

Holwell Neighbourhood Plan

Basic Conditions Report

Prepared by: Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd, on behalf of Holwell Parish Council

Plan period: 2017-2031

Date of report: February 2021

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Legal Requirements	1
	Has the draft plan been submitted by a qualifying body?	1
	Does the proposed neighbourhood plan state the period for which it is to have effect?	1
	Is what is being proposed a neighbourhood development plan making provision in relation to land or sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area?	1
	Do any of the policies relate to excluded development?	1
	Do any of the policies extend beyond the neighbourhood area or cover an area where there is a neighbourhood development plan already in place?	2
3.	Consideration of National and Strategic Policies	1
	National Planning Policy and Guidance	1
	The Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan area	1
	Neighbourhood Plan Policy	2
	National Policy: key statements	2
	Local Plan: Strategic Policies	2
	Conformity Assessment	2
	Conformity conclusions	11
4.	EU and sustainability obligations	11
	Appendix 1 – Local Plan Policies List	Error! Bookmark not defined.

1. Introduction

When a neighbourhood plan proposal is submitted to the local planning authority, it needs to be accompanied by a statement, known as the basic conditions statement, which explains how:

- the plan meets the legal requirements in terms of its contents and coverage
- the plan has had appropriate regard to national policy and is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the area
- the plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, is compatible with EU obligations, and would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

2. Legal Requirements

Has the draft plan been submitted by a qualifying body?

Yes – Holwell Parish Council agreed the submission of the draft plan and supporting documents at its meeting in February 2021.

Does the proposed neighbourhood plan state the period for which it is to have effect?

Yes – the plan makes clear in the plan’s title that it is intended to cover the period April 2017 – March 2031. This has not been altered as part of the review. If necessary, the Parish Council can update the plan period at the next review.

Is what is being proposed a neighbourhood development plan making provision in relation to land or sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area?

Yes - the Neighbourhood Plan proposal relates to planning matters (the use and development of land) and its policies relate to the designated Neighbourhood Plan area or parts thereof.

Do any of the policies relate to excluded development?

The policies contained in the plan cover:

- Policy H1: Amount and Location of New Housing
- Policy H2: Preventing Backland Development
- Policy H3 : Affordable Housing Prioritised For Local People
- Policy EB1: Locations for Employment and Business
- Policy EB2 : Camping and Caravanning Sites
- Policy C1: Important Community Facilities
- Policy C2: Public Rights of Way
- Policy E1: Locally Important Views
- Policy E2: Locally Important Woodlands, Wildlife and Landscape Features
- Policy E3 : Buildings and Structures of Local Importance
- Policy E4: Design

These are largely unaltered from the made plan. The Neighbourhood Plan policies do not deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or development that falls within Annex 1 to Council Directive 85/337/EEC.

Do any of the policies extend beyond the neighbourhood area or cover an area where there is a neighbourhood development plan already in place?

No - the Neighbourhood Plan policies relate only to Holwell parish (which remains the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area) and to no other area.

There are no other neighbourhood plans relating to Holwell Parish. None of the adjoining parishes (Bishop’s Caundle, Caundle Marsh, Folke, Glanville’s Wootton, Pulham, Lydlinch or Stourton Caundle) have been designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area.

Map 1 – Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area



3. Consideration of National and Strategic Policies

The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to national policy and guidance from the Secretary of State and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan that covers the area.

The following conformity assessment summarises how the Neighbourhood Plan relates to the relevant national planning guidance and strategic development plan policies.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

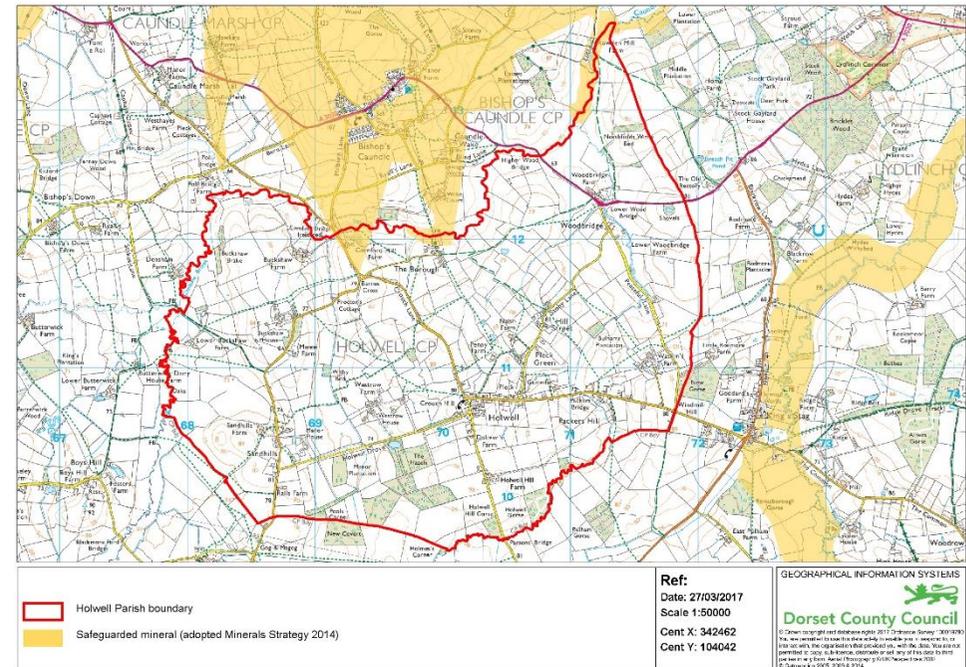
National planning guidance comes primarily from the published National Planning Policy Framework (as revised February 2019), but where appropriate, reference is made to the online National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) and Ministerial Statements.

The Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan area

The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, which was adopted by West Dorset District Council on 22nd October 2015, contains the bulk of the strategic planning policies for the area. Dorset County Council’s Minerals Strategy (adopted May 2014) also forms part of the development plan for the area, together with the more recently adopted Minerals Site Plan and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Plan. None of the minerals or waste development plans contain proposals for the Neighbourhood Plan Area, other than defining minerals safeguarding areas that cover a very small part of the parish.

The NPPG makes clear that in considering whether a policy is in general conformity, a view should be taken on whether the neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal supports and upholds the general principle that the strategic policy is concerned with and the degree, if any, of conflict and the rationale and evidence to justify that approach.

The NPPG also states that it is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in a neighbourhood plan and an emerging Local Plan, and that the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. Work is already progressing on the Dorset Council Local Plan, and the first consultation draft is currently out for consultation (January – March 2021). The draft does not significantly alter the approach to development in rural areas such as Holwell from that of the adopted Local Plan, but does include an indicative housing target.



The following table considers each policy in turn, against the relevant national and local policies for that particular topic and comments made by the previous Examiner.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Policy: key statements	Local Plan: Strategic Policies	Conformity Assessment and previous Examiner comments
<p><i>Policy H1: Amount and Location of New Housing (SUS1)</i></p> <p>In addition to the additional dwelling in Westbourne (as permitted under planning application WD/D/18/002618), provision is made for up to three (3) new build, open market houses to be developed in Holwell during the Plan period (April 2017 to March 2031), through allowing one dwelling (net) on each of the identified sites allocated in this Neighbourhood Plan and shown on the policies map.</p> <p>The sites selected for new build, open market housing are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Site between Roseacre & Newhaven, Fosters Hill. – Plot adjacent to The Rectory, Pulham Road. – Site adjacent to Gunville House. 	<p>66. The local planning authority should provide an indicative housing figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.</p> <p>69. Neighbourhood planning groups should consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites suitable for housing in their area.</p> <p>77. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.</p> <p>78. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.</p> <p>79. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside (five possible exceptions given)</p>	<p>SUS2 - Distribution of development - Strategic Approach includes reference to the settlement hierarchy and development within settlement boundaries, and a general restriction of development in rural areas – but recognises that neighbourhood plans may allocate additional sites, add or extend development boundaries, and that some development types are needed to support the rural economy.</p> <p>SUS5 - Neighbourhood development plans - the Strategic Approach identifies that neighbourhood plans can allocate development beyond that allocated in the local plan, and can extend or add settlement boundaries. But it also sets out principles such as concentrating development where jobs and facilities are accessible, and development being at an appropriate scale to the size of the village.</p>	<p>The housing numbers are unchanged from the previous draft, and the policy has simply been updated to recognize the planning consent that has been implemented on one of the chosen sites (Westbourne).</p> <p>The previous Examiner considered that, subject to removing the reserve status of the site adjacent to Gunville House (which was subsequently accepted), the policy was acceptable that the phrase ‘up to’ appropriately used in the context of the housing supply.</p> <p>Discussions have been held with Dorset Council in light of the production of the Local Plan, which includes an indicative figures of 35 houses for the period 2021 to 2038 (i.e. a further 7 years beyond the end of the Neighbourhood Plan). The pro-rata equivalent to 2031 would therefore be 21 homes. There are 17 dwellings with extant consent, which together with the 3 site allocations, windfall allowance (the Local Plan target includes an estimate of 15 windfall from conversions, of which approximately 7 would be expected to come forward within the plan period) and the affordable housing reserve site, would more that meet the identified housing needs for the plan period.</p> <p>No conformity issues identified.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Policy: key statements	Local Plan: Strategic Policies	Conformity Assessment and previous Examiner comments
<p><i>Policy H2: Preventing Backland Development</i> UNCHANGED</p> <p>The conversion of existing buildings to the rear of an established building line, such that it would comprise back land development, is not supported.</p>	<p>118. Planning policies and decisions should:...</p> <p>c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;</p> <p>d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively</p>	<p>ENV15 - development should optimise the potential of the site and make efficient use of land, subject to the limitations inherent in the site and impact on local character – the Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area</p> <p>SUS2 and SUS5 (see above)</p> <p>SUS3 - Adaptation and reuse of buildings outside defined development boundaries is NOT considered to be a strategic policy</p>	<p>Although the re-use of buildings is generally supported by national policy or the Local Plan, this is balanced against other considerations such as the suitability of the site for development and impact on local character.</p> <p>Land supply is not constrained, and the character of Holwell is predominantly linear ribbon development. Nor does the policy prohibit the re-use of existing buildings that are well-related to the highway or remove permitted development rights for barn conversions.</p> <p>The previous Examiner concluded that the policy was also in general conformity with Local Plan Policy HOUS6 (which the previous Council had advised was non-strategic in nature).</p>
<p><i>Policy H3 : Affordable Housing Prioritised For Local People</i></p> <p>The site to the rear of 7 and 8 The Plot (as shown on the policies map) is identified as the preferred location for a rural exception site for affordable housing for local people, and may be developed once 14 affordable homes at the Crouch Lane affordable housing site are fully occupied and there is an identified affordable housing need.</p> <p>The site would be developed for 100%</p>	<p>77. In rural areas, local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.</p> <p>78. Housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages</p>	<p>SUS2 and SUS5 (see above)</p> <p>HOUS2 - Affordable housing exception sites – refers to small scale sites for affordable housing adjoining settlements provided that there is an identified, current, local need which cannot otherwise be met; the scheme is of a character, scale and design appropriate to the location; and provision is in perpetuity. The Strategic Approach refers to flexible policies that encourage affordable housing to come</p>	<p>The housing needs assessment shows very limited need for further affordable housing in the plan period, but nonetheless it is considered reasonable to identify a reserve site at the main area of settlement around Fosters Hill. The policy has been amended slightly purely to clarify the reference to the Crouch Lane development for the avoidance of doubt.</p> <p>This was the only site put forward as available for affordable housing, and its</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Policy: key statements	Local Plan: Strategic Policies	Conformity Assessment and previous Examiner comments
<p>affordable housing, in accordance with the local plan policy for rural exception sites. A legal agreement will be sought with the developers and providers of affordable housing to ensure that it remains affordable in perpetuity and allocations are prioritised to people with a local connection to the parish of Holwell.</p>	<p>to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.</p> <p>Rural exception sites – defined as: Small sites used for affordable housing to address the needs of the local community in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. A proportion of market homes may be allowed, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.</p>	<p>forward, but does not refer to exception sites so this is NOT a strategic policy. The supporting text indicates that if a community wants to allow open market cross-subsidy on exception sites they could do this in neighbourhood plans without being contrary to the strategic policies.</p>	<p>allocation was considered preferable than having no such options identified.</p> <p>The policy does not allow for open market housing cross-subsidy, given the general approach adopted in the Local Plan is for 100% affordable housing (and continues to be so in the proposed draft Dorset Council Local Plan), and the clear indication (in the case of the Crouch Lane appeal) that 100% affordable housing sites are deliverable.</p> <p>The previous Examiner concluded that the policy had had regard to national policies and was in general conformity with Local Plan Policy HOUS2.</p>
<p><i>Policy EB1: Locations for Employment and Business</i> UNCHANGED</p> <p>New employment premises and built tourist accommodation should either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be well-related to existing buildings and the highway network • be part of a farm diversification scheme, or • re-use an existing building <p>and comprise sensitive, small-scale development that would not be intrusive in the landscape or cause harm to protected species or designated wildlife habitats. The development of</p>	<p>83. Planning policies and decisions should enable:</p> <p>a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;</p> <p>b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;</p> <p>c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and</p> <p>d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community</p>	<p>SUS2 and SUS5 (see above)</p> <p>ECON1 - Provision of employment - Strategic Approach includes the general support for employment development as expressed in this policy. This states that employment development will generally be supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → within or on the edge of a settlement; → through the intensification or extension of existing premises; → as part of a farm diversification scheme; → through the re-use or replacement of an existing building; or 	<p>The policy is generally supportive of development to support local businesses in a manner appropriate to the rural character of the area.</p> <p>Careful consideration was given to potential conformity issues with ECON1 following discussions with the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>The previous Examiner consider the policy to be in general conformity with Local Plan Policy ECON1 but required a minor modification (which was made) to reflect that the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual impacts of development</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Policy: key statements	Local Plan: Strategic Policies	Conformity Assessment and previous Examiner comments
<p>new employment premises on sites that lie behind an established building line, such that they would comprise back land development, should be avoided unless the development comprises the intensification or extension of an established employment site and no alternative frontage sites are available.</p> <p>Adverse social or environmental impacts that would clearly outweigh the potential economic benefits should be avoided, through:</p> <p>a) having good road access, avoiding routes through residential or other sensitive areas where significant traffic movements would be detrimental to the living conditions of residents or cause harm to designated heritage or other environmental assets, and</p> <p>b) not generating noise, pollution or other effects which would cause harm to the living conditions of nearby residents or harm the enjoyment of public areas including rights of way or cause harm to protected species or designated wildlife habitats.</p>	<p>facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.</p> <p>84. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.</p>	<p>→ in a rural location where this is essential for that type of business.</p> <p>ECON5 – on Tourism attractions and facilities is NOT considered to be a strategic policy, except for the strategic locational principles reflected in criteria ii-iii and originating in policy SUS2.</p> <p>ECON6 - Built tourist accommodation – is NOT considered to be a strategic policy, except criterion ii on larger hotel / guesthouse developments</p>	<p>are severe.</p>
<p><i>Policy EB2 : Camping and Caravanning Sites</i></p> <p>UNCHANGED</p> <p>New camping or caravanning sites to provide tourist accommodation should</p>	<p>There is no specific mention of camping and caravanning sites in the NPPF.</p> <p>83. Planning policies and decisions should enable:...c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments</p>	<p>ECON7. Caravan and Camping Sites is NOT considered to be a strategic policy. It allows new caravan and camping sites if well located in relation to existing facilities or making appropriate</p>	<p>The policy is generally supportive of development to projects that would support this form of rural tourism in a manner appropriate to the rural character of the area and respecting</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Policy: key statements	Local Plan: Strategic Policies	Conformity Assessment and previous Examiner comments
<p>meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → comprise sensitive, small-scale sites that would not be intrusive in the landscape → have good road access, avoiding routes through residential or other sensitive areas where significant traffic movements would be severely detrimental to the living conditions of residents or cause harm to designated heritage or other environmental assets, and → not generate noise or other effects which would cause harm to the living conditions of nearby residents or harm the enjoyment of public areas including rights of way. 	<p>which respect the character of the countryside</p> <p>84. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport).</p>	<p>provision for facilities on site. All such development must not, individually or cumulatively, have a significant adverse impact on the distinctive characteristics of the areas landscape, heritage or built environment, and must include an appropriate landscape scheme and provision for its ongoing maintenance</p>	<p>local amenity.</p> <p>No conformity issues have been identified, and the previous Examiner concluded that the policy was in general conformity with Local Plan Policies ECON1 and ECON7, subject to the qualification “severely” to the detrimental effects of traffic movements on living conditions in line with the NPPF (and this change was made).</p>
<p><i>Policy C1: Important Community Facilities</i></p> <p>UNCHANGED</p> <p>Community facilities listed below should be retained where possible, and every effort should be made to work with the local community to investigate potential solutions to avoid any unnecessary loss of these valued facilities and services. Proposals that would allow such facilities to modernise and adapt for future needs, including complementary facilities that would support their long-term viability, are encouraged.</p>	<p>83. Planning policies and decisions should enable:...</p> <p>d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.</p> <p>94. It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this</p>	<p>COM2 - New or improved local community buildings and structures - Strategic Approach states that community facilities should be provided within local communities, recognising the benefit of reducing car travel</p> <p>COM3 - The retention of local community buildings and structures - Strategic Approach states that existing facilities will be protected through a flexible approach which recognises the changing needs in society</p>	<p>The retention of existing facilities is considered to be in conformity with the approach taken in National Policy and the Local Plan.</p> <p>The previous Examiner concluded that the retention of community facilities would have regard to government policies and be in general conformity with Local Plan Policy COM3. The Policy also supports proposals for new facilities, and the Examiner required a change (that was undertaken) to have regard to the aims for sustainable transport and Policy COM2, by amending the last section to refer to</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Policy: key statements	Local Plan: Strategic Policies	Conformity Assessment and previous Examiner comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church and churchyard • Village Hall • Nursery School <p>In addition to those listed above, proposals for new facilities will be supported, provided the site is within or on the edge of the built-up area of Holwell, which includes The Borough, subject to consideration of environmental, road safety and amenity concerns.</p>	<p>requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education.</p>		<p>“within or on the edge of the built-up area of Holwell, which includes The Borough” rather than simply being “well-related to an existing building...”.</p>
<p><i>Policy C2: Public Rights of Way</i> UNCHANGED</p> <p>The network of public rights of way will be safeguarded, and improvements to provide safer and more accessible routes will be supported.</p>	<p>98. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.</p>	<p>COM7 - Creating a safe and efficient transport network - Strategic Approach states that providing a safe transport route network for all types of travel, and providing choices for ‘greener’ travel options where practicable, are also a key part of the strategy, and that development contributions towards transport infrastructure will be made</p>	<p>This policy is considered to be in conformity with National Policy and with Policy COM, which makes clear that development should not result in the severance or degradation of existing or proposed public rights of way, and encourages opportunities for their improvement.</p> <p>The previous Examiner concluded that the policy did have regard to national policy which aims to protect and enhance public rights of way, and that it was in general conformity with Local Plan Policy COM7 v).</p>
<p><i>Policy E1: Locally Important Views</i> UNCHANGED</p> <p>The design and layout of development should minimise adverse impacts on views from public rights of way over open countryside and preserve and</p>	<p>127. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:...</p> <p>c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or</p>	<p>ENV1 - Landscape, seascape and sites of geological interest - Strategic Approach includes the protection of landscape, seascape and sites of geological interest, and mitigation where appropriate</p>	<p>Views are not specifically referenced in either National Policy or the strategic policies. However the policy is considered to be in general conformity with those policies seeking to protect and reinforce local character.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Policy: key statements	Local Plan: Strategic Policies	Conformity Assessment and previous Examiner comments
<p>enhance such views where possible.</p> <p>Development that would adversely affect the rural setting of the village [whether by scale, massing, design or location] will not be supported.</p>	<p>discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);</p> <p>d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;</p>	<p>ENV10 - Landscape and townscape setting, ENV11 - Pattern of streets and spaces, and ENV12 - Design & positioning of buildings - Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area</p>	<p>The previous Examiner agreed that the views identified were impressive, but recommended rephrasing the policy to remove reference to the specific views which he considered lacked the clarity necessary for the effective management of development. This change was made.</p>
<p><i>Policy E2: Locally Important Woodlands, Wildlife and Landscape Features</i></p> <p>UNCHANGED</p> <p>All woodlands, veteran trees and the wildlife areas identified on the Holwell Policies Map, shown at Appendix P5, should be protected and managed to sustain them in the long term. Where their loss cannot be avoided, suitable replacement planting that will provide a similar landscape and wildlife benefit should be secured.</p> <p>Where development is proposed, native hedgerows and mature trees should be retained where possible, or replanted if there is a specific reason why they cannot be retained.</p> <p>Development that would noticeably detract from the rural character of the lanes and tracks in the parish, including the distinctive wide grassed verges, will not be supported.</p>	<p>170. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:...</p> <p>b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;....</p> <p>d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;</p>	<p>ENV1 - Landscape, seascape and sites of geological interest - Strategic Approach includes the protection of landscape, seascape and sites of geological interest, and mitigation where appropriate</p> <p>ENV2 - Wildlife and habitats - Strategic Approach includes protection of wildlife and habitats, and mitigation where appropriate</p> <p>ENV3 - Green infrastructure network - Strategic Approach includes protection of important local green spaces, and mitigation where appropriate</p> <p>ENV10 - Landscape and townscape setting, ENV11 - Pattern of streets and spaces, and ENV12 - Design & positioning of buildings - Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area</p>	<p>The policy is considered to be in general conformity with those policies seeking to protect and reinforce local character and biodiversity.</p> <p>The addition of the requirement for biodiversity mitigation and enhancement was made as a result of the specific request of Natural England.</p> <p>The previous Examiner was satisfied that the components of the policy would each have regard to the NPPF and would also generally conform with Local Plan Policies ENV1, ENV2, ENV3 and ENV10.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Policy: key statements	Local Plan: Strategic Policies	Conformity Assessment and previous Examiner comments
<p>All landscaping schemes should respect local landscape qualities taking account of existing natural landscape and native flora, including the preservation and strengthening of existing wildlife corridors.</p> <p>Biodiversity mitigation and enhancement should be secured on all development sites over 0.1ha, and on sites where there are known habitat/protected species interests that may be affected by the proposed development, including the potential presence of bats or barn owls</p>			
<p><i>Policy E3 : Buildings and Structures of Local Importance</i> UNCHANGED</p> <p>Direct or indirect harm to Identified Locally Important Buildings and Structures (as shown in Appendix P13) should be avoided unless clearly justified, having regard to the contribution the asset makes to the historic and architectural character of the area balanced against the scale of any harm or loss taking into account the potential to avoid harm through changes to the scheme design.</p>	<p>184. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, ... and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.</p> <p>197. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.</p>	<p>ENV4 - Heritage assets - Strategic Approach includes protection of heritage assets</p> <p>ENV10 - Landscape and townscape setting, ENV11 - Pattern of streets and spaces, and ENV12 - Design & positioning of buildings - Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area</p>	<p>This policy identifies non-designated heritage assets (there is no Local List). These are considered important for their contribution to the locally distinctive character of the parish, and add detail to the general approach set out in the Local Plan.</p> <p>The policy wording was amended following the previous Examination to better reflect the 'balanced judgement' in national policy.</p>
<p><i>Policy E4: Design</i> Any future development should be</p>	<p>125. Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design</p>	<p>ENV1 - Landscape, seascape and sites of geological interest - Strategic Approach</p>	<p>This policy was based on a review of the heritage and character of the area and</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Policy: key statements	Local Plan: Strategic Policies	Conformity Assessment and previous Examiner comments
<p>designed to reinforce the distinctive rural character of Holwell parish. This should include reference to and consideration of all of the key characteristics, as described in Table 3 below.</p>	<p>vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.</p> <p>126. To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans or supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. Their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified</p>	<p>includes the protection of landscape, seascape and sites of geological interest, and mitigation where appropriate</p> <p>ENV10 - Landscape and townscape setting, ENV11 - Pattern of streets and spaces, and ENV12 - Design & positioning of buildings - Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area</p>	<p>development of guidelines by AECOM (consultant). This is considered important to avoid an ‘anything goes’ approach given the variety of building designs and materials, which has in the past undermined the opportunity to properly consider the sites context and local characteristics, and how local character can be reinforced.</p> <p>The policy is not intended to be prescriptive, and the supporting text makes clear that design quality should focus on reinforcing local distinctiveness, but not preclude originality or achieving energy efficient designs.</p> <p>The previous Examiner confirmed that in his view the policy was a useful tool, that innovation would not be stifled, thereby having regard to national policy, and that it would also generally conform with Local Plan Policies ENV1, ENV11, and ENV12.</p>

Conformity conclusions

The Neighbourhood Plan includes a positive vision for the future of the area and explains how this translated into objectives and in turn relate to the relevant policies.

The analysis of the plan in relation to national planning policy and guidance and the strategic policies of the local plan, as shown in the preceding tables, does not highlight any fundamental conformity issues.

On this basis, there are no apparent reasons to conclude other than the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic condition of having regard to national policy and guidance from the Secretary of State and being in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

4. EU and sustainability obligations

The ‘making’ of the Neighbourhood Plan must not breach or conflict, and must be compatible, with EU obligations, must not have a significant effect on a European site, and must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It must not breach human rights, within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998.

A screening assessment in relation to potential requirements for a Strategic Environmental Assessment was undertaken on behalf of the Parish Council in December 2020. Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency were consulted on the contents of the SEA screening report in accordance with regulation 9(2) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004), coinciding with the 7 week consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, which ran from 14 December 2020 to 1 February 2021.

The determination made was that, having considered the environmental designations and constraints outlined in the screening report, and the scale of development being considered in the Holwell Neighbourhood

Plan (Review Version), in combination with that already benefiting from planning permission and proposals coming through other neighbourhood plans, there are unlikely to have significant effects on the environment, and there that the full SEA process was not necessary.

Specific consideration of the need for a Habitats Regulations Assessment was also undertaken at the same time. The making of the previous plan had considered the potential impacts of the plan upon the integrity of the protected sites, in light of their qualifying features, conservation objectives and the key environmental conditions required to support site integrity. This assessment concluded that the Holwell Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in an adverse effect upon the integrity of a European Site. Therefore, there was no requirement to undertake any further stages of HRA, such as an Appropriate Assessment. Natural England, the Government’s advisors on ecological issues and the ‘Appropriate Nature Conservation Body’ according to Regulation 63(3) of the Habitats Regulations, confirmed in response to the consultation this time around, that their stance in relation to the need for HRA remains unchanged (i.e. further consideration under the Habitats Regulations s is not required).

The Neighbourhood Plan’s policies have also been assessed against the three overarching objectives considered in achieving sustainable development as identified in the NPPF, ie:

- **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future

generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and

- **an environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using

natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The assessment is summarised in the following table. This allows an overview of the combined impacts of the plan’s policies. It demonstrates that the plan’s policies should help contribute towards sustainable development.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	Economic	Social	Environmental	Notes / Explanation
H1: Amount and Location of New Housing		✓✓		Ensures sufficient homes provided to meet projected needs
H2: Preventing Backland Development			✓	Contributes to protecting local landscape character
H3 : Affordable Housing Prioritised For Local People		✓✓		Ensures sufficient affordable homes provided
EB1: Locations for Employment and Business	✓✓	✓	✓	Supports provision of new employment opportunities subject to environmental and social checks
EB2 : Camping and Caravanning Sites	✓	✓	✓	
C1: Important Community Facilities		✓		Protects and supports provision of accessible services
C2: Public Rights of Way		✓		Protects and supports provision of accessible services
E1: Locally Important Views			✓	Contributes to protecting local landscape character
E2: Locally Important Woodlands, Wildlife & Landscape Features			✓✓	Contributes to protecting local landscape character and biodiversity
E3 : Buildings and Structures of Local Importance		✓	✓	Contributes to protecting local landscape and cultural identify
E4: Design		✓✓		Contributes to enhancing local built character

No issues have been raised in relation to the possible contravention of Human Rights in the preceding consultations, and given the conclusions on the plan’s general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and regard to National Planning Policy, it is reasonable to conclude that the making of the plan should not breach human rights.