

Introduction

Shaftesbury is a market town within North Dorset with a population of circa 7,900 people¹, and is one of the major centres of population in the north of the district. The Local Plan recognises that the potential for future growth around Shaftesbury is limited due to its topography and landscape and ecological constraints. It borders Wiltshire to its east side, where the majority of current growth is planned. The rural parishes of Melbury Abbas (population circa 275) and Cann (population circa 990) lie to the south. Cann Common is the largest settlement in the rural area, straddling the two parishes. It does not have a settlement boundary and as such is subject to countryside policies where development will be strictly controlled unless required to enable essential rural needs to be met (or unless a settlement boundary is defined in the neighbourhood plan).

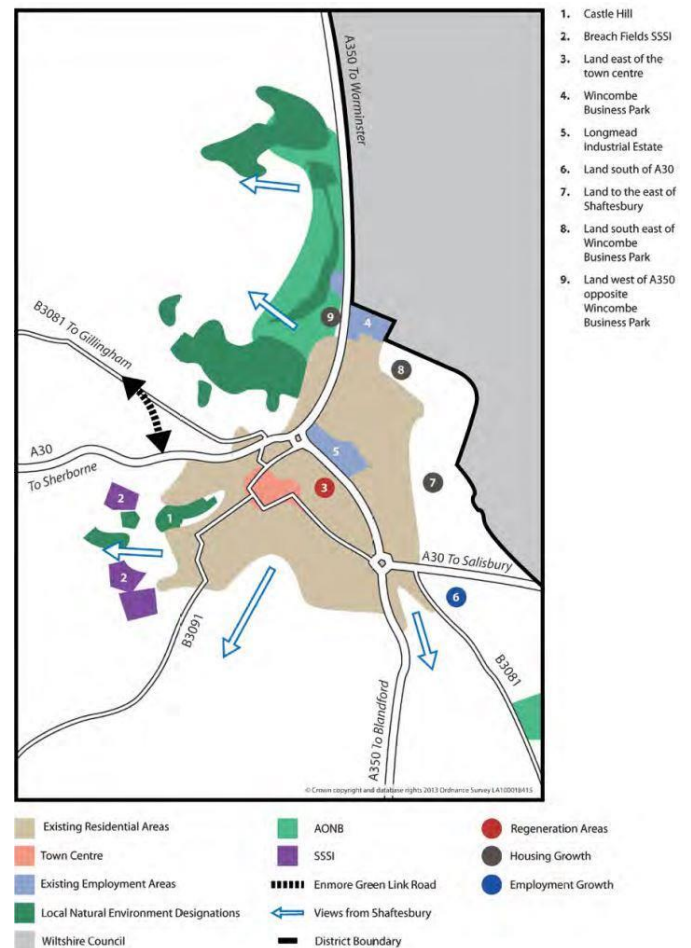
The Shaftesbury Town Council is working with Melbury Abbas and Cann Group Parish Council to prepare a neighbourhood plan for their area, following the designation of the three parishes as a neighbourhood plan area in September 2013.

Common issues that crop up in the consideration and examination of neighbourhood plans include whether the policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan (which is one of the basic conditions set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act), and also whether they relate to the development and use of land (which is how a neighbourhood plan is defined in section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). It is also important to bear in mind that policies need to be sufficiently clear (the latter part of NPPF para 154 although written for Local Plans, advises “only policies that provide a clear indication of how a decision maker should react to a development proposal should be included in the plan”)

The following report has been prepared by Jo Witherden BSc(Hons) DipTP DipUD MRTPI - Dorset Planning Consultant Limited. It provides advice in relation to the emerging vision, objectives and potential policy areas contained in the working group reports (2016).

The report outlines the finding of an initial review of the emerging ideas, followed by a suggested approach in respect of how the plan could be structured and the policy areas / projects that might be included.

Figure 1: Key diagram extract for Shaftesbury from North Dorset Local Plan part 1 (January 2016)



¹ Source: 2013 Mid Year Estimates, Office for National Statistics

Review of the emerging ideas

Vision / Objectives / Policy suggestions	Supporting evidence	Local Plan context (overview)	Potential way forward
VISION			
<p>Shaftesbury, ‘Home of Gold Hill’ and famous Saxon Hilltop market town, with a rich and diverse history mapping back to 900 AD starting with Great King Alfred; has matured into a peaceful, welcoming, rural market town with strong artistic and cultural connections. We are able to capitalise on the benefit brought by the regions character, diversity of people, built environment, enhanced natural environment and open spaces.</p> <p>These assets need conservation and also to be utilised for the benefit of the whole community. We are proud of our heritage and are committed to developing a sustained and prosperous future by providing opportunities for all who live and work in the town and surrounding villages. We are committed to building with a high quality of life and access to services for our people.</p>	<p>View of the Hill Vision: In 2020 the Shaftesbury area will be thriving, centred on its Dorset market town, with a strong and distinctive character, with respect for its past and pride in its diverse built, natural and cultural heritage.</p> <p>It will be an area where the community works together, firmly committed to securing a sustained and prosperous future, with a high quality of life and access to services, providing opportunities for ALL who live and work in the town and the surrounding villages</p>	<p>Extract from Local Plan (8.99): Shaftesbury’s role together with Gillingham is to serve the needs of the northern part of the District and neighbouring parts of Wiltshire and this will be maintained. Its distinctive character will be retained and enhanced in order to build on its growing reputation as a centre for arts, culture and tourism. The expansion of the town, particularly on land to the east, should enhance its scope for self-containment by bringing forward both housing and employment development.</p>	<p>Consider simplifying the language – some phrases such as “capitalise on the benefit brought by the regions character” may not be readily understood by a significant proportion of local people</p> <p>Consider whether the vision includes the rural areas sufficiently in its balance.</p>
HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT DESIGN			
<p>1. Integrate all new housing into the community</p> <p>2. Ensure Policies on affordable housing benefit local people</p>	<p>Community survey feedback: strong support for smaller / starter homes (1-2 bed), affordable homes, and homes for rent</p>	<p>POLICY 7: DELIVERING HOMES Housing Mix All housing should contribute towards the creation of mixed and balanced communities. The Council will seek to</p>	<p>It is difficult to understand what is meant by 1 – however it would be possible to craft a policy to allow / encourage more mixed-use developments</p>

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	<p>Also supported mix use developments (ie with community facilities) 18% of respondents work from home and a further 11% would consider this as an option (31% would not) – there was no clear demand for equipped local office space for hot-desking</p> <p>NDDC should be able to provide a breakdown of current need by household size and local connection for those on the housing register with a local connection.</p>	<p>support the delivery of about 40% of market housing as one or two bedroom properties and about 60% as three or more bedroom properties, with an emphasis on the provision of two and three bedroom properties. About 60% of affordable housing as one or two bedroom properties and about 40% as three or more bedroom properties. These proportions will be the starting point for negotiations on all sites where 10 or more dwellings, although a different mix may be permitted if it can be soundly justified by local circumstances or viability considerations. On sites of less than 10 dwellings, a mix of house sizes appropriate to each specific site will be sought</p>	<p>that include community facilities and employment opportunities (inc working from home).</p> <p>It may be useful to map community facilities (and this may also be useful evidence if this also shows how areas that are seen as more integrated tend to have such facilities).</p> <p>It should be possible to craft a policy that prioritises affordable housing for people with a local connection (and this can be defined), but it will need some flexibility to allow a cascade as the provision is also meeting wider strategic needs. You could also include starter homes in this mix if local connection criteria included.</p>
<p>3. Provide a range of housing types across all tenures. (Start-up – executive)</p>	<p>Community survey feedback: strong support for smaller / starter homes (1-2 bed), homes for rent, bungalows (2-3 bed) and retirement / sheltered homes</p> <p>The SHMA provides some</p>	<p>POLICY 8: AFFORDABLE HOUSING Development that delivers eleven or more net additional dwellings and which has a maximum combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres, including housing on mixed-use sites, will contribute to the provision of affordable housing</p>	<p>Include policy supporting the mix suggested by community – to include homes more suitable for older people and smaller / starter homes – it may be possible to word this more strongly if backed up by evidence of demand for this</p>

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	<p>indication of latest housing type mix requirement – but not at a local level (pg 200 https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/media/210430/Eastern-Dorset-Updated-SHMA-2015-Final-Doc/pdf/Eastern Dorset SHMA Final Report 2015 14.10 2015 Redacted.pdf)</p>		mix.
<p>4. Where possible new homes should be spread across several sites not in one big development Housing expansion – Wiltshire Border – 100’s houses, East side 10’s houses 20 year vision? Expansion to Semley – reopen train station</p>	<p>Household questionnaire: 93% wanted to protect the countryside between neighbouring villages and to prevent merging of towns and villages. General responses does not appear to favour identifying land for future growth.</p>	<p>POLICY 18: SHAFTESBURY Meeting Housing Needs At least 1,140 homes will be provided at Shaftesbury during the period 2011 – 2031. In addition to infilling and regeneration within the settlement boundary, Shaftesbury’s housing needs will be met though the development of land:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – to the east of the town (including the Hopkins land); and – to the south east of Wincombe Business Park; and <p>To the west of the A350 opposite Wincombe Business Park.</p>	<p>Difficult to include in the neighbourhood plan without significant additional work. The Local Plan allocations cannot be readily challenged, so the only influence is in terms of possible reserve sites that could be brought forward when there is a clear need or through the Local Plan review. Including site allocations requires much more evidence and consultation. Expansion to Semley and potential to reopen the railway station here is a strategic matter that has implications for land outside the NP area, as well as being in the AONB where major development has be to justified by exceptional circumstances.</p>

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BUSINESS			
<p>1. Support Shaftesbury high street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Retain and promote independent shops. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan needs to have a clear map of the 'town centre' which includes the actual town centre including surrounding streets with retailers rather than just the highstreet. ○ Town centre needs planning protection to prevent the change of use of any retail/office space into residential (and encourage the conversion back to commercial of currently residential properties) <p><i>Projects</i></p> <p>2. Design a cultural quarter to replace the current co-op site should it ever be vacated</p>	<p>Household questionnaire: support for traditional styles and scale of shop fronts</p> <p>Generally supportive of tourism / leisure / craft / retail employment base – need for smaller retail units</p> <p>View of the Hill – priority project was retail development strategy – was this ever completed?</p> <p>May also be worth reviewing the District Council's evidence on the town centres (although this is somewhat out of date) eg 2008 review in https://www.dorsetforyou.com/media/176117/Volume-2-Joint-Retail-Study-NORTH-DORSET/pdf/Volume_2_Joint_Retail_Study_NORTH_DORSET.pdf (though this may have been superseded by more recent development)</p>	<p>POLICY 12 RETAIL, LEISURE AND OTHER COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS</p> <p>The boundaries of town centres, primary shopping areas, primary shopping frontages and secondary shopping frontages can be defined in the NP. (NB there are also 'key shopping areas' for the purpose of permitted development rights)</p> <p>Within the town centre, developments for retail will be supported provided their type and scale will maintain or enhance the role and function of the town and its catchment and respect its historic character. Other main town centre uses will also be supported provided this does not undermine the focus on retailing in primary shopping areas. Outdoor weekly markets are supported and development should not involve sites which would prejudice their future operation.</p> <p>POLICY 18: SHAFTESBURY</p> <p>Within the town's settlement boundary, opportunities for tourist-related development that is sensitive to the landscape and historic setting of the town will be considered favourably.</p>	<p>Consider whether current defined town centre boundary needs changing and shop frontages defined</p> <p>If there is likely to be investment in the public realm some general guidance can be given – but this may be better phrased as a project</p> <p>Unclear what is meant by the cultural quarter project</p>
1. Support Shaftesbury high street	Household questionnaire:	POLICY 12 RETAIL, LEISURE AND	Is the shop front guidance

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Enhance and improve historic streetscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear rules on signage, usage types and materials. ○ Prevent planning applications that compromise the historic look & feel of the town centre. 	<p>support for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – use of traditional / quality paving & material in outdoor public areas – signage and street furniture that respects the locality 	<p>OTHER COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS</p> <p>Working with local communities to take forward proposals for town centre enhancement and growth through neighbourhood planning or other local, community-based initiatives.</p> <p>Shop front design should take account of the Council’s advice and guidance</p>	<p>https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/media/148868/Guidance-to-shopfront-design/pdf/20070529 - Revised Shopfronts.pdf – suitable to address the main points regarding the look and feel of the town centre? Key points specific to Shaftesbury could be embedded in a policy and good / bad examples included illustrating these points.</p>
<p><i>Projects</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allocate funding for examining change in road use on Shaftesbury highstreet supported by research which shows that town centre businesses are a) very supportive of one-way b) very against shared surfaces. <p><i>NB community theme also suggests minor improvements for traffic-free street market</i></p> <p><i>From historic environment theme:</i></p> <p>Town enhancement schemes and infrastructure work should contribute positively to the historic environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Examples [new pedestrian arcade linking streets, market stalls under awnings, etc.] – Attention to traffic management in the town centre should focus on the interests of pedestrians. <p>Street furniture and signage should be</p>	<p>Over 60% considered the town centre would benefit from holding more special / farmer’s markets</p> <p>Only about 30% felt ‘chocolate box’ high street fronts and heritage street lighting were important</p> <p>Improved traffic management considered top priority for town centre regeneration</p> <p>About 50% in agreement with idea of one-way system through the town centre</p>		<p>The remainder is better phrased as a potential project (subject to funding and public consultation) re public realm and traffic management</p>

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<p>kept to a minimum, necessary, and sympathetic in scale and design to the locality; they should be of high standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Street clutter is to be avoided. – Street lights [to be discussed with reference to British Standards and Conservation Areas] – Road signs – Other Signage [to be discussed with reference to STC policy] – References to the area’s historic iconography, such as wall plaques on historic structures and pub signs, are encouraged; their scale and design must be appropriate to the area. <p><i>From transport theme:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Traffic in town centre 			
<p>1. Support Shaftesbury high street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improve parking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure any new development has adequate parking provisions ○ Support the development of further parking <p><i>Projects</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Plan for a multi-story car park on the ATS site should it ever be possible to redevelop (remove housing designation) – Combined 	<p>Household questionnaire: over 60% considered the town centre would benefit from increased parking facilities. Car park was top choice for redevelopment options of possible town centre sites. Better public toilets were also strongly supported.</p> <p>View of the Hill – priority project was comprehensive strategy for car parking – was</p>	<p>POLICY 23: PARKING</p> <p>Development will provide vehicle and cycle parking in accordance with the Council’s parking standards, unless a different level of provision can be justified by local or site-specific circumstances.</p>	<p>Is there any need to vary current parking requirements? If so this could be included as a policy area</p> <p>New car parking – is there any evidence that this is needed, feasible, ie who will acquire land (potentially at residential value) to deliver and manage a public car park? If this would significantly reduce the potential supply of housing</p>

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<p>motorhome/recreational car park along with park to be constructed on the land by the Royal Chase roundabout. (currently under application for 120 homes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New car park on the current ambulance station site at Bimport (for visitor access to Castle Hill) - Retain car parking space for long term and shopper parking.at Cattle Market <p><i>NB Cattle Market project is from community theme</i></p>	<p>this ever completed?</p> <p>Is there any evidence on current levels of car park use / capacity which would justify this level of increase?</p> <p>Current parking standards: https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/397080/Car-and-cycle-parking-standards</p>		<p>land the neighbourhood plan would also potentially need to compensate for this by suggesting additional housing sites.</p>
<p>2. Support Shaftesbury existing business parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve signage and onsite facilities <p>3. Provide new employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designate land for business usage in the town - Support planning applications that increase net employment <p>4. Support and encourage business growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examine main access roads and designate areas that need improvement to assist in access to business parks. <p><i>From transport theme:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improved road links to encourage economic activity, traffic in town 	<p>Household questionnaire – highlighted faster broadband as important for local employment opportunities.</p> <p>The Employment Land Review – Part 1 looks at existing and allocated sites https://www.dorsetforyou.com/media/147658/Employment-land-Review---Review-of-Existing-Sites/pdf/070626_elr_stage_1_with_front_cover.pdf.</p> <p>The Workspace Study 2012 https://www.dorsetforyou.com/media/176561/Workspace-Strategy-Final-Update-</p>	<p>POLICY 11: THE ECONOMY</p> <p>Key strategic sites to deliver growth in Shaftesbury:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land south of the A30 at Shaftesbury (about 7.0 hectares) - Land between the Town Centre and Christy’s Lane (mixed use) <p>Economic development in the countryside will be supported by enabling rural communities to plan meet their own local needs, through neighbourhood planning, or through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > the re-use of existing buildings; > the retention and small scale expansion of existing employment sites. <p>Existing employment sites and sites</p>	<p>Signage and access ‘improvements’ would fall more within the remit of a project.</p> <p>Is more employment land required than evidenced in the Local Plan, or are the current sites undeliverable? If so – what alternatives have been identified or how realistic is the potential that windfall sites may come forward? If there is a need but no specific sites it may be possible to craft a policy that gives some flexibility outside the town boundary – if that is a solution you would want.</p>

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<p>centre</p>	<p>2012/pdf/20120416 - Unclassified - Employment - Workspace Strategy - Final - 1v0.pdf and https://www.dorsetforyou.com/media/176562/Workspace-Strategy---North-Dorset-Update-2012/pdf/20120417 - Unclassified - Workspace Strategy Update - North Dorset Summary - Final - 1v0.pdf adds supplemental information</p>	<p>identified for future employment uses will be protected from other forms of development (with exceptions allowed for potential complementary uses such as education / training, healthcare, community, small scale retail ancillary to an employment use...).</p> <p>POLICY 13: GREY INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>Supporting measures to make more effective use of the existing route network including: improvements to traffic flows at ‘pinch points’ and key junctions; and schemes to improve environmental quality on busy routes or to improve road safety</p> <p>POLICY 18: SHAFTESBURY</p> <p>Grey infrastructure to support growth will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the provision of a new road link from the B3081 to the A30 at Enmore Green; and – improved walking and cycling links between the town centre and residential development to the east of the town. 	
TRANSPORT			
<p>Improved access to rail services Reduce traffic on Christy's Lane (A350/A30) Enable less dependence on car use Weight restrictions on vulnerable rural</p>	<p>Household questionnaire: lack of support for idea of pedestrian bridge over A30 by Christy's Lane</p> <p>Just over half felt that a better</p>	<p>POLICY 13: GREY INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>Supporting measures to make more effective use of the existing route network including: improvements to traffic flows at ‘pinch points’ and key</p>	<p>Rail services largely fall outside the neighbourhood plan area – though the Gillingham cycle link proposals may help.</p>

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<p>roads</p> <p><i>NB some overlap with Business theme – improved road links to encourage economic activity, traffic in town centre covered under that heading</i></p>	<p>link to Gillingham Station was needed (this was the top suggestion for transport service improvement)</p> <p>Local Transport Plan and various studies</p> <p>https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/417819/View-the-Local-Transport-Plan</p>	<p>junctions; and schemes to improve environmental quality on busy routes or to improve road safety</p> <p>POLICY 18: SHAFTESBURY</p> <p>Grey infrastructure to support growth will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the provision of a new road link from the B3081 to the A30 at Enmore Green; and – improved walking and cycling links between the town centre and residential development to the east of the town 	<p>Need greater clarity on solutions for the other issues - and whether they have implications for land use and planning. One solution may be to ensure local traffic concerns (as listed) are properly assessed through transport assessment at planning application stage</p>
COMMUNITY AND LEISURE			
<p>To improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A multi-use community hall – An indoor / outdoor water play and swimming facility or Leisure Centre – Additional outdoor play areas for toddlers, children and adults – Delivery of edge of town centre sports fields complex (multiple pitches changing rooms etc.) – Expanded equipped play areas for teenagers <p><i>Potential policies (NB have only replicated those with land use / building</i></p>	<p>Household questionnaire: Most respondents are concerned on the overall impact of the additional housing on Infrastructure. GP Facilities coming out the highest at over 90%. General consensus (60% or more) that play areas should be improved. Mixed opinion on possible options for community hall, with slightly more in favour of Cockram’s option. Similarly low response regarding combined football centre proposal – most</p>	<p>POLICY 14: SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>Existing community halls, places of worship and other non-commercial community facilities are protected and new facilities provided where there is an identified need.</p> <p>POLICY 18: SHAFTESBURY</p> <p>Grey infrastructure to support growth will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the provision of a new community hall; and – a new two form of entry primary school, an extension to the secondary school and expanded further and adult education provision in the town; and 	<p>A policy could be included specifically identifying those community facilities that are particularly valued by local residents and therefore should be protected.</p> <p>If new provision cannot be accommodated on existing sites, it may be useful to identify and allocate sites where such provision will take place to provide greater certainty for land acquisition and potential focus of CIL funds.</p>

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<p><i>implications, the rest may be included as projects if desired)</i></p> <p>Existing facilities should be preserved or enhanced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Arts Centre – Small halls and churches – Schools – Football club – Wincombe park playing field and area – Bowling club – Swimming pool – Skateboard park <p>New facilities are needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Additional and larger meeting spaces – Football training pitches (relocation) and informal playing fields closer to the town – Tennis courts – Cricket club (relocation) – Walking and cycling routes – Allotments – Equipped play areas <p><i>NB provision of green spaces / outdoor recreation considered under next heading</i></p>	<p>comments were about swimming / leisure centre</p> <p>Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides information on critical / essential / required projects</p> <p>https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/media/214837/CIL---Infrastructure-Delivery-Plan/pdf/20160615_Infrastructure_Delivery_Plan.pdf</p> <p>Contact GP re future provision and capacity / possible requirements to establish if this may need to be considered</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a new doctor’s surgery, or the expansion or relocation of the existing doctor’s surgery. <p>POLICY 27: RETENTION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES</p> <p>Development (including the change of use of an existing premises) which involves the loss of a commercial community facility (including a local shop or a public house) will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the use is no longer commercially viable or cannot be made commercially viable.</p> <p>For all applications for development, the Council will take into account the importance of the facility to the local community and the area it serves</p>	
ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES			
<p>Maintain a distinctive landscape and urban design appropriate for a rural hilltop town. (formerly policy SB1)</p> <p>Protect all the existing green spaces with</p>	<p>Household questionnaire: 93% wanted to protect the countryside between neighbouring villages and to</p>	<p>POLICY 4: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Developments should be shaped by the natural environment so that the benefits</p>	<p>Identify and include suitable sites as local green spaces if meeting the NPPF criteria in terms of suitability (77:</p>

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<p>the town (Extension of saved policies SB3 (Slopes), 4 (views) and 5 (Western End of the Spur plus views))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Landscape design to protect the views from the town’s main viewing points, (Policies SB 4, 5 and 6) and views into the town from the surrounding countryside – Detailed design, including landscape planting and street furniture, to integrate the site to its surroundings and make a positive contribution towards the distinctive character of the town and contribute to local character by creating a sense of place appropriate to its location <p><i>From historic environment theme:</i></p> <p>Any development which adversely affects the outstanding character of Gold Hill and the views beyond will not be permitted</p> <p>The distinctive slopes in Shaftesbury should be conserved and not developed further</p> <p>The visual impact of new development on views both to and from the countryside should be minimized and must not negatively affect the Neighbourhood Plan Area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Narrow views of the country 	<p>prevent merging of towns and villages</p> <p>And over 85% agreed that open spaces, trees and wildlife areas should be protected and enhanced.</p> <p>Support for green space and gardens, and enhancement of historic sites eg Park Walk, The Slopes, Castle Hill</p> <p>View of the Hill – priority project was to undertake a full audit of open space provision – was this ever completed?</p>	<p>it provides are enhanced and not degraded.</p> <p>The landscape character of the District will be protected through retention of the features that characterise the area. Within the areas designated as AONB and their setting, development will be managed in a way that preserves conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the area</p> <p>POLICY 15: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>Neighbourhood Development Plans should consider measures that assist in delivering key green infrastructure benefits as outlined in this policy and the objectives of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, including the designation of Local Green Space, where appropriate Text makes clear that IOWA that were designated to protect the amenity and character of settlements from the pressure of infill development will continue to be saved until they are reviewed either: through the North Dorset Local Plan – Part 2: Site AllocationsPart 2 or a neighbourhood plan</p>	<p>reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance; local in character and not an extensive tract of land).</p> <p>Other areas of particular value may merit protection through a different policy approach – and under such circumstances it is important to identify the underlying reason for their protection. For example, important views can also be identified (some have been mentioned in the consultation feedback) and given policy protection. Useful to describe the quality of the view or what type of development should be avoided</p> <p>Consider whether there is any real danger the merging of settlements – and if so you can include a policy identifying and protecting important open gap/s.</p>

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<p>through side streets, alleyways and archways should be protected and maintained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Wide, open vistas of vale, chase and downland should be maintained <p><i>From rural theme:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Maintain unique landscape characteristics, including far-reaching and important views from Shaftesbury 			
<p>Enable everyone to have easy and local access to pleasant open spaces that are attractive to wild life and are designed and managed for recreation, walking, informal play and sport, linking all parts of the town and extending to the surrounding villages (Extension of saved policy SB9)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Good access to, and support for the network of landscaped pathways/ cycle routes in the town – Adequate areas of public open space – Include a multiuse open space transition corridor to, for all developments on the outskirts of the town, to blend with the surrounding countryside – Develop an off road cycle 	<p>Household questionnaire: support for pedestrian and cycle access to the Town Centre</p> <p>Nearly half of respondents walk to local amenities on a daily basis</p> <p>Safety most important factor (ie dedicated routes where possible and safe crossing points), but also landscaping / planting along routes strongly supported</p> <p>Strong support (70%) in favour of allocating land for allotments</p>	<p>POLICY 15: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>Development will be required to enhance existing and provide new green infrastructure in line with the FIT standards and 1 allotment per 60 people</p> <p>POLICY 18: SHAFTESBURY</p> <p>A network of green infrastructure will be developed in and around Shaftesbury focussing on linking existing sites, such as the Slopes, and providing new sites and links to serve the residents of both the new and existing development in the town. This will include Informal recreation space associated with the development of sites to the east of the town to reduce recreational pressure on nearby high value wildlife sites.</p>	<p>Consider whether current standards (now based on FIT standards as opposed to NPFA) are appropriate or need to be revised based on evidence of need / priority.</p> <p>Identify network of landscaped pathways/ cycle routes in the town – include policy to safeguard existing routes, consider connections / access of new development, and project for delivery of missing links if applicable.</p>

Vision / Objectives / Policy suggestions	Supporting evidence	Local Plan context (overview)	Potential way forward
<p>route/footpath to connect Shaftesbury and Gillingham</p> <p>Housing aligned to maximise solar gain and with space for wind sheltering tree belts and solar heating and/or photoelectric panels as standard. Well designed dual use SUDS systems for drainage</p> <p><i>NB Building Regulations have been increased, SUDS made a requirement for 10+ dwellings and Code for Sustainable Homes / other local standards can no longer be made a planning requirement</i></p>	<p>Household questionnaire: support for high levels of energy conservation in new buildings / harnessing renewable energy (land and buildings):</p>	<p>POLICY 3 (CLIMATE CHANGE)</p> <p>Promotes sustainable (ie well served) locations, passive solar design principles (including shading and ventilation) and high energy performance standards, measures to reduce water consumption, avoid flood risk. It also states that neighbourhood plans will be required to consider local community actions that will help to mitigate and adapt to climate change.</p>	<p>Include policy that encourages these principles in design, but cannot require specific renewable solutions as standard</p> <p>It is possible (and encouraged by Written Ministerial Statement) to include a policy identifying land suitable for larger scale renewables – however likely to require significant further research and may be controversial (20% not in favour)</p>
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT			
<p>Any development must relate well to its site and surroundings, respecting the scale of the existing buildings. For example, the continuous line of facades in the Town Centre, along with the narrow lanes connecting the larger streets should not be altered. Historic streetscapes, such as the winding street of vernacular buildings in St. James, should not be altered. Enmore Green. Gold Hill should be maintained and protected.</p> <p><i>NB some overlap with Environment and</i></p>	<p>Household questionnaire: support for housing to match existing styles of surrounding buildings, plus protecting / respecting / enhancing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – scale of the existing townscape – use of traditional local building materials – more natural solutions to control drainage – minimum standards for living space in 	<p>POLICY 4: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Developments should be shaped by the natural environment so that the benefits it provides are enhanced and not degraded.</p> <p>The landscape character of the District will be protected through retention of the features that characterise the area.</p> <p>Within the areas designated as AONB and their setting, development will be managed in a way that preserves conserves and enhances the natural</p>	<p>Locally valued features should be clearly described (mapped where applicable) and protected through a policy.</p> <p>Need to be clearer regarding what is meant by such phrases as “repair the historic character of the area and provide infrastructure needs”</p> <p>Consider whether the above should cover the rural areas</p>

Vision / Objectives / Policy suggestions	Supporting evidence	Local Plan context (overview)	Potential way forward
<p><i>Open Spaces theme – views and slopes covered under that heading</i></p> <p>Development in historic areas should utilize traditional building styles and historically correct materials that are appropriate to the context and reflect local distinctiveness, as observed in each area’s vernacular structures. A list of building materials and characteristics is in Appendix [later] and includes walls, railings, and gates. A list of historic buildings and other heritage assets is appended, with additional information about heritage conservation and sources of information. [Appendix later]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – When alterations to the facades of buildings in historic areas are proposed, these should be necessary and also appropriate to the building and historic area. See Appendix listed above. – Alterations to town shop fronts, for example, should complement those of early design nearby. Similarly, window replacement in vernacular buildings should be wooden rather than plastic. – Alterations and repairs to walls, railings, gates and other built features within historic areas 	<p>dwellings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – quality of outdoor surfaces (hard and soft) in public areas <p>Other evidence on design:</p> <p>Part 2 Design Statement And Masterplan (2003</p> <p>Development Brief for land on the Eastern side of Shaftesbury) includes analysis of issues such as height, massing and materials and detailing (eg windows, chimneys, railings)</p> <p>Dorset Historic Towns Survey: Shaftesbury https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/396399/Shaftesbury---historic-towns-survey</p> <p>breaks down analysis by character area and includes information on Settlement Pattern and Streetscape, Building Type, Materials, Key Buildings (which potentially includes some non-designated heritage assets)</p>	<p>beauty of the area</p> <p>POLICY 5: THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Any development proposal affecting a heritage asset (including its setting) will be assessed having regard to the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of that asset and securing a viable use for it that is most consistent with its conservation.</p> <p>POLICY 24: DESIGN</p> <p>Development should be designed to improve the character and quality of the area within which it is located.</p>	<p>(evidence base is currently very town focused)</p>

Vision / Objectives / Policy suggestions	Supporting evidence	Local Plan context (overview)	Potential way forward
<p>should be carried out only as necessary and must conserve the original structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In all public areas, traditional paving and materials should be used. This should include Park Walk. <p>When relocation of services or redevelopment of sites is proposed, this should be seen as an opportunity to repair the historic character of the area and provide infrastructure needs. Examples could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cattle Market • Ambulance station and fire department • Police station • NDDC/DWP site • Coppice Street • Entrances to Shaftesbury <p><i>NB some overlap with Business theme – town centre enhancement / street furniture covered under that heading</i></p>	<p>The landscape assessment work to an extent covers the rural areas, though in less detail – see North Dorset Landscape Character Assessment Addendum</p> <p>https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/media/147865/Landscape-Character-Area-Assessment-Addendum/pdf/lcaa_evidence_base_addendum.pdf</p>		
RURAL THEME			
<p>To ensure that, outside the designated settlement areas, the parish of Melbury Abbas and Cann remains a sustainable and viable community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain village viability with a flexible approach to selected development on appropriate sites 	<p>Household questionnaire: opinion divided on whether to include settlement boundaries / specific sites for development</p> <p>In terms of community hall,</p>	<p>POLICY 2: CORE SPATIAL STRATEGY</p> <p>States that all development proposals should be located in accordance with the spatial strategy - which identifies Stalbridge and eighteen larger villages (not including any in the NP area) as the focus for growth to meet the local needs</p>	<p>Need to consider whether it would be appropriate to define a development boundary or set clear criteria for how development sites are assessed.</p>

Vision / Objectives / Policy suggestions	Supporting evidence	Local Plan context (overview)	Potential way forward
<p>as directed by the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure economic viability by using redundant farm buildings and brown field sites for appropriate employment opportunities (currently in the process of identifying sites) <p><i>NB some overlap with Environment and Open Spaces theme – landscape character / views covered under that heading</i></p>	<p>refurbishment of existing hall was generally supported</p>	<p>outside of the four main towns. As such countryside policies apply - where development will be strictly controlled unless it is required to enable essential rural needs to be met.</p> <p>This will allow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – new affordable housing within or adjoining settlements with a population of 100+ and at least one essential facility within 1km of its physical centre – new rural workers dwellings where there is a full-time, functional need; – the redevelopment or limited expansion of existing employment sites; – the re-use of existing (attractive) buildings for tourist accommodation, employment or community uses (such as local shops) or as a new house (if the building is redundant and the scheme would enhance the setting) – the replacement or extension of existing dwellings if not more visually intrusive than the existing dwelling <p>Does not permit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New employment sites 	

Vision / Objectives / Policy suggestions	Supporting evidence	Local Plan context (overview)	Potential way forward
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New shops – New open market housing (unless as part of a rural exception site, or restricted to farm workers etc) – Substantial increases to the size of a house - either through its replacement or extension – Live-work extensions to allow a business / commercial enterprise to be run from the home – Increasing gardens in size 	
<p>Have a sustainable approach to flood prevention and the erosion of roads and property through the maintenance of verges, ditches, culverts and water courses to ensure adequate drainage systems and water run-off measures</p>		<p>POLICY 3 – CLIMATE CHANGE: Development should seek to minimise the impacts of climate change overall through avoidance of areas at risk of flooding from all sources and the incorporation of measures to reduce flood risk overall</p>	<p>Can be included as a project</p>
<p>Protect Dinah’s Hollow and work towards a better traffic management solution that ensures safety and maintains economics for both the C13 and A350</p> <p><i>From historic environment theme:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dinah’s Hollow should be protected 	<p>Local Transport Plan and various studies https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/417819/View-the-Local-Transport-Plan - the main reference is in a long-term aspiration (post 2026) for improvements to the C13</p>	<p>POLICY 13: GREY INFRASTRUCTURE Supporting measures to make more effective use of the existing route network including: improvements to traffic flows at ‘pinch points’ and key junctions; and schemes to improve environmental quality on busy routes or to improve road safety</p>	<p>Can be included as a project - land use implications are not currently known</p>

Suggested outline for Neighbourhood Plan

FRONT COVER

To include

- Title
- Town / Parish Council (can refer to support from working group/s)
- Date – (of publication)
- Status – (eg draft for consultation)
- Plan period (timeframe plan is intended to cover)

Summary

Key focus of the plan – easy-read 1 or 2 page summary

Introduction

Can include a ‘forward’ if useful to have an introduction – *but can make the document more ‘official’*

Can include the following

- What a neighbourhood plan is / does
- Why the parish councils are working together
- What has happened so far (ie brief account of consultation and evidence gathering)*
- What the timescale / stages are to adoption*

**Useful to include for information in draft versions but can be removed in final draft*

About the area

It can be useful (but not necessary) to provide a brief overview about the wider area (social / economic / environmental) and pull out from the consultations local people’s main concerns / aspirations. *What are the key messages you feel are important?*

Can also explain in brief the context of the North Dorset Local Plan

Focus of the plan (ie what it aims to achieve)

The plan’s vision and objectives, and this may then lead into the following chapter structure

NB note desirability of having these in sufficiently plain language that would be readily understood by most people, and to sufficiently reflect the town / countryside coverage of the plan

From my initial overview of the type of issues you are looking to cover, I would suggest departing from your current themes and perhaps grouping the objectives / sections as follows:

- **The Town Centre**
- **Main areas for future development – housing and employment**

- Community & leisure facilities for the future
- Green spaces, views, wildlife areas and walking and cycling routes
- The character and design of new development

The Town Centre

This chapter would pick up on the main issues and aspirations for the town centre.

Describe the town centre – where it has changed and how it functions, This can pick up issues such as the importance of independent, smaller shops etc and set the context for the type of shops that are likely to fit the town in terms of its wider tourist / cultural strengths.

It may be useful to explain that there are changes that can be made that do not require planning permission (as for example there were concerns

about high % of charity shops), and also the need to provide flexibility as the retail sector is changing across the UK.

Describe the importance of the historic look & feel of the town centre – many of the buildings are Listed Buildings and therefore any alterations to shop fronts etc will be carefully scrutinised, but can particularly point to good examples

Describe the importance of movement around the town – in terms of arrival (parking) and experience walking around the town centre (balance between convenience and enjoyment of the public realm). You may also want to refer to car park charges and how influential this can be – though not something that can be controlled through the neighbourhood plan.

On this basis it may of my not be appropriate to talk about the future of some of the sites that relate to the town centre – this will depend on the degree of discussion you may have had with the relevant landowners and uses you think may be appropriate

Planning policies to cover:

- Definition of the town centre boundary and shop frontages (if these are different from those in the the Local Plan), and /or adjusting the criteria that would apply to changes of use in these areas
- Shop front guidance – potential picking out key elements from the NDDC guidance applicable to Shaftesbury. This can also pick up on the use of wall plaques / pub signs etc

1Suggested Boundary and Primary shop fronts from 2008 review



Project to cover:

- Traffic management / public realm improvements – how this will be progressed and broadly what it will cover. This could include the general principles for signage, street furniture etc

Depending on evidence / further research

- cultural quarter project?
- parking improvements – this may be included in the traffic management project as aspirational. If strong evidence of need to allocate additional land, this is likely to require significant further work to establish who would fund and deliverability of sites (ie willin landowner)
- parking standards – do these need to deviate from the DCC requirements?
- policies on key sites where changes are anticipated – the degree to which further evidence may be needed will depend on what is proposed (and understanding of landowner intentions and current policy context)

Main areas for future development – housing and employment

This chapter could include information about the main areas of growth as set out in the Local Plan, and also reflect the general feelings from the consultation, and supporting evidence, about what makes places more successful / integrated, ie:

- mixed uses within housing areas – local shops, employment, community facilities
- range of housing types – but better meeting the needs of local people in terms of size, needs (eg for less mobile) and affordability
- avoidance of large areas being developed in ‘one hit’

Explain how future growth areas / reserve sites are not proposed in this neighbourhood plan but principles established should be applied

Discuss importance of employment in providing jobs for local people, and how good access and broadband are key requirements to make these successful. However the delivery of these largely falls outside the remit of the neighbourhood plan. You can refer to concerns re impact of development on road network (within and outside the town)

Discuss importance of rural settlement remaining as sustainable and viable communities. Explain loss of settlement boundary around Cann Common (and that there was no previous boundary around Melbury Abbas) – and what the neighbourhood plan is suggesting in terms of providing a flexible approach to selected development on appropriate sites as directed by the community.

Explain permitted development rights in relation to redundant farm buildings and describe how many such buildings and other brown field sites were identified as part of the neighbourhood plan work.

Planning policies to cover:

- Support for mixed uses within main housing growth areas, where compatible with a residential area.
- Specify the type and size of housing should reflect the need and demand for...
- Marker that in reviewing sites / release of further land, consideration should be given to preference for smaller development that could be more easily absorbed / integrated into the existing built areas.
- Decided approach re flexibility for growth in rural areas

Project to cover:

- Signage improvements for main employment areas
- Dinah's Hollow?
- Flood prevention measures?

Depending on evidence / further research

- Support a flexible approach that would allow new employment sites outside but close to the town boundary (subject to various environmental checks) if there is evidence that the existing sites are not meeting demand
- Transport assessments when required to include consideration of cumulative impact of development on 'hotspots'

Community & leisure facilities for the future

Explain importance of community facilities to health, social and cultural wellbeing. Explain planned improvements as set out in the Local Plan / Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and where these will happen (if known). Acknowledge what has already been achieved / is underway (eg swimming pool)

Planning policies to cover:

- Protecting (identified) community facilities that are particularly valued by local residents

Project to cover:

- Delivery of improvements (details if known)

Depending on evidence / further research

- If new provision cannot be accommodated on existing sites, consider identifying and allocating sites where such provision will take place to provide greater certainty for land acquisition and potential focus of CIL funds.

Green spaces, views, wildlife areas and walking and cycling routes

Explain the importance of the areas' distinctive landscape, some of which falls within the AONB (and what this means in terms of national policy). Also the importance of existing green spaces with the town (and explain the need to review the IOWAs and other saved policies)

Explain many benefits of the wider green infrastructure networks, ie

- Recreational / access
- Enjoyment of landscape / views
- Heritage / Cultural links
- Wildlife
- Flood risk / climate change

Include map showing

- network of landscaped pathways/ cycle routes in the town
- local green spaces (where these are to be protected)
- key views / visually sensitive areas (if you can define these – otherwise you should consider clear criteria which may be used to judge whether a place has a key view or is visually sensitive)

Explain expectation that new development should include and link to this wider green infrastructure network, and provide suitable space on site (if you intend to adopt different standards / priorities this can be explained here)

Planning policies to cover:

- Designation of local green spaces (where these meet the NPPF criteria)
- Identification and protection of important views / visually sensitive areas
- Protection and links to the network of landscaped pathways/ cycle routes in the town

Project to cover:

- Upgrades / improvements to the network of landscaped pathways/ cycle routes in the town (and possible links to wider countryside)
- Off road cycle route/footpath to connect Shaftesbury and Gillingham

Depending on evidence / further research

- Identification and protection of important open gaps (re public concern of settlements merging)
- Revised open space provision standards

The character and design of new development

Explain importance and benefits of good design of development. Character relates to making places locally distinctive and often linked to their past (what has shaped Shaftesbury in particular?). Also need to adapt to take on board innovations and improvements such as renewable energy.

May want to highlight here some good (and not so good) examples

May be useful to describe how character differs across the area, and what implications this may have in terms of design.

If possible, locally valued features should be clearly described (mapped where applicable) – eg important landmarks, character lanes – especially where these would not be protected under Conservation Area etc type designations.

Explain how building standards nationally are improving (in terms of energy efficiency etc), that some changes can be made under permitted development rights. Importance of layout in ensuring that opportunities for more environmentally friendly buildings are maximised. You can explain that it is possible for communities to identifying areas where larger scale community renewable schemes would be supported, and why / why you haven't taken this approach.

Planning policies to cover:

- General principles for design as they relate to the area / local character. It may be useful to differentiate clearly between different character areas (either Conservation Area / Modern Town / Countryside or a finer grain of detail), in order to provide clearer guidance as to what might be appropriate or not.
- Supporting more innovative environmentally friendly designs, and layout / design that allows future occupiers to install energy / water efficiency measures

Depending on evidence / further research

- Identify land in which support would be given for community / larger scale renewables

Implementation and review of the plan

Section setting out how the various organisations will take forward projects (potentially referring to the use of CIL funding), partnership working, and working with landowners / developers (eg pre-application engagement etc)