

Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



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Mr David Hogger
Planning Policy
North Dorset District Council
Nordon
Salisbury Road
Blandford DT11 7LL

ID:616

By Email: planningpolicy@north-dorset.gov.uk

11 May 2015

Dear Mr Hogger

North Dorset Local Plan Examination MHD006 extending the Plan period and housing provision to 2031

I see from Section 3 of this document that proposals have come forward at a rather late stage for an extension of the proposed development at St Mary's Hill, Blandford. This is set out in paragraphs 3.11 to 3.14 of MHD006. It appears that no Landscape or Visual Impact Appraisal has been presented to inform the consideration of this proposed extension. The site is across the Stour Valley from this AONB and the slope faces towards the AONB. The proposed allocation is, therefore, within the setting of this AONB. A development to accommodate some 450 dwellings across the valley from the AONB could be a significant change to the scene in addition to the functional landscape changes that a development of that scale would produce. This AONB is, therefore, **very concerned** that this site within the setting of the AONB could, if not properly subjected to a landscape and visual impact appraisal to inform the consideration of it, seriously conflict with the policy for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty set out in document MDH011.

Yours sincerely

RICHARD BURDEN

Richard Burden BSc DipCons MSc FLI PPLI
Landscape and Planning Advisor (part-time Monday to Wednesday)

For and on behalf of the CCWWD AONB Partnership

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Dear Mr Hogger

North Dorset Local Plan Examination MHD007 Note on Approach to Development in the Countryside to Promote a Strong Rural Economy

This AONB Partnership notes that there is a proposal to identify villages as More Sustainable Villages (MSVs) and that settlement boundaries would be retained around these villages. Less Sustainable Villages (LSVs) would have settlement boundaries removed which would mean that development in connection with those villages would come under the policies for development within the countryside.

The effect of the recommendation would be that for this AONB the MSVs would be Fontmell Magna, Iwerne Minster, Pimperne and, depending on the exact boundary, possibly part of Bourton. Stourpaine is partly within this AONB and partly in the Dorset AONB. In terms of AONB matters this approach would clarify what is meant by infill as development within those boundaries would clearly meet the necessary criteria. Paragraph 4.7 of MDH007 appears to address issues relating to sustaining local character and valued features of these AONB villages.

This AONB Partnership would, however, be **concerned** that any Neighbourhood Development Plans should take full account of the AONB's status and the weight afforded to the protection of AONBs by not just the emerging Local Plan but also the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance.

In the absence of any further clarification the AONB Partnership assumes that the settlement boundaries would be those currently existing in the current Adopted Local

Plan. If there are proposals to amend those boundaries then the AONB Partnership would wish to be consulted.

The AONB Partnership would also **strongly recommend** that if significant amendments are proposed to the boundaries then the areas under consideration should be subject to landscape and visual impact appraisals by experienced and qualified landscape architects.

Yours sincerely

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Dear Mr Hogger

North Dorset Local Plan Examination

MHD011: Issue 7 and Issue 9 note on weight afforded to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in relation to sites in Blandford and Shaftesbury,

The AONB **welcomes** this document; however there are a small number of clarifications and typographic matters that the AONB believes should be clarified.

I note, in paragraph 1.1, that the recommendation should conclude with 'setting of an AONB' and not as written 'setting on an AONB'.

The full and formal name of this AONB is the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, although for everyday purposes we refer to the Cranborne Chase AONB. In a formal document it may be more appropriate to use the full name, which includes the West Wiltshire Downs.

In paragraphs 4.1 and 5.3 reference is made to 'impact' on the AONB. As there is likely to be more than one impact I would **recommend** that this should be corrected to 'impacts'.

Section 3 is particularly helpful outlining the strategic protection for AONBs. There is, however, a major omission in that paragraph 116 of the NPPF, relating to major development and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, is not there. The AONB **strongly recommends** that reference to paragraph 116 is included either as part of paragraph 3.2 or as an additional paragraph.

The paper MHD011 refers to sites at Blandford and Shaftesbury. The AONB sought to clarify the understanding of the situation regarding the potential housing allocation at Littledown, on the west side of the A350 from Wincombe Business Park, in our letter and associated plans reference MHD001 in this mid hearing consultation.

Whilst recognising the development opportunity relating to the land immediately adjacent to the A350, and outside of the AONB, the AONB Partnership has been very aware of the landscape assessment undertaken by Dorset County Council's senior landscape architect for North Dorset District Council in the preparation of the North Dorset Local Plan (A 32 – 36). The AONB Partnership is, however, **concerned** that stretching the housing development into the AONB could undermine the principles set out in MHD011. The AONB Partnership is, therefore, **very concerned** that the scale and extent of an allocation at this location could turn an allocation on the edge of an AONB into an allocation that is primarily within the AONB.

This AONB notes that an additional site was introduced during the Hearing at Shaftesbury. A landscape appraisal (A 50 – 56) has recently been carried out, and this AONB agrees that is a fair and reasonable appraisal.

Yours sincerely

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