



Dorset Council Local Plan



Sturminster Newton 2021 Consultation Summary of Responses

January 2023



Dorset
Council

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1. Sturminster Newton

1.1 Introduction

Neighbourhood Plan

Sturminster Newton Town Council

- Inaccuracies in the local plan which do not reflect the neighbourhood plan.
- Clearly distinguish between the remit of policies in the local and neighbourhood plans.

Public response

- Greater recognition/respect for the Sturminster Newton NP. Consider the NP as an SPD.

1.2 Vision

- No comments

1.3 Development strategy

Development strategy and scale

Sturminster Newton Town Council

- Paragraph 33.3.2 – Clarification on the numbers of homes which Sturminster Newton NP makes provision for (300 [LP] or 494 [NP]). Appendix 2 refers to a need for 449.

Thornhackett Parish Council

- Comments on the general level of growth and whether this can be sustainably accommodated.
- Revise the presentation of housing land supply for Sturminster Newton to show housing allocations in the NP (for consistency and to provide clarity when compared with Stalbridge).

Grassroots Planning Ltd

- Further growth needed at Sturminster Newton to maintain its role/function and sustain the town's vitality.
- Further allocations would reflect Sturminster Newton's ranking in the hierarchy.
- Consider that there are suitable/appropriate development sites which could be allocated through the local plan.

Grassroots Planning on behalf of Land Value Alliances

- New development and growth will provide much needed market and affordable housing, but will also build on existing communities, create new neighbourhoods, and help improve infrastructure.
- Suggestion that existing allocations, and sites with existing permission should be removed from the 300 new homes identified through the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Concern with inconsistency in approaches in comparison with Stalbridge which plans for the provision of up to 430 houses and is lower in the retail hierarchy.
- Sturminster Newton needs growth to sustain its role by increasing usage of such facilities and to address the aging population issue that applies to the area.

- We disagree with the contention that there are no suitable sites at Sturminster Newton.

Greenslade Taylor Hunt on behalf of South West Strategic Developments Limited

- Inconsistent approach to further housing growth between Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton.
- Further housing allocations at Sturminster Newton will give resilience to the supply.
- Review the proportion of affordable housing delivered to be more confident around viability and to maintain supply.

Public response

- NP allocates/identifies (including windfall sites) sufficient housing supply to meet local needs. Oppose unplanned (i.e. not subject to allocation through the NP) green field development.
- Housing number figures in the plan for Sturminster Newton are inconsistent.
- The housing land supply identified for Sturminster Newton in the made neighbourhood plan is inconsistent with that identified in the council's local plan.
- Pleased there are no further housing allocations at Sturminster Newton.
- Elevate Sturminster Newton to a higher ranking in the settlement hierarchy and allocate further land for housing to reflect available employment land.
- Consider whether Sturminster Newton should be identified for significant growth in the future taking account of its particular constraints.

1.4 Policy STNW1: Residential development

Approach

Wyatt Homes

- Support for STNW1, specifically proposed housing allocation Land South and East of Elm Close (planning application submitted [2/2019/1801/FUL] awaiting determination).
- Requirement for active provision and rapid charging points – location of active provision should be agreed with residents to ensure that they are provided where required. A blanket 20% requirement may lead to them being provided where they are not required (recommend removing or reducing the requirement to 5%) (policy should be flexible to reflect demand and changes in technology).

1.5 Settlement wide issues

Environment

Public response

- Sturminster Newton has been negatively impacted by previous development which has changed the rural nature of the settlement and does not provide housing for local people.
- Following considerations likely to constrain further growth in Sturminster Newton – underlying landform, flood plain, position of the River Stour, historic pattern of growth (specifically the position/design of buildings and roads – limiting potential for further growth), relationship between Newton and the town centre (causeway/river separates).

Landscape and character

Public response

- Sturminster Newton has been negatively impacted by previous development which has changed the rural nature of the settlement and does not provide housing for local people.

Transport issues

Child Okeford Parish Council

- Further growth in Sturminster Newton likely to result in additional traffic through Child Okeford. To reduce travel, encourage development of the North Dorset Business Park and improve active travel links between the park and Sturminster Newton.

Infrastructure

Sturminster Newton High School Governors

- Sturminster Newton High School has spare capacity which could avoid the need to create further capacity in Sherborne/Gillingham.
- Invest in free school transport to ensure capacity at the high school is taken up by pupils living in the surrounding area.
- Lack of housing allocation could jeopardise the functioning of the high school in the long term.

Sturminster Newton Town Council

- Chapter does not mention schools and their capacity to meet demand from growth.

Public response

- Capacity issues within the existing primary school.
- School needs to expand (to 2 form entries) to accommodate demand arising from planned growth.
- The lack of further allocations for homes in Sturminster Newton could threaten the secondary schools viability.
- Improving public transport links from the surrounding area to the school would support this process.
- The council should include a digital strategy for Sturminster Newton.
- Identify a location for a digital hub (the role of the hub/strategy should be to promote social/economic development, delivery of council services, protection of the environment, education, human health, creation of jobs, creation of economic prosperity/growth and improvements to wellbeing).
- Consider that there should be investments to enhance broadband speeds within the area.
- Proposed site capable of accommodating car hub proposals – well placed to surrounding towns (Gillingham, Marnhull, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton).

1.6 Policy STNW2: Sturminster Newton town centre

Paragraphs 33.4.1-4

Historic England

- No settlement policy relating to development in Sturminster Newton's town centre – Historic England's particular interest is that the policy should reference heritage assets (with particular reference to the Sturminster Newton Conservation Area).

Wessex Water

- Improvements to the town centre should seek to reduce surface water run-off through SuDs.
- Observe easements/avoid damage to Wessex Water assets.

Sturminster Newton Town Council

- 5.5 – 'town centres and retail development' – clarify the remit of non-strategic NP policy and strategic LP policy.

Public response

- The Local Plan should take account of policies/proposals in the neighbourhood plan around the regeneration/development of the land in the northern part of the town centre (adjacent to the former railway line).
- Should specifically refer to which sections of NP, specifically town centre content.
- Brownfield sites along the route of the former railway line in the northern part of the town hold the key to the town's regeneration.

1.7 Policy STNW3: North Dorset Business Park

Approach

Aldi

- The council needs to undertake further consideration of the potential uses for allocated employment sites, recognising that retail is an important contributor and critical element to the economy and employment generation and should be supported.

Grassroots Planning on behalf of Land Value Alliances

- The provision of employment land, will provide jobs close to where people live and contribute towards reducing the level of out-commuting, helping to retain skills and support local shops and services during the day.
- The provision of employment hubs close to where people live is likely even more important following the COVID19 pandemic.

Public response

- Important that the North Dorset Business Park is pushed on by Dorset Council and that walking/cycling links are made a priority.
- No mention of tourism or the digital economy.

Heritage

Historic England

- Suggest an additional requirement for the policy relating to heritage assets (conservation area and listed building) which has been guided by landscape/historic environment sensitivity testing.

Flood Risk

Environment Agency

- No development in the current or future floodplain.

Electrical supply

Public response

- There will need to be investments in infrastructure (specifically the electricity supply to the site) in order to support development and delivery of employment uses.
- Investment in the supply of electricity needed to support development at North Dorset Business Park. Support the following range of uses: B1/B2/B8/education/training/ancillary retail (bulky goods)/business support uses.
- The issue is not just availability of land and employment. Sites are dependent on increasing the electricity supply.
- Inadequate electricity supply to support further growth in Sturminster Newton.

1.8 Policy STNW4: The North Dorset Trailway

Paragraphs 33.5.4-5

North Dorset Trailway Network

- Completion of the trailway could encourage active and sustainable travel which reduces carbon dioxide emissions and supports economic growth.
- Commit more to investing in safe sustainable travel routes.
- There should be general commitment to extending the North Dorset Trailway.

Ramblers

- The North Dorset Trailway, which is being developed by an independent charity whose work the Ramblers endorses, is attracting a great deal of interest and use both for recreation as a route for non-motorised, sustainable transport.
- However, the Trailway is incomplete and the considerable missing links would, if provided benefit the whole area.
- The benefits would arise from reduced carbon emissions and so support Dorset Council's climate change strategy and would also provide economic benefits to local businesses and enterprises from increased tourism, as well as giving local people access to sustainable recreational facility, and the wider public rights of way network.
- At present, the longest missing link in the north is between Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton, and in the south between Spetisbury and Corfe Mullen, and there is also an aspiration is to link with the Castlemain Trailway.
- The Ramblers suggests that the plan should be amended to provide for the strategic planning and financing of the North Dorset Trailway.

Historic England

- Heritage assessment required.

Natural England

- Supports proposals to extend the trailway.

Stourpaine Parish Council

- Council should consider the wider function of the North Dorset Trailway – considering investment in infrastructure including toilets and car parking.
- People visiting the trailway are using the facilities that service other local community assets (village hall/sports grounds, car parking).

Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council

- Welcome the protection of the North Dorset Trailway (the parish council has upgraded the Little Lane link to the trailway for cyclists/pedestrians).

Public response

- Sustainable travel.
- STNW4 sections are blank, though in the NP there are multiple sites, some with outlying planning permission.
- The Trailway should follow this route: crossing Station Road just outside The Exchange, through the Railway Gardens, across Bath Road and on through Clarkes Yard (formerly Snook's Yard), across a new bridge on the former railway arches over the River Stour, carrying on to the west.
- The adopted Local Plan should have specific policies relating to the North Dorset Trailway.
- Route should follow former railway line.

Crossing point at A357

Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council

- The parish council seeks improvements to the link over the A357 to the railway from Little Lane.

Public response

- Would like to see the inclusion of a safe crossing point at A357.

1.9 Omission sites

Land South of the A357, Sturminster Newton (LA/SNEW/004)

Grassroots Planning on behalf of Land Value Alliances

- Promotion of Land South of the A357, Sturminster Newton for development of approximately 50 homes.
- Site is unconstrained in a sustainable location with good connections to the town centre.
- Reference to attached masterplan.
- Vehicular access can be obtained directly from the A357 to the north.
- Pedestrian links to the town centre could be improved and enhanced through simple measures such as traffic calming measures and crossing points.
- The principle of housing development in this location has also effectively been accepted by the Neighbourhood Plan site designation (policy 39: land adjacent Barton Farmhouse) adjacent to the east of the site.

- Proposed measures would minimise any potential landscape impact to an acceptable degree.
- The redevelopment of this site would effectively comprise “rounding off” of the settlement boundary.
- Site is located within flood zone 1 and therefore has a low level of risk from flooding.
- The site is not located within, or close to, heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings or conservation area) which would impact on the setting or significance of such assets.
- The existing site, which comprises agricultural land is likely to have a low overall value in ecological terms, but could provide ecological enhancements.
- Disagreement with the conclusion of the Sustainability Appraisal in respect of site STNW E.
- Disagreement with the conclusion of the SHLAA in respect of Land South of the A357, Sturminster Newton.

Land On the East Side Of Manston Road, Sturminster Newton (LA/SNEW/003)

Greenslade Taylor Hunt on behalf of South West Strategic Developments Limited

- Promotion of the site as suitable, available and achievable for housing development.
- The land is available for residential development within a period of 1 to 5 years.
- The site’s boundaries are well formed by mixed species hedgerows with post and wire fence, along with an intermixture of trees.
- There is a small watercourse to the eastern boundary that is lined with tree cover.
- The site extends, in total, to approximately 9.11-acres (3.69-hectares).
- The site is currently in agricultural use and benefits from an extant access to/from the site from the B3091.
- A new access would be formed in order to provide suitable capacity and visibility splays to serve the proposed form and scale of development, retaining as much of the roadside hedgerow as possible.
- The land does not present any obvious physical or planning constraints that would limit its development.
- The entirety of the site falls within Flood Zone 1 save for the margin of the water course to the east.
- There do not appear to be any local issues with surface water flows that might otherwise prevent development from taking place. Conversely, we are unaware of any issues that would prevent the site from managing its surface water in compliance with SUDS principles.
- There appear to be limited heritage sensitivities, with no nearby Conservation Areas.