

BLANDFORD + NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2015-2031

SUBMISSION PLAN



Published by Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St Mary Parish Council and Bryanston Parish Council for consultation under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as amended.

July 2016

www.blandfordplus.org.uk

CONTENTS & POLICIES

FOREWORD	3
1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	5
Background	5
Neighbourhood Development Plans	5
The Plan Preparation Process	6
A Profile of the Blandford + Area	6
Planning Issues for the Town	7
Consultation	8
Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Assessment	8
Supporting Evidence	8
2. VISION & OBJECTIVES	9
3. LAND USE POLICIES	12
Introduction	12
Policy 1: Land North & East of Blandford Forum	13
Policy 2: Land at Shaftesbury Lane, Blandford Forum	17
Policy 3: Land at Salisbury Road, Blandford Forum	18
Policy 4: Land at Hunt Road, Blandford Forum	19
Policy 5: East Street/Langton Road, Blandford Forum	20
Policy 6: West Street, Blandford Forum	21
Policy 7: Community Facilities	22
Policy 8: Blandford Forum Town Centre	23
Policy 9: Green Infrastructure Network	24
Policy 10: Local Green Spaces	25
Policy 11: Design Management: Blandford Forum	26
Policy 12: Design Management: Blandford St. Mary	27
Policy 13: Design Management: Bryanston	28
Policy 14: Local Tourism	29
4. IMPLEMENTATION	31
Introduction	31
Development Management	31
Infrastructure	31
5. EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENTS	33
6. POLICIES MAPS	34

FOREWORD

Blandford+ is a grouping of three councils – Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St. Mary Parish Council and Bryanston Parish Council – a town and two parishes lying on its boundary. Each parish has its own special environment and atmosphere but they all use much of the same services infrastructure, which is primarily based in Blandford Forum. The significant shortcomings in this infrastructure, notably the lack of primary school places and oversubscribed doctors surgeries (although this is also due in part to the nationwide shortage of GPs) have been the principal driver in the identification of possible additional development sites in this Neighbourhood Plan.

The Steering Group is made up of councillors from the three councils, residents and a representative from the DT11 Forum Community Partnership. The Neighbourhood Plan area sits in the very beautiful Dorset countryside, as evidenced by the fact that there are two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to be considered.

Blandford Forum is a unique Georgian Market Town, as the centre was re-built after a series of disastrous fires which completely destroyed the town in 1731. The lovely, red-brick houses are complemented by 2 stone built buildings in the Market Place itself – The Corn Exchange complex and the Parish Church. Over the centuries since then the town has continued to expand, in particular to the north. It is a very pleasant place to live, partly because of its beauty and situation but also because of the friendliness of the people.

Blandford St Mary is a small but varied community with an active primary school, an annual horticultural and craft and various groups which meet regularly in and around the village in residents' homes – and a talented group of artists who regularly exhibit as part of the bi-annual Dorset Art Week. As well as a variety of old and distinguished properties dating back a century or more, we have many relatively new residential properties, together with a busy business estate which is home to, among others, Tesco, Homebase and the famous Hall and Woodhouse brewery.

Bryanston is a small village, full of history, which extends over approximately 1,500 acres of mainly agricultural land and lying to the west of Blandford. Bryanston village itself is spread out amongst the rolling Dorset fields, which still bear traces of lynchets and ancient field systems. Dominating the village today is the large house and grounds, once the home of the Portman family, which is now owned by Bryanston School. 'Old Bryanston' village consists of picturesque and historic Portman estate cottages, clustered below the Bryanston Club.

A second area of the village, which runs along the Cliff, consists of former Council-owned housing together with some more modern detached houses. A third part of the village has historic cottages built along a short portion of Dorchester Hill, close to Blandford town and a fourth area is mainly former Portman estate cottages surrounding the Kennels. Bryanston Club is a popular venue for many traditional pub games, such as pool and skittles, with many visiting teams using the venue. In recent years, the annual 'Tea on the Lawn' event has provided quintessentially English tea, scones and cakes to raise funds for the Village newsletter, which is delivered free to residents.

The early period in which the Steering Group worked together was engaged in responding to North Dorset District Council's (NDDC) Local Plan. However, the last 24 months the Steering Group has been engaged with accumulating relevant information for, structuring and promulgating the Neighbourhood Plan, in the latter part with the help of experienced consultants, rCOH Ltd. Several consultations have been held and the public have been very supportive and engaged. During the public consultations, events were held in each of the three distinct parishes: Blandford Forum, Blandford St. Mary and Bryanston. The plan has been amended to reflect the opinions put forward by the public.

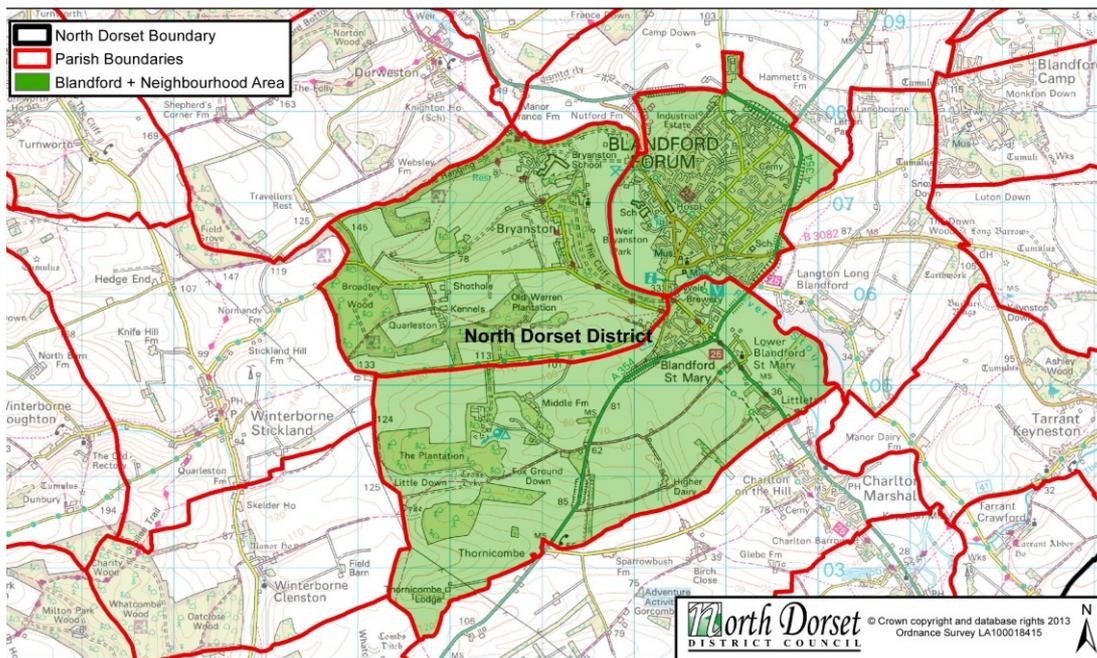
As well as funding from the three councils, the Steering Group has received two grants from the Community Development Foundation and Groundwork UK to contribute towards the costs of preparing this Neighbourhood Plan.

Sara Loch
Chairman of Blandford +

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Background

1.1 Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St Mary Parish Council and Bryanston Parish Council (“the Councils”), the DT11 Forum Community Partnership and local residents have been working together under the title Blandford + (“the Steering Group”) to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated by North Dorset District Council (NDDC) under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The designated area is shown in Plan A below.



Plan A: Designated Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan Area

1.2 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to make planning policies that can be used to determine planning applications in the area alongside other development plan policies (primarily in the new North Dorset Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)). In some cases, its policies are aimed at lowering planning risk to encourage development and investment of the right type in the right location. In others, its policies discourage development that will undermine the special historic and landscape character of the area.

Neighbourhood Development Plans

1.3 Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to shape the future development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the Plan becomes a statutory part of the development plan for the area and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided. Plans must therefore contain only land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose. This often means that there are important issues of interest to the local community that cannot be addressed in a Plan if they are not directly related to land-use planning.

1.4 Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Plans must meet four 'basic conditions'. These are:

- Is the Plan consistent with national planning policy?
- Is the Plan consistent with local planning policy?
- Does the Plan promote the principles of sustainable development?
- Has the process of making of the Plan met the requirements of European environmental standards?

1.5 In addition, the Steering Group, on behalf of the Councils as the qualifying body, must be able to show that they have properly consulted local people and other relevant organisations during the process of making the Plan and has followed the Regulations. The Steering Group have undertaken extensive consultations across the area to ensure that the Plan reflects the majority of local community opinion and they are described in greater below.

1.6 These requirements will be tested by an independent examiner once the Plan is finalised. If satisfied, the Examiner will recommend to NDDC that the Plan goes to a referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority of the turnout votes for the Plan, then it must become adopted (or 'made') as formal planning policy for the area by NDDC.

The Plan Preparation Process

1.7 The plan preparation process has included:

- A Pre-Draft Plan Survey in March 2013 which sought views on growth options for the neighbourhood area
- Representations to the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 examination dated 20 February 2015; to the Mid-Hearing written material dated May 2015; and the Main Modifications dated September 2015
- Informal draft Plan consultation in October 2015 to test policy options
- Pre Submission Blandford+ NP; the draft version of the plan dated February 2016 comprising the vision, objectives, land use policies, implementation proposals and Policies Maps
- Submission Blandford+ NP; this final version of the plan which takes into account the representations received on the Pre Submission plan during the public consultation period and amended as necessary for submission to North Dorset DC

1.8 Thereafter, the B+ NP will be subject to independent examination and, if successful, will be put to a local referendum. A majority vote will lead to the B+NP becoming part of the development plan for Blandford to inform future development decisions alongside the North Dorset development plan and National Planning Policy Framework.

A Profile of the Blandford+ Area

1.9 The area comprises the main town of Blandford Forum to the north of the River Stour, the smaller village of Blandford St Mary to the south, and the even smaller settlement of Bryanston to the west of the Stour. The town lies in the

gap where the River Stour cuts through the chalk downland and is at the meeting point of two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB to the east and north and the Dorset AONB to the west and south.

1.10 Blandford Forum is the main service centre in the south of the District with an extensive rural hinterland. The 2011 Census showed that the town had a population of 11,836. Blandford has expanded significantly in recent years, more than 1,400 new homes being built between 1994 and 2012 and a similar number planned in the period to 2031.

1.11 Blandford Forum has been described as one of the finest ensembles of Georgian country town architecture in the UK, possessing an excellent example of a Georgian town centre which contains many Listed Buildings. The town has a good range of shops and other key town centre uses, with a number of national businesses represented as well as independent traders. There are a number of large employment sites within the town and many local people are also employed at Blandford Camp, a large military site located just to the east of the by-pass. The settlement also contains three primary schools with a fourth at Blandford Camp, a secondary school and a community hospital.

Planning Issues for the town

1.12 Blandford Forum Town Council has long sought to address social and other infrastructure weaknesses in the northern half of the town. The housing expansion of the town over the last three decades up to the A350 bypass and into the AONB has not been accompanied by supporting social or commercial infrastructure. The strategic housing proposals for the new Local Plan, which allow for the significant growth of Blandford St. Mary, will not address these problems although they will help to meet local housing needs.

1.13 Whilst the Steering Group and Councils made representations on these proposals during the examination of the Local Plan, they now accept them reluctantly as part of the future planning for this area. However, further housing demand survey work (as part of the East Dorset Strategic Housing Market Assessment – see the evidence base) has indicated that the District will need an additional 900 new homes up to 2031 to be able to meet local needs. This important evidence, and the unresolved issues in the north of the town, has helped shape the Submission Plan.

1.14 Of importance too is the survival and success of the town centre as the commercial, cultural and tourism heart of the local area. Although the planning system is limited in how it can influence strong market forces, it is vital that it supports the regeneration of the town centre and the considerable local employment that depends on that success. Blandford Forum Town Council is not complacent and is working with all the key agencies to secure a sustainable, thriving town centre offer to local people and visitors.

1.15 More generally, the town needs to maintain a strong employment base as a key wealth creator for this part of the District. Investment in higher value-added economic development is much sought after and the competitive

locations are few and far between (and will often be constrained by planning policies). The Councils are keen to attract new investment to complement the existing industrial and business areas and know they cannot rely on past allocations of employment land to meet the changing needs of new investors.

1.16 The challenge for the Plan is to promote housing, economic and community infrastructure development within an area with high environmental constraints. The Blandford Conservation Area covers a large part of the town; the River Stour flood plain is extensive; and the two AONBs encircle much of the town. It is therefore crucial that the right balance is struck between economic, social and environmental objectives and that the opportunity for the local community to define what it considers to be sustainable development provided by the Localism Act, is not missed.

Consultation

1.17 The Councils have consulted the local community extensively since the project commenced in 2013. Groups of local residents have been established to review and agree which issues should be addressed by the plan. There have also been community surveys to obtain the fullest view of local community concerns, needs and wants from the B+NP. The Pre-Submission B+NP was published for public consultation for the statutory six-week period on 12th February 2016 and ending on Thursday 31st March 2016. The full details of all the formal and informal consultations are provided in the accompanying Consultation Statement.

Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA)

1.18 An SA/SEA Report has been prepared to identify and address any significant environmental effects of the B+NP objectives and policies. This follows the screening opinion by North Dorset DC on the 25th October 2015 that given the intention for the neighbourhood plan to allocate land for development a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the B+NP would be necessary in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004. The Councils have determined that this should be done within the broader scope of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA/SEA) to enable the social and economic effects of the Plan to be understood alongside its environmental effects.

1.19 A Draft SA/SEA report was published alongside the Pre Submission Plan for consultation and the Plan and the Final SA/SEA report have both considered comments received on those documents.

Supporting Evidence

1.20 The Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan website contains all the necessary background information and evidence in support of the Plan. The evidence list is available in Section 5 of this Plan and documents are available at:

www.blandfordplus.org.uk

2. VISION & OBJECTIVES

2.1 The Steering Group held a Visioning Workshop in February 2015 to assemble and analyse the planning policy context and community engagement data collated to that point. The session formed a key stage in scoping the draft vision, objectives and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

2.2 In essence, the draft vision sought to present an alternative to the emerging proposals of the North Dorset Local Plan. The belief was that the Local Plan vision of doubling the size of Blandford St Mary to 2026 would do little to meet the housing, employment and social infrastructure needs of the main town. Instead, the Neighbourhood Plan vision preferred to see the town grow to its north and east to deliver a range of new homes, jobs, community facilities and bus service improvements where they were needed most.

2.3 This alternative vision was tested with the local community in March 2015 using a household survey and public meetings across each parish. This engagement work indicated clear support for the emerging neighbourhood plan vision and this therefore formed the basis of the Draft Plan which was published for informal consultations with the local community and other stakeholders in October 2015. There remains strong community support for the vision and the range of economic and social benefits it will bring the main town, even though parts of the land to the north of the town lie in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.4 Since then, the Local Plan has been successfully examined and adopted and Policy 16, which sets out the spatial strategy for Blandford, was modified to enable the neighbourhood plan vision and strategy and its emphasis on the delivery of social and commercial infrastructure, to be accommodated and to complement the Local Plan strategy. This in turn ensures the neighbourhood plan promotes the principles of sustainable development.

2.5 The Neighbourhood Plan vision for 2031 comprises:

Growing our Communities Sustainably

Blandford Forum will maintain its role as the main service centre in the south of the district through:

- a. development and redevelopment within the settlement boundary;
- b. extensions, primarily of housing to the north and east of Blandford Forum and to the south east and west of Blandford St Mary; and
- c. a range of new employment uses on land beyond the bypass on the northern edge of the town.

Growth will be taken forward in ways which respect the town's environmental constraints, support its role, function and identity, and contribute to making it more self-contained. Blandford's distinctive natural and historic character will be retained and enhanced.

Maintaining our Special Heritage and Landscape Character and Addressing the Challenges of Climate Change

The town's special landscape and historic assets will be protected and enhanced.

The impact of flooding and climate change on the town will be addressed by:

- d. taking account of the risks of fluvial, groundwater and surface water flooding in new development;
- e. incorporating sustainable drainage systems into new developments; and
- f. the protection and management of valuable groundwater resources.

Meeting Local Housing Needs

At least 1,700 homes will be provided at Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary during the period 2011 - 2031. In addition to infilling and redevelopment within the settlement boundary, Blandford's housing needs will be met through:

- g. the regeneration of the Brewery site;
- h. the development of land to the north and east of Blandford Forum and south east of Blandford St Mary; and
- i. the development of land to the west of Blandford St Mary (at Lower Bryanston Farm and Dorchester Hill), which should only commence once a mitigation package has been agreed and implemented to the satisfaction of Natural England and the community.

As mentioned in paragraph 1.13 above, the latter site is reluctantly accepted, but still not supported by the community, because these sites have been approved in the statutory North Dorset Local Plan.

To ensure new houses are of high quality design and of an appropriate mix, in keeping with the established character of the area, and, that meets the needs of the existing community, especially younger families and local people.

Creating and Supporting Jobs and Cherishing our Town Centre

Employment needs in the town will be met through:

- j. the extension to the Sunrise Business Park;
- k. the development of land off Shaftesbury Lane;
- l. the development of vacant sites on existing industrial estates; and
- m. the retention of existing employment sites.

As well as the retention of the anchor superstore in the town centre, additional retail floorspace will be provided through:

- n. the provision of a new supermarket off Shaftesbury Lane.

The town centre will remain the focus of community activity. It will embrace a range of town centre uses, including retail, commercial, community, tourism and leisure as well as residential uses.

On appropriate sites, all development and redevelopment schemes should build on the ability of the town to attract and retain new businesses and major high street brands. Proposals such as the extension of existing retail units south of Market Place and at East Street/Langton Road, will be viewed positively within the recognised constraints of heritage and flooding considerations.

Improving Vital Community Infrastructure

Grey infrastructure to support growth will include:

- o. the provision and enhancement of walking and cycling links within Blandford between the existing and new residential areas and key destinations, such as the town centre, employment sites, schools and other community facilities;
- p. the provision and enhancement of public transport, cycling and walking links between Blandford and nearby villages (and Blandford Camp);
- q. the improvement and extension of the North Dorset Trailway along, or close to, the route of the former Somerset and Dorset railway line for cycling and walking; and
- r. the identification of a safeguarded route for the Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall Bypass as part of the development of the land south east of Blandford St Mary;

Social infrastructure to support growth will include:

- s. the refurbishment of the Corn Exchange to form the main community venue for the town and the provision of new community centres on land east of Blandford Forum to serve new development in the northern part of the town and on land at Blandford St Mary to serve that community;
- t. the retention of Blandford Leisure Centre in community use and the upgrading of its facilities;
- u. the provision of a new 2FE primary school on land north of Blandford Forum; and
- v. a new doctors' surgery on land east of Blandford Forum or the expansion of existing doctors' surgeries.

A network of green infrastructure will be developed in and around Blandford, focussing on linking existing sites (such as the Milldown, Stour Meadows and Preetz Way) and providing new sites and links to serve the residents of both the new and existing developments in the town. New or improved facilities will include:

- w. informal open space on land north and east of Blandford Forum; and
- x. Upgrading of existing sports pitches and associated facilities on land within the built up area of Blandford.

3. LAND USE PLANNING POLICIES

Introduction

3.1 Land use policies are used to determine planning applications made for development proposals. They can establish the principles for retaining or changing the use of land in settlements and in the countryside. They can also set out the conditions against which development proposals will be judged in terms of their design, access etc.

3.2 The purpose of these policies is to either encourage planning applications to be made for things the local community wants to see happen or to discourage applications for developments that they do not want to happen. Policies must be clearly written so they can be easily applied when considering planning applications.

3.3 The Plan deliberately avoids repeating existing national or local planning policies. The proposed policies therefore focus on a number of key development issues in the area. For all other planning matters, the national and local policies of other planning documents – the National Planning Policy Framework and the North Dorset Local Plan will continue to be used. The development plan for North Dorset comprises the Local Plan Part 1 covering the period 2011-2031, which has very recently been adopted, and some remaining saved policies of the former Local Plan.

3.4 The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have been prepared to deliver the vision set out in Section 2, which itself is intended to complement and update Policy 16 of the new Local Plan Part 1. So, in addition to the development and infrastructure proposals set out in that policy, the Neighbourhood Plan makes a small number of proposals that will provide a comprehensive development plan for the town and its partner parishes for the next fifteen years and beyond.

3.5 In this section are set out the fourteen proposed policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. Each policy has a number and title and the policy itself is written in bold italics for ease of reference. There is also a short statement explaining the intention of the policy including any other relevant evidence and background information. At the end of this document is the Policies Map. Where a policy refers to a specific site or area then it is shown on the Map.

Policy 1 – Land North & East of Blandford Forum

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land to the North and East of Blandford Forum (as shown on the policies map) for a mix of uses comprising:

- i. Open market, starter, self-build and affordable rented homes;**
- ii. New business uses as an extension to the Sunrise Business Park;**
- iii. A new two form entry primary school;**
- iv. A community hub comprising a new general practice surgery, a community centre and a small number of convenience food and similar uses to serve the locality;**
- v. Safe and convenient cycle and pedestrian connections across the A350 bypass to the retail and employment uses on Shaffesbury Lane, to the recreation ground at Larksmead, and to Pimperne Brook/Black Lane;**
- vi. improvements to the existing bus services connecting the land to the town centre, Blandford School, the Sunrise Business Park and Blandford Heights Industrial Estate;**
- vii. Public open space including informal open spaces and an equipped children's play space; and**
- viii. The relocation of Lamperd's Field Allotments to the north of their existing position.**

Proposals must be made as part of a comprehensive outline planning application for the whole site and should include:

- ix. an illustrative masterplan that defines the land uses and key development principles for access, layout and design, and principles of phasing and implementation;**
- x. a landscape strategy to demonstrate how any effects on the AONB and its setting will be satisfactorily moderated;**
- xi. A dark skies strategy to demonstrate how light spill into the AONB will be minimised;**
- xii. an ecology, green infrastructure and boundary treatment strategy to demonstrate how existing environmental assets will be protected and enhanced and green space will be integrated into the built environment;**
- xiii. a flood risk assessment and sustainable drainage strategy to demonstrate how the scheme will not increase surface water or fluvial flood risk on any adjoining land;**
- xiv. a transport strategy to demonstrate how the scheme will manage its traffic effects on the road network and how it will encourage and enable walking and cycling to community facilities and employment areas in the town;**
- xv. typical details of appearance and elevation of buildings to illustrate the response to the setting of the AONB; and**
- xvi. a planning obligation to secure the release of all land necessary for the supporting infrastructure, the 2FE primary school and other community facilities following outline planning consent for the phase 1 scheme within the Blandford + neighbourhood area and prior to the commencement of that scheme, with no dependency of the land**

release for the Phase 1 Scheme on the Phase 2 scheme which lies outside the neighbourhood plan boundary within the adjacent parish of Pimperne.

3.6 This policy allocates land on the northern and eastern edges of Blandford Forum for a wide range of housing, employment, education and community uses to meet the long term needs of the local community. In doing so, it complements the strategy and proposals of Policy 16 of the new Local Plan for Blandford Forum and Blandford St. Mary and enhances the resulting benefits of the Policy. It continues the historic growth pattern for the town as illustrated in the Framework Masterplan (Savills, Feb 2016). In addition, it presents the opportunity to create a new town gateway which reinforces this growth pattern and the strategic importance of Salisbury Road for both new and existing communities.

3.7 The land comprises two main parcels in the single ownership of a consortium of landowners, which have a development agreement in place and have made the land available for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan. The eastern land forms part of 28 ha immediately to the east of the A350 bypass to the south of Letton Park and north of Pimperne Brook and Black Lane. The land falls within the setting of the Cranborne Chase AONB but does not lie within it. It can be safely accessed from both the bypass A350/A354 roundabout and by the A354 Salisbury Road and there are opportunities to establish a safe pedestrian and cycling crossing of the bypass to connect the development with Preetz Way.

3.8 The northern land forms 13 ha immediately north of the A350 bypass and extends to the Sunrise Business Park to the west, to the Town Council boundary to the north and to the Town Council allotments to the east. The site lies within but on the edge of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire AONB. The land was allocated for sports pitches by Policy BL6 of the 2003 Local Plan but this proposal has since been abandoned. There is already a pedestrian bridge over the A350 bypass connecting the land with the large residential area at Shaftesbury Lane, which is also within the AONB.

3.9 Based on the housing land budget contained in the Framework Masterplan, it is anticipated that approximately 400 dwellings will be delivered within the neighbourhood plan boundary. The allocation will be expected to deliver a wide range of house sizes, types and tenures, comprising open market, self-build, starter and affordable rented homes in accordance with national and local planning policies. This provision will significantly increase the contribution of the town to meet the additional local housing needs of North Dorset in the period to 2033 that was recently identified in the Eastern Dorset Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

3.10 In addition, it will enable the delivery of a number of other vital land uses and infrastructure for the town to especially meet the needs of the main town areas north of the town centre. These educational, public transport and health needs cannot be directly met by the planned growth of Blandford St Mary on the other side of the town. It will also enable an important local employer who to date has been unable to identify a suitable site (Concept

Cables Ltd) to bring significant extra employment and to establish a new manufacturing facility in the town as part of the extension to the successful Sunrise Business Park. This will enable the safeguarding and creation of new high quality engineering and similar jobs for local people that are now far less likely to be delivered on sites elsewhere in the town, especially with the loss of the proposed employment uses at The Brewery site. The existing vacant land within the town's existing industrial areas is not a competitive location for this business.

3.11 The provision of a new two form entry primary school in the northern growth area to serve local needs will deliver the proposals of policies 14 and 16 of the Local Plan. It recognises that the significant new housing development already planned will increase the demand for school places. Dorset County Council is very clear that additional places will be needed in the town and especially to serve pupils living north of the town centre, which does not have existing provision. It locates the school where the evidence indicates it is most needed.

3.12 The availability of land north of the bypass for a new primary school has been discussed with the landowners and the County Council. DCC have provided a Pupil Place Planning Statement (see evidence base) which summarises the future demand for school places in Blandford. Whilst the Statement acknowledges the proposed location sits within the Cranborne and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it confirms that based on their analysis to date for delivering additional capacity in terms of a new 2FE (2.1ha) primary school, the site north of the bypass is the most appropriate, and the delivery of which is critical to the ability of DCC to fulfil its statutory obligation of providing school places in Blandford. The location also benefits from pedestrian access to the Shaftesbury Lane residential area via a pedestrian footbridge and would mitigate the potentially considerable additional car movements required to ensure 400 children are able to access the primary school safely and that could result from locations elsewhere.

3.13 The principle to relocate the existing allotments to accommodate the allocation has already been discussed with the Town Council and negotiations have taken place with the land agents.

3.14 The County Council as Minerals and Waste Authority is proposing in its draft Dorset Waste Plan of 2015 to allocate land adjoining the Sunrise Business Park for a new household waste recycling and transfer station to replace smaller facilities in the town. It proposed allocation of the site (WP06) reflects the fact that this location is the best to meet its operational and accessibility needs. In making this complementary proposal to the Neighbourhood Plan, the County Council considers the site to "present the exceptional circumstances and sufficient public interest to justify a location in the AONB" (p42). The County Council has separately noted that there is sufficient available land to screen the facility from the AONB countryside to the north, from the existing and new business uses to its north and west and from the proposed school site to its east. Such a proposal can only come forward through the Waste Plan (as it is regarded as a type of 'excluded development', on which neighbourhood plans cannot contain policies). This policy does not therefore make a specific allocation. But, unlike the school

and employment uses that are dependent on this location and require the land to be made available for those purposes, there are other locations for the waste facility. If not required in due course, then the land may be used for another of the land uses provided for in the policy.

3.15 Together, the vital school and employment benefits justify the incursion of a major development into the AONB in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF, which places great weight on conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of such designated landscapes. Policy 4 of the Local Plan reiterates this importance. An 'Exception' Statement' is included in the evidence base which sets out the relationship of Policy 1 of the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan and Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework. However, as with the major housing and retail schemes off Shaftesbury Lane approved in the AONB in recent years, the need for the development and its dependency on that location and ability to moderate its effects on the AONB can provide sufficient justification.

3.16 And, unlike those schemes, this policy allocation, which establishes a series of key development principles, will ensure that a full package of supporting infrastructure and landscape mitigation measures will be delivered. To that end, the policy requires a comprehensive planning application including a site masterplan and landscape strategy setting out how any impact on the AONB will be moderated and how the key development principles will be met including access, layout, design, landscaping and surface water management.

3.17 Importantly, it also requires a planning obligation to be agreed to secure all the infrastructure requirements of the policy, alongside other Local Plan requirements, to deliver a satisfactory scheme in line with para 173 of the NPPF and with Policies 13, 14 and 15 of the NDLP1. The obligation will detail the phasing of onsite delivery of infrastructure as well as financial contributions to other off-site works. Given the housing scheme is enabling the delivery of specified educational and economic development infrastructure, the policy requires that the land is made available for those purposes on receipt of the outline planning consent but prior to the commencement of the housing scheme. In addition, the policy acknowledges that part of the housing land east of the town lies beyond the designated neighbourhood area in Pimperne Parish. It therefore defines that part of the scheme within the area as Phase 1 and that part beyond the area as Phase 2, and requires that no part of the delivery of Phase 1 depends on the delivery of Phase 2.

Policy 2 – Land at Shaftesbury Lane, Blandford Forum

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land at Shaftesbury Lane, Blandford Forum, as shown on the Policies Map, for a mix of A1 retail, B1/B2/B8 business uses and C1 Hotel.

Development proposals will be supported provided:

- i. The retail use comprises land of no more than 1.6 ha to accommodate a building of a gross internal area of approximately 2,750 square metres and a total of 174 car parking spaces including at least 15% disabled and parent and child spaces;***
- ii. The business land comprises land of approximately 1.85 ha to accommodate buildings of a total gross floor area of approximately 5,000 square metres.;***
- iii. The proposals include a landscape buffer to the A350 Blandford Forum Bypass and to the residential area to the east, and limit light pollution into the AONB;***
- iv. One or both schemes make provision for a footpath and cycleway link from the site to the footbridge over the A350 Blandford Forum Bypass; and***
- v. Proposals include a flood risk assessment and sustainable drainage strategy that demonstrates the scheme will not increase surface water or fluvial flood risk on any adjoining land.***

3.18 The site lies within but on the edge of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire AONB. The NDDC Joint Retail Study (2008) identified a need for additional convenience goods floor space in Blandford. Planning permission was granted in March 2013 for a 2,300 m² ASDA supermarket and filling station on this vacant land off Shaftesbury Lane, but in 2015 ASDA advised they no longer intended to develop this site for a new supermarket. A report by MWA titled 'Final Observations on Retail Matters Blandford' (Dec 2012) concluded that the impact of the ASDA store in this location would be significant but not lead to a level of trade diversion that would result in the closure of 'Morrisons' in the town centre. It would help however to increase competition in the town. Since that time, the extension to Tesco is no longer proceeding and a planning application for a Lidl store, with substantially less sales floorspace than the previous consent, has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The LIDL application confirms that the store will offer a limited range of products requiring 'top up' shopping in surrounding retailers, hence its town centre retail impact would be less than that of the ASDA retail consent.

3.19 The north of the town is currently poorly served by convenience shops and on the basis of the growth strategy and allocations to the north and east it is considered prudent to retain this land for out of centre retail uses.

3.20 At Draft Plan stage, representations were received indicating that the need identified in the Retail Study could be met in full if the Morrisons store, which at that time stood empty were to re-open. The store has since re-opened. However, the neighbourhood plan has to balance this matter with the democratic element to neighbourhood planning in that to be 'made' the

plan has to pass a referendum. Residents to the north of the town have made it very clear to the Steering Group the importance of convenience store provision currently lacking in their part of the town, and with further allocations proposed in the north of the town this pressure is likely to increase over the plan period.

3.21 At the Pre-Submission Plan stage, representations from the land owner included a request to allocate the remainder of the site for a mix of uses to include generating employment, including tourism accommodation, care home, medical facilities and other A class uses. Through the consultation process additional tourism accommodation has been supported by the local community and the site does lend itself to being suitable for such a use. No evidence has been provided nor has this been identified by the local community to suggest that the Blandford + area require another care home. The medical facilities requirements are to be met on a different site allocated in Policy 1 and other A class uses have already been allocated at this site and within the town centre.

Policy 3 – Land at Salisbury Road, Blandford Forum

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for housing development at Land at Salisbury Road, Blandford Forum, as shown on the Policies Map. Development proposals will be supported provided:

- i. the scheme retains and refurbishes for a change of use to dwellings of the main office building as a heritage asset;***
- ii. there is no unnecessary loss of any mature trees;***
- iii. there is a provision for a continuing community use of the site comprising a community hub to retain the community service currently provided on site;***
- iv. the scheme design sustains and enhances the character of the Blandford Forum Conservation Area and adheres to the other policies of the neighbourhood plan; and***
- v. Proposals include a flood risk assessment and sustainable drainage strategy that demonstrates the scheme will not increase surface water or fluvial flood risk on any adjoining land.***

3.22 This policy anticipates the relocation of the District Council offices from the current site on Salisbury Road, Blandford Forum during the plan period. The approximately 1.3 ha rectangular site lies within the Blandford Forum Conservation Area and comprises the main offices as well as a pre-school facility (operating from The Lodge) and the town's Registrar service, together with large areas of car parking and amenity space at its front and rear. The group has held meetings with NDDC, the Pre-School facility and Spectrum Housing regarding relocating the childcare service currently being met on site. Policy 4 of this plan deals with this service being lost from this site.

3.23 The offices are located in the original building on the site called 'Nordon', built in 1901 and of local heritage value as an example of the large, late Victorian and Edwardian villas in the town. There are also a number of

mature trees on the site that form part of the contribution the site makes to establishing the character of this part of the Conservation Area.

3.24 The policy allocates the site for a primarily residential redevelopment scheme, including the retention, change of use and refurbishment of the main building as a local heritage asset and the Lodge for community uses. The remaining buildings and structures may be demolished. There appear to be no major obstacles preventing its reuse in this way, given the building was originally a dwelling, and the neighbourhood plan group hope that a minimum of two car parking spaces per dwelling are provided on site to ensure parking pressures do not spill out into the surrounding area but acknowledge that the DCC Residential Parking Standards set out in Appendix D of the NDLP1 will apply.

3.25 Throughout the meetings held with NDDC, the Pre-School facility and Spectrum Housing, it was initially understood that NDDC would be retaining the Lodge on site to continue to provide its services on site. It has now been confirmed by NDDC that the principle of providing a community hub has been agreed to, but not where this facility would be provided and that the Lodge would only be an option for District Council members to consider. Alternative options would be explored should any opportunities come to light at any point in the future. Therefore, the established local authority community services facility used by members of the public, in line with the adopted NDDC Policy 27, requires the retention of this community hub facility on this site to serve the local area. The 'Statement for a Community Hub at Nordon' confirms there is no other community facility in this part of the town that could be used for this purpose and establishes why this site has been selected as the most appropriate site for a community hub in Blandford Forum.

3.26 The policy, in conjunction with Policy 11 of the Plan, requires the design of the scheme to retain as many of the mature trees as possible and to reflect the heritage significance of the main building and the contribution of the site to the Conservation Area. This will likely mean that new buildings may be of a similar height and form to the main building but should not entirely surround the building or obscure its view from Salisbury Road.

Policy 4 – Land at Hunt Road, Blandford Forum

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land at Hunt Road, as shown on the Policies Map, for a childcare (D1) use.

Development proposals will be supported, provided they can demonstrate they can effectively manage car parking for staff and car movements for drop off and collection that minimise disruption for local residents.

3.27 This policy allocates land at Hunt Road for a new childcare facility. The land is currently an under-used public open space that is no longer appropriate for that use. The land has a legal covenant to avoid change of use from a play area, however the District Council has indicated to the landowners that they would be willing to start negotiations to remove this

covenant from the site. This makes new provision in the same vicinity for the existing facility that will be lost with the redevelopment of the Salisbury Road site in Policy 3.

3.28 For clarity, the benefit of this site allocation policy extends only to a small childcare facility and not any other use within the D1 class. The site is small and is not well suited to other non-residential institutional uses that will require a larger site and would generate more traffic movements than can be accommodated on the site. The Pre-School and owners of this site, Spectrum Housing, are in negotiation and the existing project timetable expects the site to be operational December 2016.

Policy 5 – East Street/Langton Road, Blandford Forum

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land at East Street/Langton Road, Blandford Forum, as shown on the Policies Map, for a mixed use development scheme.

Proposals for visitor centre (D2/A1/A3), retail (A1) and childcare (D1) uses will be supported, provided:

- i. There is no loss in the total number of existing car parking spaces;***
- ii. The scheme design sustains and enhances the character of the Blandford Forum Conservation Area and adheres to the other policies of the neighbourhood plan;***
- iii. A flood risk assessment demonstrates the proposals will manage this risk effectively;***
- iv. The scheme layout provides for pedestrian access to East Street and Stour Meadows/Trailway; and***
- v. Any proposed additional retail use is to be ancillary to the visitor centre.***

3.29 This policy allocates approximately 0.9 ha of land off East Street and Langton Road for a mixed use commercial and tourism scheme. It aims to encourage more visitors to the town as one element of a number of town centre regeneration initiatives.

3.30 The land comprises land adjoining the Marks & Spencer Food store and includes a small commercial building (currently a hairdressers). There is also a significant number of valuable public car parking spaces serving the town centre and the food store and a flood alleviation infrastructure around the edge of the site. The majority of the land falls within Flood Zone 3 but benefits from the flood defences.

3.31 The site offers good visitor access to both the town centre, within which the site is located, and also Stour Meadows and the Brewery visitor centre beyond. The site adjoins the Trailway, which forms the spine of the green infrastructure network of the town (see Policy 9). Although there is a short gap in this popular walkway through the town and beyond to the north of the site, it does run south into Stour Meadows. The Town Council has recently released funding to restore the nearby Railway Arches, which will become a significant

tourist attraction and, potentially, a viewing platform overlooking the river Stour and meadows and an outdoor theatre. As such, the site presents an opportunity to locate a visitor centre to serve the Trailway in North Dorset or other tourism related facilities, and proposals for funding the venture are being prepared, although options for the Trailway Visitor Centre location may remain to be finalised.

3.32 There is considered to be sufficient land within the site to incorporate additional commercial buildings to accommodate a visitor centre and ancillary retail, cafe and community uses. However, such new development must not be at the cost of the loss of the total number of car parking spaces, which may be reconfigured on the site with the application of good urban design practice.

3.33 The proposed uses are less vulnerable to flood risk than others and the land benefits from flood defences. There are no alternative sites within the town centre or on the Trailway that are as well suited to these purposes. However, the policy requires the flood risk assessment of proposals to demonstrate that flood risks can be managed effectively. This specifically means they are flood resilient and resistant and safe for uses in flooding events and they will not increase flood risk elsewhere.

Policy 6 – West Street, Blandford Forum

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land at West Street, Blandford Forum, as shown on the Policies Map, for a mixed-use scheme comprising a ground floor commercial (A1-A5) unit or a community use (D2) with one or more dwellings (C3) on the upper floors.

Proposals will be supported, provided:

- i. the scheme will sustain and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and the setting of nearby Listed Buildings;***
- ii. special attention should be paid to maintaining the dominant building line on West Street; and,***
- iii. A flood risk assessment demonstrates the proposals will manage this risk effectively;***

3.34 This policy replaces that part of saved Local Plan Policy 4.3 relating to this vacant 0.03 ha site on West Street at the southern entrance to Blandford Forum town centre. That policy reserves the land for a new library building on land owned by Dorset County Council but the Council no longer wishes to pursue such a scheme. The Council's cabinet, at its meeting of the 2nd December 2015, have identified the site held for a replacement library in West Street, Blandford, as surplus and agreed that it is disposed of on terms to be agreed by the Director for Environment and the Economy. The site is currently on the market. The site is prominent and currently detracts from the very special character of the Blandford Forum Conservation Area within which it sits.

3.35 In which case, this new policy allocates the land for a mixed commercial and/or community ground floor use with residential uses on upper floors, assuming a building of three storeys to remain in keeping with the dominant building forms in this part of the Conservation Area. The new building should follow the main building line at the back of pavement with any private amenity space to the rear.

Policy 7 – Community Facilities

The Neighbourhood Plan defines the following properties as community facilities:

- i. The Corn Exchange, The Market Place, Blandford Forum, DT11 7AF***
- ii. The Leisure Centre, Milldown Road, Blandford Forum, DT11 7DB***
- iii. Woodhouse Gardens and Pavilion, The Tabernacle, Blandford Forum, DT11 7UN***
- iv. The Bowling Club, Milldown Road, Blandford Forum, DT11 7DD***
- v. The Football Pavilion, Milldown Road, Blandford Forum, DT11 7DD***
- vi. The Cricket Pavilion, Milldown Road, Blandford Forum, DT11 7DD***
- vii. Larksmead Pavilion, Larksmead, Blandford Forum DT11 7LU***
- viii. The Skate Park, Stour Park, Blandford St Mary, DT11 9LQ***
- ix. Bryanston Estate Club, Hillside, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 0PR***

Proposals that will result in either the loss of, or cause significant harm to a defined facility will be resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the operation of the facility, or the on-going delivery of the community value of the facility, is no longer financially viable.

Development proposals to sustain or extend the viable use of existing community facilities and the development of new facilities will be supported.

3.36 This policy identifies community facilities that will be protected from unnecessary loss or harm in accordance with Policy 27 of the new Local Plan.

3.37 The Neighbourhood Plan Group have been collecting evidence on community facilities within Blandford that are valued by the community and offer a valuable resource to support community life. Whilst some facilities like the Corn Exchange are very well known, others less so and some may, at some time in the future, come under increased financial pressure.

3.38 The purpose of this policy is therefore to secure these assets in the long term for the benefit of the people of Blandford Forum and surrounding parishes and to apply a test of viability, which otherwise would not exist, to give added protection to them.

Policy 8 – Blandford Forum Town Centre

The Neighbourhood Plan defines the Town Centre Area and the Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages in the Area, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of managing proposals for retail, leisure and other commercial developments in accordance with the development plan.

Proposals that will result in the net loss of public car parking spaces in the Town Centre Area will be refused unless the community benefit outweighs the net loss of public car parking spaces.

3.39 This policy complements new Local Plan Policy 12 by defining the Town Centre Area and Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages of Blandford Forum. The Local Plan policy sets out the ways in which the Area and Frontages will be used to manage retail, commercial and leisure developments within the Area and elsewhere in the town and parishes. The two policies must therefore be read and applied together.

3.40 It is proposed to make a minor change to the primary shopping frontages, as set out in the Local Plan 2003, by extending the Primary Shopping Frontage northwards to include 51/52 Salisbury Street.

3.41 The B+ SG received comments at Regulation 14 in respect of proposals to amend the primary retail frontage at Morrisons notwithstanding concerns about the need for greater flexibility offered by a secondary frontage. The policy therefore reverts back to the retention of the food store at the Marsh and Ham car park as primary frontage. The provision of public car parking spaces is seen as a vital element in the attractiveness of the town centre and the policy therefore requires no net loss of existing spaces in any new proposals.

3.42 The Steering Group appreciate the concerns expressed locally following the previous period of vacancy on the Morrisons site, but are fully supportive of the continued occupation of Morrisons. The groups reasoning for including Morrisons within the secondary frontage was that it provided greater flexibility for change of use of the site (should the store be closed in the future). Following negotiations with Morrisons it has been agreed that it will be more beneficial for the town centre to recognise the store as part of the Primary Shopping frontage to show the community's commitment to keep the store operational.

3.43 Comments received related to the shortage of town centre car parking and it has increased dramatically in the last year. Being able to park in any of the town centre car parks, including on-street parking, and shop in Blandford Forum remains one of its strengths and the group therefore wishes to see this approach safeguarded unless the community benefit outweighs the net loss of public car parking spaces such as the proposals in the approved planning application for the regeneration project for the Corn Exchange.

3.44 The extension of the Primary Shopping Frontage northwards in Salisbury Street reflects the importance of trading shops on Salisbury Street and their contribution to the town centre and local economy.

3.45 The draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) also proposes to use a Town Centre Area to define different CIL charging areas. The District Council is proposing a charge on new retail development outside the Town Centre Area and a zero charge within it. This is designed to encourage development on more complex existing sites in the town centre and to use sites beyond for investment in infrastructure. The District Council has confirmed that it will be creating its own town centre boundary and does not wish to use the Neighbourhood Plan's town centre boundary for this purpose.

3.46 In addition to these proposals, and as another regeneration initiative, the Town Council is keen to address the improvement of traffic flow within the town centre. However, it recognises that such proposals require time to debate with traders and other organisations in the town, and the highways authority and that a Neighbourhood Plan is not the correct platform for such debate. This plan does not therefore make such proposals but informs local people that these discussions will begin once the Plan project is completed.

Policy 9 – Green Infrastructure Network

The Neighbourhood Plan designates a Green Infrastructure Network, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of promoting sustainable movement and ecological connectivity through the town and neighbouring parishes. The Network comprises Local Green Spaces, informal open spaces, allotments, playing fields, off-street footpaths/cycleways, children's play areas, woodland and land of biodiversity value.

Development proposals that lie within or adjoining the Network are required to have full regard maintaining and improving the Network in the design of their layouts, landscaping schemes and public open space provisions. Proposals that will lead to the loss of land lying within the Network and that will undermine its integrity will be resisted.

Development proposals that will lead to the extension of the Network will be supported, provided they are consistent with all other relevant policies of the development plan.

3.47 This policy supports Local Plan Policy 15 on Green Infrastructure by defining a network of green infrastructure assets in and around Blandford Forum, Blandford St Mary and Bryanston as a means of promoting walking, cycling and recreation and of improving local biodiversity through connecting habitats. It continues to promote walking and cycling routes identified in the North and North East Dorset Transport Study (see evidence base) and supports enhanced links with the land to the north to ensure the integration of these areas to the town south of the bypass.

3.48 The spine of the network is provided by the Trailway running along a former railway line from Sturminster Newton north of Blandford Forum to Spetisbury to the south but also includes the major spaces of the River Stour corridor, the Bryanston Estate, Stour Meadows and the Milldown. Although the majority of these features are physically attached to enable habitat

connectivity, some features of the Network are not. This does not devalue their integral biodiversity or recreational value and at some point in the future an opportunity may arise to achieve similar connectivity.

3.49 The policy requires that all development proposals that lie within the Network, or that adjoin it, should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least do not undermine its integrity of connecting spaces and habitats. This may mean that scheme layouts, access points, landscape schemes and amenity spaces are designed to contribute to the effectiveness of the Network where possible and without undermining other planning policy objectives. In some cases, proposals will enable the creation of new green infrastructure assets that extend the benefits of the Network. They will be supported provided they are appropriate in other respects.

Policy 10 – Local Green Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan designates Local Green Spaces in the locations shown on the Policies Map.

Proposals for development in a Local Green Space that will undermine its essential open character will be resisted, unless they can demonstrate exceptional circumstances.

Blandford Forum

1. Diamond Way Amenity Area
2. Westbury Way
3. Davies Gardens
4. Crown Meadows
5. Badbury Heights Open Spaces
6. Land adjacent the Leisure Centre
7. The Trailway

Blandford St Mary

8. Coppice and Badger Sett
9. Bryanston Hills

3.50 This policy designates a series of Local Green Spaces in accordance with paragraphs 76-77 of the NPPF and with Local Plan Policy 15 on Green Infrastructure. A designation has the policy effect of the equivalence of the Green Belt when determining planning applications located within a designated Local Green Space. Hence, the policy resists all development proposals that will undermine the essential character of designated areas, unless there are very special circumstances as set out in NPPF paragraph 78, to justify why consent should be granted.

3.51 A review of all open land within and adjoining each settlement has been completed, informed by the qualifying criteria of paragraph 77 of the NPPF. The land that is considered to meet those criteria and is therefore worthy of designation is shown on the Policies Map. 29 sites were originally reviewed (see 'Local Green Spaces Working Group Report' in evidence base) and a

full description and justification for each site is included in the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan 'Local Green Spaces Study' in the evidence base.

Policy 11 – Design Management: Blandford Forum

Proposals within or affecting the setting of the conservation area, as shown on the Policies Map, should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area and should demonstrate:

- i. consistently high standard of design and detailing reflecting the scale and character or appearance of the area, including the layout of the streets, development patterns, burgage plots, building lines and building form;***
- ii. the use of building materials and finishes which are sympathetic to the area, in particular the use of red brick in facades;***
- iii. no harmful impact on the townscape and roofscape of the Conservation Area;***
- iv. the retention and protection of trees, gardens, spaces between buildings, and other open areas which contribute to the character or appearance of the area, and the use of permeable surfaces to reduce surface water flooding;***
- v. where appropriate, the removal of unsightly and inappropriate features or details; and***
- vi. the retention and, where appropriate, the reinstatement of original features such as chimneys, chimney pots, gates, railings and shop fronts and small scale architectural details such as mouldings which individually or cumulatively contribute to the character or appearance of the area.***

Proposals including proposed changes of use that are likely to have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area will not be supported.

3.52 Blandford Forum has developed over centuries, starting from the centre of town, where buildings are older, to the outskirts where building continues. Many styles and trends are incorporated in the buildings, although the town is famous for the excellent examples of Georgian architecture. Heritage led regeneration such as the refurbishment of the Corn Exchange, will help to secure this status. This policy establishes the key design management principles for the Blandford Forum Conservation Area and its setting and requires special regard to matters of detailed design to avoid the continued erosion of the town centre character. The Dorset Historic Towns Study (2010) identified the Medieval Town and Salisbury Road areas as highly sensitive to large scale development and Historic England have confirmed the Conservation Area as a whole, is on the 'At Risk Register' in addition to a number of 'listed buildings'.

3.53 In 2015, the local community formed the Blandford Heritage Group. The Heritage Group is a Blandford Forum Town Team sub-group comprising NDDC's Conservation Officer, the Town Museum and Civic Society members. The group's initial aim was to highlight and promote the unique nature of the Town and surrounding Conservation Areas, and ensure that the community's wishes to maintain the town's architecture, halt its steady deterioration and identify areas where improvements could be implemented. Historic England have advised that there maybe an opportunity for the Heritage Group to undertake a Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) with the aim of producing a Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP) with the support of the District Council and Historic England. Guidance on how this could be achieved was provided by NDDC's Conservation Officer in November 2015 and a Management Brief produced in 2016. The Heritage Group's initial priority is Blandford Forum Town Centre. The group have provided a detailed document, the Blandford Heritage Group Towards a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, of how it will achieve this.

3.54 This policy will require planning applications to reflect the character of the buildings and landscape in and around the conservation area in their design proposals. The area is deficient in tree cover and proposals should give special attention to new landscaping and how this may complement other flood risk measures to avoid new development exacerbating existing problems.

Policy 12 – Design Management: Blandford St. Mary

Proposals including infill within or affecting the setting of the Conservation Area, as shown on the Policies Map, should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area and should demonstrate:

- i. a consistently high standard of design and detailing reflecting the scale and character or appearance of the area;***
- ii. the use of building materials and finishes which are sympathetic to the area;***
- iii. the retention and protection of trees, front gardens, boundary hedges and other open areas which contribute to the character or appearance of the area;***
- iv. the use of permeable surfaces to reduce surface water flooding; and***
- v. where appropriate, the removal of unsightly and inappropriate features or details.***

Proposals including proposed changes of use that are likely to have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area will not be supported.

3.55 Present day Blandford St Mary is adjacent to the town of Blandford Forum, but is keen to retain its identity. The village is broadly made up of 4 fairly distinct areas. The older area lies mainly to the south side of the Blandford bypass. There is a mix of older detached houses and a few

detached bungalows, which hug the A350. The main part of the village is made up of the 1980s and the 1990s housing developments.

3.56 Whilst the Dorset Historic Towns Study identified this area as having medium density to change this sensitivity varies throughout the area. The Hall and Woodhouse Brewery building is the dominating feature of the area and holds the greatest architectural interest and is considered to be of regional significance. The Brewery site and the river meadows of Stour Park to the north offer a considerable and underutilised 'green infrastructure' asset in terms of offering a 'shared focus' with historic town centre to the north of the river.

3.57 This policy will require planning applications to reflect the character of the buildings and landscape in and around the village in their design proposals. It also requires that specific attention is paid to how flood risk is managed to avoid new development increasing existing problems.

Policy 13 – Design Management: Bryanston

Development proposals will be supported, provided they have full regard to the design principles of Bryanston village as follows:

- i. a consistently high standard of design and detailing reflecting the scale and character or appearance of the area;***
- ii. the use of building materials and finishes which are sympathetic to the area, in particular the use of red brick or flint in facades and slate for roofs;***
- iii. the retention and protection of trees, front gardens, boundary hedges and other open areas which contribute to the character or appearance of the area;***
- iv. the use of permeable surfaces to reduce surface water flooding;***
- v. where appropriate, the removal of unsightly and inappropriate features or details; and***
- vi. the retention and, where appropriate the reinstatement of original features such as chimneys, gates, railings and small architectural details which individually or cumulatively contribute to the character or appearance of the area.***

Proposals including proposed changes of use that are likely to have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the area will not be supported.

3.58 This policy will require planning applications to reflect the character of the buildings and landscape in and around the village in their design proposals. It also requires specific attention is paid to how flood risk is managed to avoid new development increasing existing problems.

3.59 Bryanston Parish covers 1,500 acres on mainly agricultural land to the west of the River Stour, of which approximately 85% is in the ownership of the

Bryanston RFE Limited and a substantial portion of the remainder by Bryanston School.

3.60 Bryanston RFE Ltd rents two farms and around 40 residential dwellings. The Parish consists of five distinct areas:

1. The Cliff - Former council-built housing at Forum View now administered by Signpost Housing but with a substantial number of properties now in private hands. The rest of the Cliff is a mixture of old Portman estate houses and newer houses, most privately owned.
2. Older part of village clustered close to Home Farm, below the Bryanston Estate Club, consisting of old Portman estate cottages and former working farm buildings, some in private hands with most rented out by Bryanston RFE Ltd.
3. Lower Bryanston – historic cottages, and Berkeley Lodge house, along a short portion of New Road and Old Dorchester Road close to Blandford town.
4. The Kennels area – the Portman Hunt complex and associated cottages (mainly built by the Portman family), farm and some larger privately owned houses.
5. Bryanston School

Policy 14 – Local Tourism

Proposals for the development of, or change of use to, a C1 bed and breakfast, hotel or hostel use within the defined Development Boundaries of Blandford Forum or within the observed built up area of Blandford St Mary and Bryanston village will be supported, provided the scheme has sufficient off-street car parking spaces and has regard to the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

Proposals that will result in the loss of an existing tourist use will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that its continued use is no longer viable. Proposals to expand an existing tourist use will be supported, providing they are located in or adjoin the defined Town Centre Area and any impact on local amenity can be satisfactorily mitigated.

3.61 The existing tourism accommodation sites in the area that currently successfully contribute to local tourism include Inside Park caravan and camping facility and existing hotel and bed and breakfasts. This policy is intended to support the growth of the tourist economy, protect existing tourist uses, and support development of new accommodation to contribute towards it by giving specific encouragement for the provision of new hotel, hostel and bed and breakfast accommodation.

3.62 This may either be by way of a change of use of an existing house or by new development, provided it is located within the existing settlements. However it requires proposals to ensure they are suited to their location, in which case it distinguishes between the provision of new accommodation within the settlements and the provision of new tourism destination uses, which are only appropriate in or adjoining the town centre. Policy 31 of the

new Local Plan will provide the basis for considering tourism proposals beyond the three settlements in the countryside.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

4.1 The policies of the B+NP will be implemented through the determination of planning applications and through the investment of financial contributions in supporting infrastructure projects.

Development Management

4.2 Most of the policies contained in the B+NP will be delivered by landowners and developers. In preparing this plan, care has been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that the policies are achievable.

4.3 Whilst the Local Planning Authority will be responsible for development management, the Town and Parish Councils will also use the B+NP to frame its representations on submitted planning applications. It will also work with the District Council to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development.

Infrastructure

4.4 The Town and Parish Councils propose the following projects for investment of future Community Infrastructure Levy funding received by the local planning authority:

- i. Bus interchange Blandford / town centre stop improvements
- ii. Blandford Town centre enhancements
- iii. Blandford - Cycleway schemes
- iv. Blandford hard and soft landscaping
- v. Blandford Town centre public artwork (sculpture, painting, mosaic)
- vi. Public toilets provision / upgrading
- vii. Provision / maintenance of children's centre
- viii. New health and wellbeing centre (to include GP surgery)
- ix. Library enhancement scheme
- x. Refurbishment of the Corn Exchange
- xi. Development of the Fording Point
- xii. Blandford St Mary Community Hall
- xiii. Additional and new provision of sports pitches
- xiv. Allotments
- xv. Retention and upgrading of Leisure Centre, Blandford Forum
- xvi. Extension to the Trailway Network

4.5 This series of local infrastructure projects has been identified in the North Dorset Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2014 (IDP) and will be prioritised for investment from the forthcoming North Dorset Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The list does not include the infrastructure projects that are proposed to be delivered through site specific policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.

4.6 The CIL will replace the pooling of S106 agreement financial contributions during the plan period. It will be charged on qualifying residential and commercial development. At least 25% of the levy collected from development in the Blandford + designated area will be invested in the Blandford + designated area and prioritised as per the Memorandum of Understanding between the Councils. The policy provides the local community with an indication of the priorities for investing the fund to improve local infrastructure as a result of new development in the parish.

4.7 In addition, other policies of the B+NP require planning obligations to be entered into as part of planning consents to finance and deliver specific infrastructure projects relating to the development scheme in order to make the scheme satisfactory in line with paragraphs 173 and 204 of the NPPF.

5. EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENTS

The list below contains all those documents collected and reviewed in the process of preparing the Plan. Links to the evidence base are available on the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan website.

Blandford + Possibilities and Opportunities Document (2014)
Retail and the Town Centre working group report (2015)
Other Sites working group report (2015)
Local Green Spaces working group report (2015)
Local Green Spaces Study (2016)
Green Infrastructure Network report (2016)
Heritage working group report (2015)
Heritage Statement (2016)
Design in Blandford Forum, Blandford St Mary and Bryanston (2015)
Blandford Heritage Group Towards a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2015)
Community Facilities working group report (2015)
Statement for Community Hub at Nordon (2016)
Pre-Draft Plan Survey results (2015)
Draft Plan Survey results (2015)
The Blandford + Visioning Document (rCOH 2015)
The Blandford + Regulation 14 Report (rCOH 2016)
The Blandford + Consultation Statement (2016)
The SA/SEA Report (rCOH 2016)
The Basic Conditions Statement (rCOH 2016)
Framework Masterplan for Land North East of Blandford Forum (Savills, New Masterplanning 2016)
Landscape and Visual Appraisal for Land North East of Blandford Forum (fabrik 2016)
'Exception Statement' - Relationship of Policy 1 of the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan and Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Savills, 2016)
Heritage Statement (Savills, 2016)
Flood Risk and Drainage Overview for Land North East of Blandford Forum (Peter Brett 2016)
Access Appraisal for Land North East of Blandford Forum (Savills, PFA 2016)
Land North East of Blandford - Infrastructure Delivery (Savills, 2016)
Ecological Appraisal for Land to the North of Blandford Forum (LCES, Feb 2016)
The Cranborne Chase AONB Management Plan (2014-2019)
The Dorset AONB Management Plan (2014-2019)
The National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
The North Dorset Local Plan 2003-2011
The North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (2011-2031)
The North Dorset Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2014)
Eastern Dorset Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update and Review (G L Hearn 2015)

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in North Dorset (2010)
The North Dorset District Council Joint Retail Study (NLP 2008)
Report on Retail Issues Blandford (MWA Dec 2012)
Dorset County Council Blandford Pupil Place Planning Statement (updated 2016)
Dorset County Council North and North East Dorset Transport Study (Buro Happold 2010)
Dorset County Council ND03 – Land South of Sunrise Shortlisted Waste Site Assessment (2015)
Dorset County Council's Dorset Historic Towns Survey: Blandford Forum (2011)

6. POLICIES MAPS

Blandford Policies Map

Blandford Policies Map Inset 1

Blandford Policies Map Inset 2

Blandford Policies Map Inset 3

Blandford Policies Map Inset 4