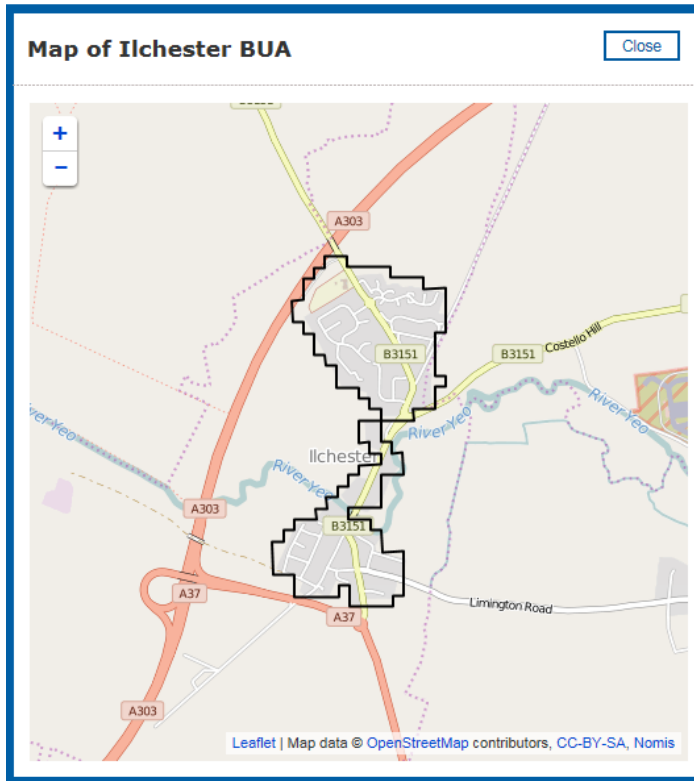


October 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Settlement Profile has been produced using 2011 Census data for the 'Built-up Area' (BUA) of Ilchester (Figure 1.1) unless stated otherwise.

Figure 1.1: Map of Ilchester BUA



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council

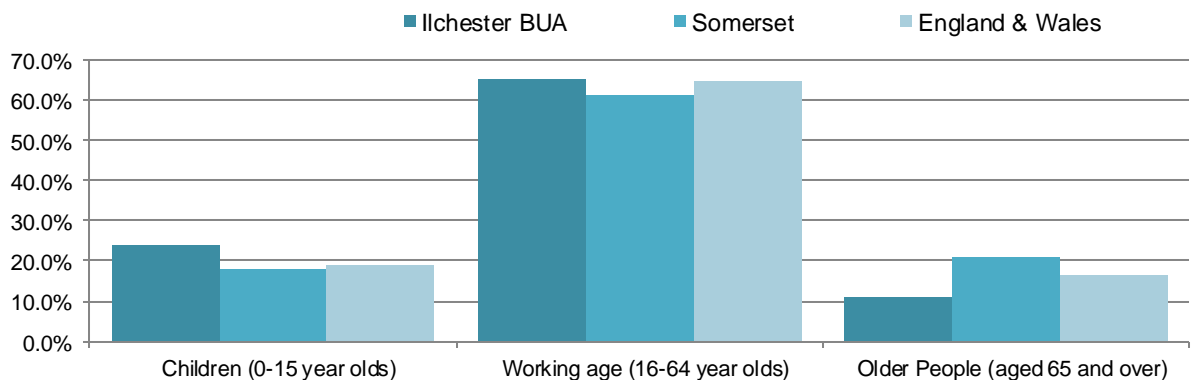
- 1.2 Ilchester is situated five miles north of Yeovil, on the eastern fringe of the Somerset Levels and Moors, concentrated at the point at which the River Yeo crosses the Fosse Way. It is a Rural Centre with Iron Age origins and an important history, including serving as a small Roman fort settled by the Fosse Way and briefly serving as the county town of Somerset in the 12th Century, due to the presence of the county gaol. The settlement's historic legacy is apparent in the concentration of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, archaeological sites, and historic buildings that are present; and include the 13th century Church of St Mary Major and of St Andrews, both Grade II* Listed Buildings.
- 1.3 In 1940, the Royal Naval Air Station was commissioned at Yeovilton; since then it has grown to become one of the busiest military airfields in the UK, with both helicopters and jet aircraft operating out of the Station. Ilchester, being in close proximity to RNAS Yeovilton has accommodated development over recent years to provide housing for many service personnel and their families stationed at the air base.

2. POPULATION

2.1 Figure 2.1 shows the age profile of Ilchester’s resident population, with the number and percentage of residents in each of the following groups: children; working age; and older people. It then compares the percentages against those for Somerset, and England & Wales.

Figure 2.1 Ilchester’s Age Profile Compared to Somerset, and England & Wales

	Ilchester BUA		Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total usually resident population	2,153	100	100.0	100.0
Children (0-15 year olds)	513	23.8	17.8	18.9
Working age (16-64 year olds)	1,048	65.4	61.1	64.7
Older People (aged 65 and over)	232	10.8	21.1	16.4



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council, using 2011 Census statistics from ONS

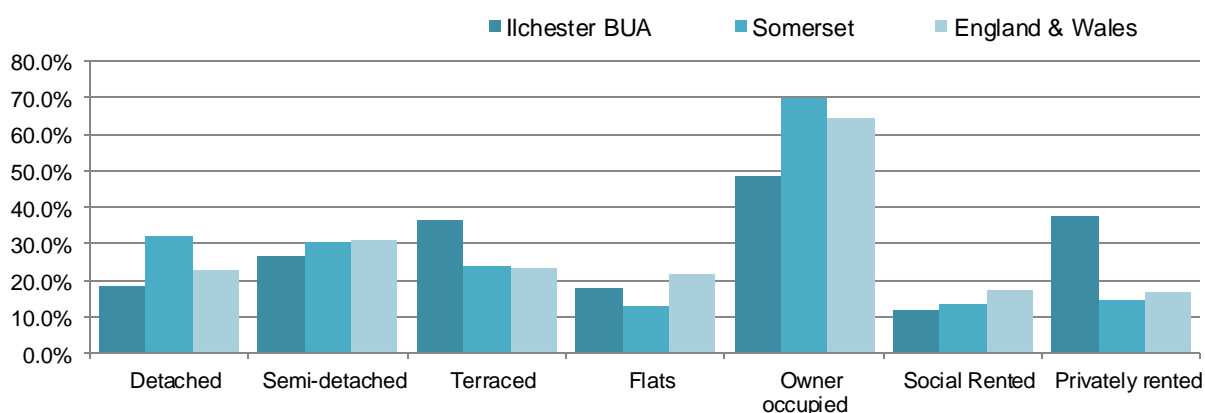
2.2 Ilchester has a resident population of 2,153; and the community is relatively young compared with the rest of Somerset. There are proportionally more children, more people of working age; and fewer elderly than across the County as a whole; although the ratio of the working age group is similar to the national picture. These figures probably reflect the proximity of the air station and characteristics of MoD households living in the settlement.

3. HOUSING

3.1 Figure 3.1 shows the number and percentage of dwellings by dwelling type and households by tenure. It also presents a comparison of dwelling types and tenure profiles for Ilchester, Somerset, and England & Wales.

Figure 3.1: Ilchester's Accommodation and Household Profiles

	Ilchester BUA		Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total number of dwellings	920	100%	100.0%	100.0%
Detached	170	18.5%	32.3%	22.6%
Semi-detached	247	26.8%	30.4%	31.1%
Terraced	336	36.5%	23.7%	23.6%
Flats	165	17.9%	13.0%	21.6%
Tenure		%	%	%
Total number of households	864	100%	100.0%	100.0%
Owner occupied	422	48.8%	70.2%	64.3%
Social Rented	101	11.7%	13.5%	17.6%
Privately rented	326	37.7%	14.7%	16.7%



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council, using 2011 Census statistics from ONS

- 3.2 The data in Figure 3.1 also seems to be strongly influenced by the presence of MoD staff, with the proportion of households in privately rented accommodation being significantly higher than the averages elsewhere. There are significantly more terraced houses and flats than the proportion across Somerset.
- 3.3 The Local Plan¹ states that 141 dwellings should be provided in Ilchester over the Plan period; but there have been no actual completions up to March 2017. There are planning permissions for a total of 161 new dwellings, although provision of the majority of these may be dependent on whether staff numbers at the air base increase again.

4. ECONOMY

The Economy in General

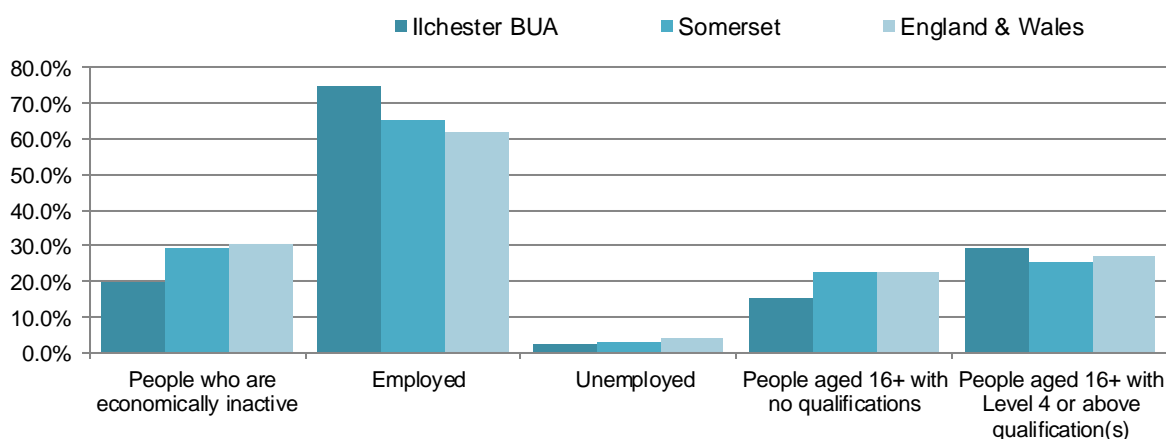
- 4.1 The proportion of people in Ilchester who are economically inactive is significantly lower than across Somerset or nationally; unemployment levels are very low; and employment levels within the population of working age much higher than elsewhere. Educational qualification attainment is comparatively high with a lower percentage of the population with no qualifications than either within Somerset as a whole or in

¹ Policy SS5

England and Wales. These figures, again, are probably strongly influenced by the presence of large numbers of residents based at RNAS Yeovilton.

Figure 4.1: Ilchester’s Economic Activity Compared to Somerset, and England & Wales

	Ilchester BUA		Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total number of people aged 16 to 74	1,524	100%	100.0%	100.0%
People who are economically inactive	305	20%	29.2%	30.3%
Employed	1,141	74.9%	65.2%	61.9%
Unemployed	41	2.7%	3.0%	4.4%
People aged 16+ with no qualifications	251	15.3%	22.4%	22.7%
People aged 16+ with Level 4 or above qualification(s)	479	29.2%	25.6%	27.2%



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council, using 2011 Census statistics from ONS

- 4.2 Significant numbers of people work in manufacturing, with the ratio doing so being higher than is generally the case in the rest of the District as a whole (Figure 4.2). Over 21% of the jobs are in accommodation and food services.

Figure 4.2: Employment Provision in Ilchester, 2015

Sector	Ilchester		South Somerset
	No of Jobs	%	%
1 : Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	0	0	n/a
2 : Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	50	3.2	0.9
3 : Manufacturing (C)	400	25.6	20.3
4 : Construction (F)	50	3.2	5.5
5 : Motor trades (Part G)	40	2.6	18.8
6 : Wholesale (Part G)	50	3.2	
7 : Retail (Part G)	35	2.2	
8 : Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	30	1.9	3.5
9 : Accommodation & food services (I)	340	21.7	6.2
10 : Information & communication (J)	5	0.3	2
11 : Financial & insurance (K)	0	0	0.9
12 : Property (L)	20	1.3	1.4
13 : Professional, scientific & technical (M)	165	10.5	7
14 : Business administration & support services (N)	80	5.1	5.5
15 : Public administration & defence (O)	0	0	2.3
16 : Education (P)	100	6.4	7.8
17 : Health (Q)	65	4.1	14.1
18 : Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	135	8.6	3.9
Total	1,565	100	

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, NOMIS, 2015

The BRES data does not include farmagriculture (SIC subclass 01000) data at settlement level; it is only available at region and country level. Unfortunately, most, if not all, of the 4,300 personnel based at RNAS Yeovilton do not appear to have been captured by the data available. This is Open Access data that has been rounded to make it publishable; as such, the figures do not tally to an exact 100%. Ilchester is comprised of Super Output Areas E01029198 and E01029199.

- 4.3 Ilchester's attraction for businesses is probably the ease of access onto the A303, A37, and A372, and close proximity to Yeovilton. There is no employment/ industrial park in Ilchester though; the main locations of employment in the town itself being Ilchester Community Primary School and Norse Ltd site; and with much employment at RNAS Yeovilton.
- 4.4 Local Plan Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) sets a requirement for 1.02ha employment land to be delivered at Ilchester in the Plan Period. To date, 0.41ha gross employment land has been completed, but a net delivery of -0.02ha net. New floorspace delivery has been healthier, with a gross delivery of 1,510 sq. metres and 1,160 sq. metres net.

The Town Centre

- 4.5 Ilchester is designated as a Rural Centre in the adopted Local Plan (Policy EP9). At the time of writing, there are a limited number of commercial units within the centre itself, comprising a hairdresser, restaurant, two public houses, and a Chinese takeaway. A post office has recently closed. There are no convenience or comparison shops in the centre although the Texaco Garage does incorporate an important ancillary retail use (Central Off Licence). There is no bank, estate agent or travel agent within Ilchester.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5.1 The GP surgery has no capacity for additional patients. It is currently operating out of less space than advocated in business case guidance, and there is little or no capacity to expand the current site. Given these factors, a new site and premises are required to accommodate any housing growth in Ilchester.

6. TRAVEL

- 6.1 The nearest train services are available in Yeovil; Pen Mill station is six miles to the south and Yeovil Junction, 7.2 miles. Bus services run to Yeovil, Taunton, Street, Glastonbury and Wells; and a coach service is available to London (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: Public Transport Provision in Ilchester

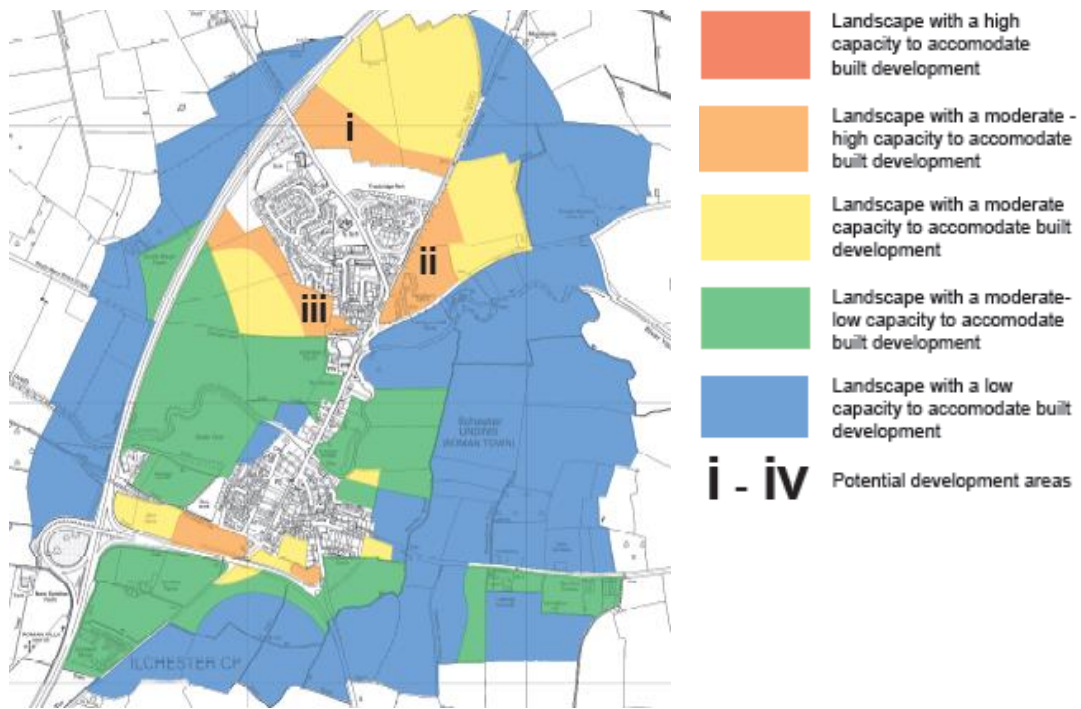
Buses		
Operator	Principal Destinations	Frequency (approx.)
Buses of Somerset	54: Taunton – Yeovil (via Fivehead, Curry Rivel, Langport, and Somerton)	Hourly
	77: Yeovil – Wells (via Somerton, Street, Glastonbury)	Hourly
Nippy Bus	–N11 Yeovil – Limington – Fleet Air Arm Museum	Tuesdays & Fridays only
Berry's Coaches	London Superfast 2	2x daily

7. ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 The Peripheral Landscape Study² shows that there is only limited suitable land available to accommodate growth, taking into account landscape character and sensitivity; and historic, wildlife or environmental constraints. (Figure 7.1). The Study identified three potentially most suitable sites, as shown below (i-iii).

² Peripheral Landscape Assessment, March 2008

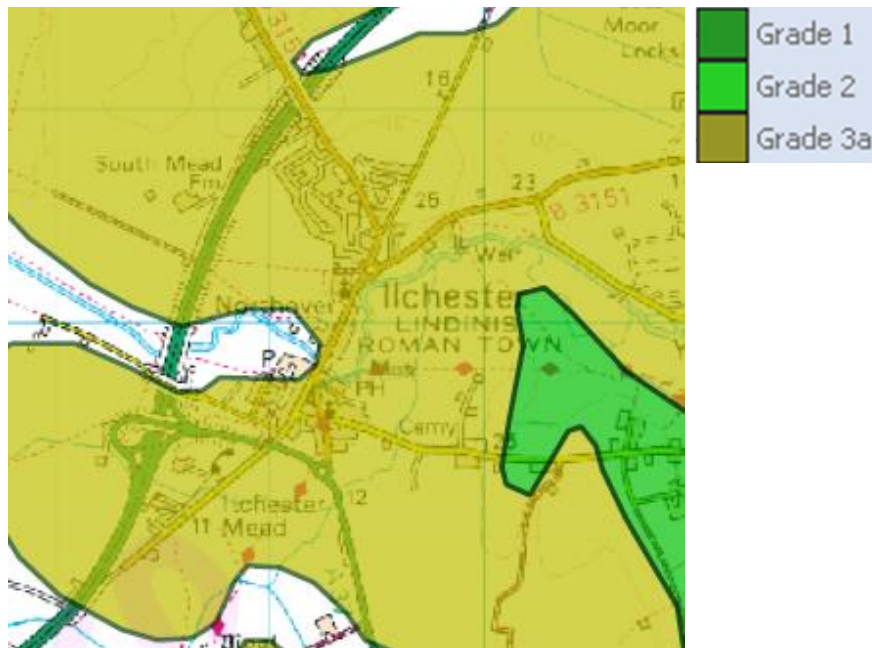
Figure 7.1: Ilchester Landscape Capacity



Source: Peripheral Landscape Study (2008)

7.2 Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 & 3a)³ is a key environmental constraint according to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF⁴). As Figure 7.2 shows, large areas of Grade 2 and 3a land surround Ilchester.

Figure 7.2: BMV Land around Ilchester



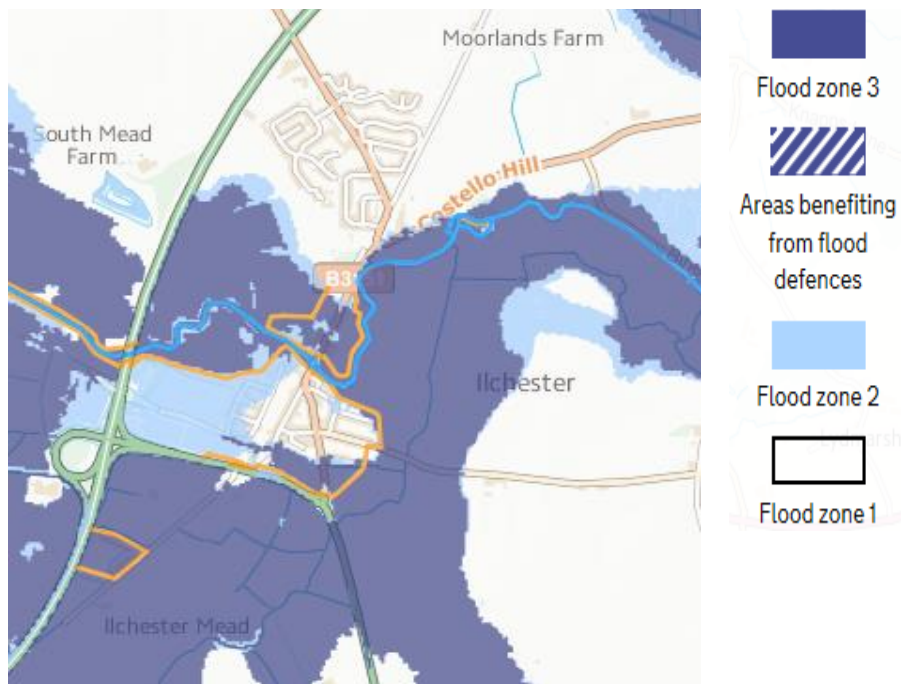
Source: WebMap, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

³ Defined in the NPPF, (DCLG) 2012 – Annex 2

⁴ DCLG, 2012

7.3 Another environmental constraint to be taken into account in Ilchester's growth is flood risk, shown below in Figure 7.3.

Figure 7.3: Ilchester Flood Map



Source: GOV.UK Flood Map for Planning

7.4 Fluvial flooding from the River Yeo is a key risk at Ilchester, with surface water flooding also being an issue at Ilchester Meads. Much of the surrounding area is classified as most seriously at risk and designated Flood Zone 3. There has been flooding on the highway on the A37 and nearby on the A303. Flood mitigation infrastructure includes embankments and raised channel banks on the River Yeo and flood walls, but the embankment that runs alongside the River Yeo may need to be raised to help protect the settlement in the future.

7.5 Due to the proximity of the RNAS Yeovilton, the settlement's growth is also constrained by noise exposure from flying activities. The Local Plan (2006-2028) uses mapped contours to geographically represent noise exposure levels in and surround Ilchester.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Key environmental issues affecting future growth include flooding – as Figure 7.3 shows, the town is located within a significant flood risk area; the presence of archaeological remains (much of the southern half of the town is an Area of High Archaeological Potential); and noise constraints from the airbase.

Key Issues

- 8.2 Key issues that will need to be taken into account in planning the future of Ilchester include:
- The size and future of the community is very dependent on any future strategy of the MoD, given the dominant presence of RNAS Yeovilton nearby.
 - The local community is currently relatively young compared with the County as a whole, with high numbers of school children and those of working age; and proportionately fewer older people.
 - Levels of qualifications are relatively high and unemployment low; although large numbers of people still work in the manufacturing sector; and accommodation and food services are also areas in which a large portion of the community works.
 - There is a large proportion of terraced properties in the settlement; and comparatively fewer detached and semi-detached houses. The private-rented sector is relatively high, probably as a result of a high number of people being housed in rented accommodation by the MoD.
 - There are limited opportunities for the town to expand due to the risk of flooding, archaeological potential, and noise from the air base.