

# North Dorset Local Plan – 2011 to 2026

## Part 1: Pre-submission Focused Changes

Major (and Consequential) Changes to the Pre-submission Document and Further Proposed Changes to the Proposals Map

August 2014

# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 On Friday 29 November 2013 the Council published the North Dorset Local Plan – 2011 to 2026 Part 1 Pre-submission Document (Local Plan Part 1), which was subject to an 8 week consultation period ending on 24 January 2014. 2,012 representations were received by the Council, including both objections and expressions of support.
- 1.2 English Heritage responded to the consultation on the Pre-submission document and whilst support was given to the overall approach to the conservation of the historic environment, concerns were raised about the extent to which it had been taken into account in the preparation of the Local Plan and the identification of locations for growth, particularly at Blandford.
- 1.3 In response to Policy 6: Housing Distribution, English Heritage questioned the housing provision figure of 960 new homes for Blandford and in response to Policy 16: Blandford (and the proposed development on Crown Meadows), English Heritage commented that the Local Plan appeared to be unsound because it was not based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the historic environment.
- 1.4 The impact of development at Crown Meadows on the historic environment was also raised as an issue by local people in response to consultation on the Local Plan Part 1 – Pre-submission Document. Of the 2,012 representations received in total, 1,372 were on questionnaires prepared by the Bryanston Park Preservation Group (BPPG).
- 1.5 The questionnaire identified two different options for growth: ‘St Mary’s Hill, Blandford St Mary, site opposite the Tesco roundabout’; and ‘Crown Meadows site (land west of Blandford)’. Respondents were invited to indicate their preference for their favoured site with 98% preferring the St Mary’s Hill site and only 2% preferring the Crown Meadows site.
- 1.6 In response to English Heritage’s concerns, the Council agreed to undertake a more in depth ‘heritage assessment’ of the Crown Meadows site and, as this work progressed, it was also agreed that a similar assessment should be prepared for the St. Mary’s Hill site. The completed heritage assessments were considered by English Heritage and their response stated:
  - *“We concur with your evidence that development of the Crown Meadows would be inappropriate because of the degree of harm to the significance of a number of heritage assets. Conversely the historic environment assessment of the St Mary’s (Hill) site demonstrates a more suitable option and one that English Heritage would not challenge if promoted.”*
- 1.7 In the light of the conclusions of the two heritage assessments and English Heritage’s endorsement of the findings, the Council is undertaking a further round of consultation on a change to the strategy for the future growth of Blandford. It is

proposed to delete the Crown Meadows site (land west of Blandford Forum) as a broad location for growth and to identify the land south-east of the A350 / A354 (Tesco) junction, Blandford St Mary (the St Mary's Hill site) as an alternative location for growth. This further round of pre-submission consultation on these 'focused changes' is explained in more detail below.

## Focused Changes

- 1.8 This document, the North Dorset Local Plan – 2011 to 2026 Part 1: Pre-Submission Focused Changes (August 2014), sets out a number of major changes (and other changes) to the Local Plan Part 1 Pre-submission Document prior to its submission. The major changes relate to the town of Blandford **only** and in particular to Policy 16 – Blandford with the aim of resolving issues raised during the last consultation. Major changes to the town policy in relation to broad locations for housing growth also result in changes to the Blandford Inset Diagram (Figure 8.1), the Proposals Map and a number of consequential changes to the Pre-submission Document.
- 1.9 The Council is keen to address the issues raised prior to the Local Plan Part 1 being submitted to the Secretary of State for examination, hence the term 'Pre-Submission Focused Changes'. These changes are the subject of a separate six week consultation from 1 August to 12 September 2014.

## Understanding this document

- 1.10 As outlined above these focused changes are subject to a further round of consultation to allow interested parties the opportunity to comment on the changes before the Local Plan Part 1 is submitted to the Secretary of State.
- 1.11 Changes to the Pre-submission Document have been categorised into four sections, as set out in subsequent chapters:
- Chapter 2: Major changes to the Pre-submission Document. (These relate to Policy 16: Blandford);
  - Chapter 3: Changes to the Blandford Inset Diagram (Figure 8.1);
  - Chapter 4: Further changes to the Proposals Map (Inset No. 2 of the Proposals Map of the North Dorset District-wide Local Plan: First Revision 2003); and
  - Chapter 5: Consequential changes to the Pre-submission Document (including consequential changes to Policies 6 and 16 and their supporting text).
- 1.12 For each proposed change there is a:
- Change Reference** – This is a unique code for each of the proposed changes (e.g. MAJ/16/1 denotes the first major change to Policy 16, INSET/16/1 denotes the first change to Policy 16: Blandford Inset Diagram, MAP/2/1 denotes the first change to Inset No. 2 of the Proposals Map for the North Dorset District-wide Local Plan: First Revision 2003 and CON/16/1 denotes the first consequential change to Policy 16)

**Type of Change** – Is a broad indication of the type of change being suggested (e.g. the deletion of text, a significant change to policy wording).

**Section Reference** – This is the page number, Paragraph/Figure number and / or Policy number.

**Proposed Change** - The sections of text affected by one or more proposed changes are shown with ‘tracked changes’. Text to be inserted is represented in red underline and the text to be removed is shown ~~blue struck through~~. This allows readers to see quite clearly how the text is being changed so they do not have to refer back to the original Local Plan Part 1 Pre-submission Document. Changes to Inset Diagrams cannot be presented in this way so they are shown as ‘before’ and ‘after’ diagrams.

**Reason for Change** – This is a brief account of why the change is proposed. For the consequential changes these are referred back to the Major Changes proposed.

- 1.13 ‘Tracked changes’ versions of Policies 6 and 16 in full (together with all supporting text) setting out the proposed focused changes in context are provided in Appendices 1 and 2.
- 1.14 A supplement to the Sustainability Appraisal of the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1: Pre-submission Document has been produced, showing how the two sites have been re-appraised in the light of new information.
- 1.15 The Crown Meadows and St. Mary’s Hill heritage assessments provide much of the evidence to support the proposed focused changes and are also available to view or download.

## Consultation

- 1.16 The Council is inviting any interested parties to make representations on the focused changes **only** in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.17 The Local Plan Part 1: Pre-Submission Focused Changes and all related documents can be found on our website [www.dorsetforyou.com/focusedchangesconsultation/north](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/focusedchangesconsultation/north)
- 1.18 Here you can use our on-line form to submit your comments or download a comments form that can be emailed or sent to:

Planning Policy  
 North Dorset District Council  
 Nordon  
 Salisbury Road  
 Blandford Forum  
 Dorset  
 DT11 7LL  
 Email [planningpolicy@north-dorset.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@north-dorset.gov.uk)

- 1.19 Representations must be received by 11.59 pm on 12 September 2014. Representations received after this time will not be considered.
- 1.20 Representations made on the focused changes, together with any representations made on the Local Plan Part 1: Pre-submission Document between 29 November 2013 and 24 January 2014 will be submitted to Secretary of State for examination later this year.

### Making your comments

- 1.21 Representations supporting any of the proposed changes are welcomed as such representations give an indication of the extent to which the focused changes would overcome the concerns previously expressed by local people and organisations.
- 1.22 If you wish to object to any of the proposed changes, your representations should explain why you consider that the plan, as amended, would fail to meet one or more of the government's 'tests of soundness'. The tests of soundness say that Local Plans must be:
- **Positively Prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
  - **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
  - **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
  - **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.

### Timetable

- 1.23 This further round of consultation on focused changes has implications for the Local Plan timetable and a revised schedule to adoption has been prepared.

Figure 1.1 – Timetable to adoption

Consultation/Stage	Date
Issues & Alternative Options for the Core Strategy	June – July 2007
Draft Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD	March – May 2010
Key Areas for the Revision of the Draft Core Strategy	October – December 2012
Pre-Submission Consultation on the Local Plan Part 1 Document	November 2013 to January 2014
Pre-Submission Consultation on Focused Changes to the Local Plan Part 1 Pre-Submission Document	August – September 2014
Submission of the Local Plan Part 1 to the Secretary of State	Autumn 2014
Public Examination	Winter 2014
Adoption	Spring 2015

- 1.24 If you have any questions regarding the Local Plan please contact a member of the Planning Policy Team by telephone on 01258 484201 or email [planningpolicy@north-dorset.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@north-dorset.gov.uk).

## 2. Major Changes to the Pre-submission Document

### Change Reference - MAJ /16/1

**Type of Change:** Deletion of the west of Blandford Forum (Crown Meadows) broad location for housing growth and the informal open space associated with the development.

**Section Reference:** Page 193 and 195, Policy 16: BLANDFORD (Policy Text)

**Proposed Change(s):** To be read in conjunction with MAJ/16/2.

Extract from Page 193

#### Sustainable Development Strategy

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

- a development and redevelopment within the existing built-up area; and
- b extensions, primarily of housing to the ~~west of Blandford Forum and to the~~ west of Blandford St Mary; and
- c employment uses on land within the bypass on the northern edge of the town and the mixed use regeneration of the Brewery site close to the town centre.

Extract from Page 193

#### Meeting Housing Needs

..... In addition to infilling and redevelopment within the settlement boundary, Blandford's housing needs will be met through:

- g mixed use regeneration of the Brewery site; and
- h ~~the development of land to the west of Blandford Forum;~~ and
- i the development of land to the west of Blandford St Mary.

Extract from Page 195

#### Infrastructure

..... New or improved facilities will include:

- ~~w informal open space at Crown Meadows associated with housing development to the west of Blandford Forum; and~~
- x new sports pitches and associated facilities on land within the built up area of Blandford.

#### Reason for Change:

This broad location for housing growth to the west of Blandford Forum (Crown Meadows) is proposed for deletion from the Pre-submission Document due to the impact development would have on heritage assets.

## Change Reference – MAJ/16/2

**Type of Change:** Addition of housing on land to the south east of Blandford St Mary (St Mary’s Hill), and the identification of a safeguarded route for the Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall Bypass.

**Section Reference:** Pages 193 and 194, Policy 16: BLANDFORD (Policy Text)

**Proposed Change(s):** To be read in conjunction with MAJ/16/1.

Extract from Page 193

### Sustainable Development Strategy

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

- a development and redevelopment within the existing built-up area; and
- b extensions, primarily of housing to the south east and west of Blandford St Mary; and
- c employment uses on land within the bypass on the northern edge of the town and the mixed use regeneration of the Brewery site close to the town centre.

Extract from Page 193

### Meeting Housing Needs

..... In addition to infilling and redevelopment within the settlement boundary, Blandford’s housing needs will be met through:

- g mixed use regeneration of the Brewery site; and
- h the development of land to the south east of Blandford St Mary; and
- i the development of land to the west of Blandford St Mary.

Extract from Page 194

### Infrastructure

In the period up to 2026, grey infrastructure to support growth will include: .....

- s 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.

### Reason for Change:

The broad location for growth to the west of Blandford Forum (Crown Meadows) is proposed for deletion (MAJ/16/1). A new location for housing growth to the south east of Blandford St Mary (St Mary’s Hill) has been identified, which will maintain (and increase) overall levels of housing provision for the town. Further text has been added to ensure that a safeguarded route for the Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall Bypass is identified within the development, although its exact location will be established in Part 2 of the Local Plan (MAJ/16/2).



### 3. Changes to Blandford Inset Diagram

- 3.1 In the supporting text to Policy 16: Blandford an inset diagram (Figure 8.1) provides a diagrammatic representation of the policy for the town. It sets out where housing and employment growth will take place and also shows local natural environmental designations, the extent of existing employment and housing areas, the town centre and other landscape and wildlife designations.
- 3.2 The proposed major changes that need to be reflected in the Blandford Inset Diagram are:
- The deletion of the broad location for housing growth to the west of Blandford Forum (Crown Meadows) (MAJ/16/1); and
  - The addition of the broad location for housing growth on land to the south east of Blandford St Mary (St Mary's Hill) (MAJ/16/2).
- 3.3 To show the changes to the Blandford Inset Map a 'before' map shows the policy approach in the Local Plan Part 1: Pre-submission Document and an 'after' map shows the Local Plan Part 1: Pre-submission Focused Change position.

**Changes Reference – INSET/16/1**

**Type of Change:** Change to Inset Diagram to reflect Major Changes (MAJ/16/1 and MAJ/16/2)

**Section Reference:** Page 192, Figure 8.1 – Blandford Inset Diagram

**Proposed Change**

**Before - Inset Diagram to be deleted**



1. The Milldown
2. Stour Meadows
3. The Cliff
4. The Brewery
5. West of Blandford Forum (Crown Meadows)
6. West of Blandford St Mary
7. Land at Black Lane
8. Stour Park
9. Blandford Heights Industrial Estate
10. Sunrise Business Park
11. Land off Shaftesbury Lane
12. Retail regeneration land to south of East Street
13. Bryanston SSSI

- |  |                            |                                 |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Areas liable to flood                    | Existing Residential Areas | Regeneration Areas              |
| Town Centre                              | AONB                       | Housing Growth                  |
| Existing Employment Areas                | SSSI                       | Employment Growth               |
| Local Natural Environmental Designations | North Dorset Trailway      | North Dorset Trailway Extension |

**After – Inset Diagram to be inserted**



1. The Milldown
2. Stour Meadows
3. The Cliff
4. The Brewery
5. South east of Blandford St Mary
6. West of Blandford St Mary
7. Land at Black Lane
8. Stour Park
9. Blandford Heights Industrial Estate
10. Sunrise Business Park
11. Land off Shaftesbury Lane
12. Retail regeneration land to south of East Street
13. Bryanston SSSI



**Reason for Change:**

To reflect major changes MAJ/16/1 and MAJ/16/2 on the Blandford Inset Diagram.

## 4. Further Changes to the Proposals Map

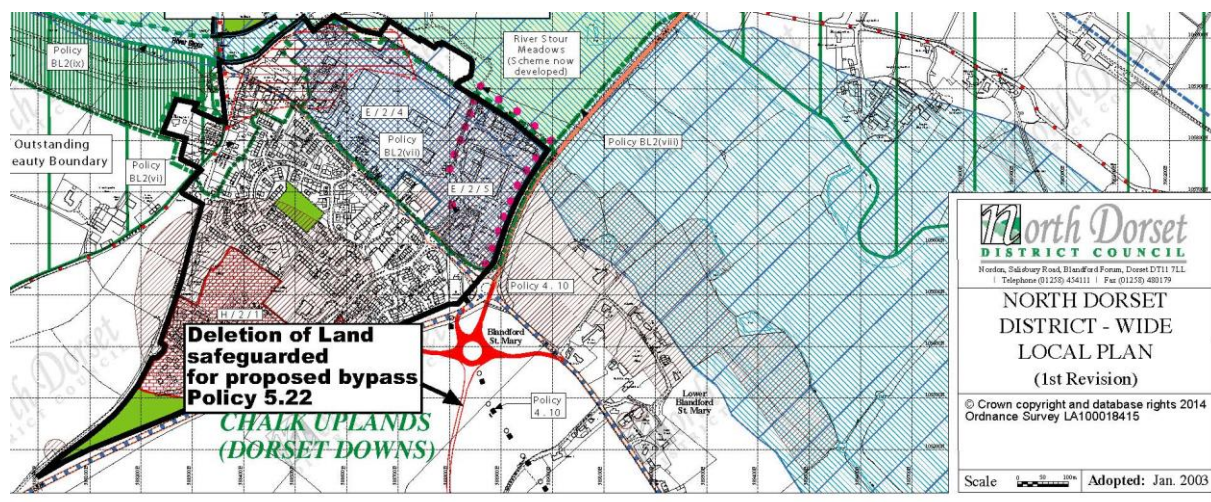
- 4.1 The identification of a location for housing growth to the south east of Blandford Forum (St Mary's Hill) (MAJ 2) will require an amendment to the adopted Proposals Map (Volume 2) of the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Revision) (2003): in particular Inset No. 2 for the town of Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary.

### Change Reference – MAP/2/1

**Type of Change:** Deletion of the road layout proposed for the safeguarded route of the Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall Bypass.

**Section Reference:** North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Revision) Proposals Map (Volume 2) Town & Village Inset Plan – Inset No. 2 Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary

**Proposed Change(s):** To be read in conjunction with MAJ/16/2.



### Reason for Change:

Policy 5.22 of the Local Plan 2003, which identifies and safeguards a route for the Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall Bypass, has been saved. The proposed route shown on Inset Map 2 of the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Revision) will be deleted but an additional criterion has been added to Policy 16 to ensure that an alternative safeguarded route will be identified through the land to the south east of Blandford St Mary (St Mary's Hill) (MAJ/16/2). Its exact location will be established in Part 2 of the Local Plan.

## 5. Consequential Changes to the Pre-submission Document

5.1 As a result of Major Changes to the Local Plan Part 1: Pre-submission Document there are a number of consequential changes required to Policy 16, other related policies and to the supporting text. The Schedule of Consequential Changes below outlines each change.

Figure 5.1 – Schedule of Consequential Changes

Change Reference	Type of Change	Section Reference	Proposed Change	Reason for Change
CON/6/1	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 84, Para 5.14 Policy 6 supporting text	280 dwellings per annum equate to 4,200 homes over the fifteen years from 2011 to 2026 and this <del>has been used as the basis for</del> <del>is</del> the District-wide housing provision figure <del>used of 4,350</del> in the Local Plan Part 1.	To ensure consistency with other proposed changes to the plan.
CON/6/2	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 85, Para 5.17 Policy 6 supporting text	The provision of affordable housing in line with these percentages would deliver <del>1,480</del> <del>1,540</del> additional affordable homes in the four main towns by 2026. The Council will seek to deliver this level of provision, whilst also having regard to any site-based assessments of viability which could, where justified, result in a level of provision below that being sought.	To reflect the higher capacity of the alternative location for housing growth (MAJ/16/2).
CON/6/3	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 85, Para 5.20 Policy 6 supporting text	Gillingham will accommodate about <del>35%</del> <del>34%</del> of housing growth in North Dorset over the 15 years between 2011 and 2026 reflecting its economic potential, the availability of suitable sites and the relative lack of environmental constraints <sup>10</sup> . The vast majority of new housing	To ensure consistency with other proposed changes to the plan.

Change Reference	Type of Change	Section Reference	Proposed Change	Reason for Change																								
			at Gillingham will be built on the southern extension to the town. The figure of 1,490 new homes at Gillingham by 2026 does not reflect the full capacity of the southern extension to the town and assumes that the development of this allocated site will continue beyond the end of the plan period. Policy 21 - Gillingham Strategic Site Allocation, provides detail on how this development will be taken forward to 2026 and beyond, and shows how new housing will be delivered in step with infrastructure and facilities.																									
CON/6/4	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 86, Figure 5.1 Policy 6 supporting text	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Location</th> <th>Homes Proposed 2011 to 2026</th> <th>% of Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Blandford</td> <td>About <del>960</del><u>1,110</u></td> <td><del>23%</del><u>26%</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gillingham</td> <td>About 1,490</td> <td><del>35%</del><u>34%</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shaftesbury</td> <td>About 1,140</td> <td><del>27%</del><u>26%</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sturminster Newton</td> <td>About 380</td> <td>9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Countryside (including Stalbridge and the Villages)</td> <td>At least 230</td> <td>Minimum of <del>6%</del><u>5%</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>About <del>4,200</del><u>4,350</u></td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Location	Homes Proposed 2011 to 2026	% of Total	Blandford	About <del>960</del> <u>1,110</u>	<del>23%</del> <u>26%</u>	Gillingham	About 1,490	<del>35%</del> <u>34%</u>	Shaftesbury	About 1,140	<del>27%</del> <u>26%</u>	Sturminster Newton	About 380	9%	Countryside (including Stalbridge and the Villages)	At least 230	Minimum of <del>6%</del> <u>5%</u>				Total	About <del>4,200</del> <u>4,350</u>	100%	To reflect the higher capacity of the alternative location for housing growth (MAJ/16/2).
Location	Homes Proposed 2011 to 2026	% of Total																										
Blandford	About <del>960</del> <u>1,110</u>	<del>23%</del> <u>26%</u>																										
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Total	About <del>4,200</del> <u>4,350</u>	100%																										

Change Reference	Type of Change	Section Reference	Proposed Change	Reason for Change
CON/6/5	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 86, Para 5.21 Policy 6 supporting text	Blandford will accommodate about <del>23%</del> <u>26%</u> of housing growth. The figure of <del>960</del> <u>1,110</u> new homes by 2026 includes homes on both brownfield sites, such as the Brewery, and greenfield urban extensions. The level of proposed housing growth reflects the town's importance as the main service centre in the south of the District, but also recognises environmental constraints, particularly in the form of protected landscapes, including AONBs, and areas at risk of flooding. At Blandford, the need to encourage self-containment in order to limit levels of commuting to the South East Dorset Conurbation is also important.	To reflect the higher capacity of the alternative location for housing growth (MAJ/16/2).
CON/6/6	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 86, Para 5.22 Policy 6 supporting text	Shaftesbury will accommodate about <del>27%</del> <u>26%</u> of housing growth. The figure of 1,140 new homes by 2026 includes all those that will be built on the eastern extension of the town. This is currently being developed in a phased manner and is likely to be completed well before 2026. Environmental constraints, such as the town's hill-top location and nearby AONB, together with the proximity of the administrative boundary of Wiltshire, limit the potential for further growth on land within North Dorset.	To ensure consistency with other proposed changes to the plan.

Change Reference	Type of Change	Section Reference	Proposed Change	Reason for Change
CON/6/7	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 87, Para 5.25 Policy 6 supporting text	Of the <del>identified strategic need</del> <u>housing provision figure of for 4,200 4,350</u> homes in North Dorset by 2026, <del>3,970</del> <u>4,120</u> can be provided at the District's four main towns. This means that in order for the <del>full strategic housing need</del> <u>housing provision figure</u> for North Dorset to be met, a minimum of 230 new homes (or <del>6%</del> <u>5%</u> of all housing development) need to be built in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages). In the light of the number of new homes that have already been built since 2011 and the number of new homes with planning permission, the level of additional provision required to deliver <del>4,200</del> <u>4,350</u> homes District-wide by 2026 is very modest and should be easily achieved	To reflect the higher capacity of the alternative location for housing growth (MAJ/16/2).
CON/6/8	Revision of policy to reflect major change	Page 88 POLICY 6: HOUSING DISTRIBUTION	At least <del>4,200</del> <u>4,350</u> net additional homes will be provided in North Dorset between 2011 and 2026 <del>at</del> <u>to deliver</u> an average annual rate of about 280 dwellings per annum. The vast majority of housing growth will be concentrated at the District's four main towns of Blandford (Forum and St. Mary), Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton.  The approximate scale of housing development at the four main towns during the period 2011 - 2026 will be as follows:	To reflect the higher capacity of the alternative location for housing growth (MAJ/16/2).



Change Reference	Type of Change	Section Reference	Proposed Change	Reason for Change
			<p>a Blandford (Forum and St. Mary) – about <del>960</del> <u>1,110</u> homes;</p> <p>b Gillingham – about 1,490 homes;</p> <p>c Shaftesbury – about 1,140 homes;</p> <p>d Sturminster Newton – about 380 homes.</p> <p>The approximate scale of affordable housing development that will be sought at the four main towns during the period 2011 - 2026 will be as follows:</p> <p>e Blandford (Forum and St. Mary) – about <del>380</del> <u>440</u> affordable homes;</p> <p>f Gillingham – about 500 affordable homes;</p> <p>g Shaftesbury – about 450 affordable homes;</p> <p>h Sturminster Newton – about 150 affordable homes.</p> <p>In the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages) the level of housing and affordable housing provision will be the cumulative number of new homes delivered to contribute towards meeting identified local and essential rural needs. A minimum of 230 dwellings will be provided in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages) during the period 2011 – 2026.</p>	

Change Reference	Type of Change	Section Reference	Proposed Change	Reason for Change
CON/16/1	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 184, Para 8.11 Policy 16 supporting text	<p>The key spatial aspects of this strategy will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focusing housing in accessible locations, particularly locations close to the town centre <u>and other facilities</u>;</li> <li>• locating mainly B-Class employment uses on the northern edge of the town in locations accessible to the strategic road network;</li> <li>• focusing a mix of employment uses (including offices) on the regenerated Brewery site close to the town centre;</li> <li>• providing an enhanced green infrastructure network focused primarily on the Stour Valley and the disused railway line that runs through the town; and</li> <li>• accommodating growth within environmental constraints: notably <u>heritage assets</u>; two AONBs; <u>and</u> the floodplain of the River Stour; <del>and the town's by-pass</del>.</li> </ul>	To ensure consistency with other proposed changes to the plan.
CON/16/2	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 186, Para 8.22 Policy 16 supporting text	<p>It is anticipated that about <del>960</del> <u>1,100</u> dwellings will be built in Blandford between 2011 and 2026. In recent years, the greenfield site off Shaftesbury Lane (on the northern edge of the town) and the land behind the new Archbishop Wake Primary School (on Black Lane on the eastern edge of Blandford) have been developed for housing. There remains significant potential to meet housing needs on brownfield sites within the existing settlement boundary<sup>9</sup>. A large mixed-use regeneration scheme for the Hall and Woodhouse Brewery site in Blandford St Mary already has planning permission and other</p>	To reflect the higher capacity of the alternative location for housing growth (MAJ/16/2).

Change Reference	Type of Change	Section Reference	Proposed Change	Reason for Change
			smaller sites, such as the site of the former Magistrates Court on Salisbury Road, will also come forward for housing.	
CON/16/3	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 186, Para 8.23 Policy 16 supporting text	<p>Nevertheless, additional greenfield land will be required for housing development but there are a limited number of potential options for further growth<sup>10</sup> due to environmental constraints. Much of the land around Blandford is constrained by the Dorset AONB, the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB and the floodplain of the River Stour. Within these constraints, there are three main options for further growth, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land <del>around</del> <u>west of</u> Blandford St Mary and west of Blandford Forum, largely outside the Dorset AONB (with capacity for about 500 dwellings);</li> <li>• Land to the south east of Blandford St Mary, outside both AONBs (with capacity for <del>at least 200</del> <u>about 300</u> dwellings); and</li> <li>• Land to the north-east of Blandford Forum beyond the by-pass outside, but surrounded by <del>the</del> the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB (with capacity for about 800 dwellings)</li> </ul>	To reflect alternative location for housing growth and its higher capacity (MAJ/16/2)
CON/16/4	Revision of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 186, Para 8.24 Policy 16 supporting text	<p>The Council's preferred approach is to develop land <del>west of Blandford Forum and</del> <u>to the south east and</u> west of Blandford St Mary. Development in these locations would be more accessible to facilities and services and would have less impact on the <del>landscape</del> <u>natural and historic environment</u> than the other options. These issues are</p>	To reflect alternative location for housing growth (MAJ/16/2) and to acknowledge the identified heritage impacts.

Change Reference	Type of Change	Section Reference	Proposed Change	Reason for Change
			discussed in more detail in the Market Towns: Site Selection Background Paper.	
CON/16/5	Inclusion of new supporting text to reflect major change	Page 190, Para 8.42 Policy 16 supporting text	Public transport, cycling and walking links with the surrounding villages (and Blandford Camp) also need to be improved in order for Blandford to maintain its function as a service centre for the surrounding area. Parts of the former Somerset and Dorset Railway line have been transformed into the North Dorset Trailway, which now extends northwards from Blandford to Sturminster Newton. Better linkage is required to the part of the Trailway south of Blandford, which is likely to include a crossing of the A354 and improved signage through the town. <u>Any scheme to develop the land south east of Blandford St Mary should re-establish the Trailway on the line of the former railway. A route for the Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall Bypass should be safeguarded within the site and will be defined in Part 2 of the Local Plan.</u>	Specific reference is made: to the opportunity to re-establish the trailway on the line of the former railway; and to the need to identify a safeguarded route for the Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall Bypass within the development.
CON/16/6	Deletion of supporting text to reflect major change	Page 192, Para 8.47 Policy 16 supporting text	The main areas for informal recreation at Blandford are the Milldown to the north-west of the town, the North Dorset Trailway through the town and Stour Meadows between Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary. <del>Additional open space will be provided in the Crown Meadows in association with development to the west of Blandford Forum to providing foraging areas for the Greater Horseshoe Bat colony at Bryanston SSSI and informal recreation space to reduce pressure on other high value wildlife sites.</del> These main sites, other	As the housing growth to the west of Blandford Forum, is being proposed for deletion, the proposal for informal open space in association with it is also proposed for deletion.

Change Reference	Type of Change	Section Reference	Proposed Change	Reason for Change
			smaller greenspaces and green links, together with other new green infrastructure items provided with new development will provide the basis for developing a green infrastructure strategy for the town.	
CON/16/7	Revision of Policy to reflect major change	Page 193 POLICY 16: BLANDFORD	About <del>960</del> <u>1,100</u> homes will be provided at Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary during the period 2011 - 2026	To reflect the higher capacity of the alternative location for housing growth (MAJ/16/2).
CON/16/8	Minor change of policy numbering	Page 194 POLICY 16: BLANDFORD	<del>r</del> 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; <u>and</u>	As a result of an insertion to the policy text numbering has been amended.
CON/16/9	Minor change of policy numbering	Page 194 POLICY 16: BLANDFORD	<p><del>st</del> the refurbishment of the Corn Exchange to form the main community venue for the town and the provision of neighbourhood halls to serve new development in the northern part of the town and Blandford St Mary; and</p> <p><del>tu</del> the retention of Blandford Leisure Centre in community use and the upgrading of its facilities; and</p> <p><del>uv</del> the extension of the Archbishop Wake and Milldown primary schools; and</p> <p><del>vw</del> a new doctors' surgery or the expansion or relocation of existing doctors' surgeries</p>	As a result of an insertion to the policy text numbering has been amended.

Change Reference	Type of Change	Section Reference	Proposed Change	Reason for Change
CON/APPA/1		Page 372 Appendix A Saved Policy 5.21 and 5.22	North Dorset Local Plan – Part 1: <u>Policy 16 requires a route for the Spetisbury and Chartlon Marshall Bypass to be safeguarded within the proposed housing site to the south east of Blandford St Mary.</u> Policy 18 indicates that the <u>existing</u> route of the Shaftesbury Outer Bypass will be safeguarded, <del>but there is no policy to safeguard the Spetisbury &amp; Chartlon Marshall Bypass.</del> Therefore Local Plan Policies 5.21 and 5.22 will continue to be saved until the need for both schemes is reviewed. If the safeguarded routes are to be retained long term, <u>they their routes</u> will be shown in the North Dorset Local Plan – Part 2: Site Allocation <u>Document.</u>	To reflect the revised policy approach in MAJ/16/2.

## Appendix 1

### Track Changes - Policy 6 - Housing Distribution

## Policy 6 - Housing Distribution

### National Policy

- 5.4 National policy<sup>85</sup> states that local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of the housing needs in their area and should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries.
- 5.5 They should use their evidence base (including the SHMA) to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the relevant housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). They should also identify key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period<sup>86</sup>.
- 5.6 In terms of location, national policy advises that councils should actively manage growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations, which are or can be made sustainable. It also states that in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

### The District Council's Approach

- 5.7 The Council has commissioned research to assess future housing needs and has established an overall District-wide housing figure and levels of affordable housing provision that will be sought at the District's four main towns.
- 5.8 The proposed strategic distribution of housing in North Dorset reflects both national policy and Policy 2 - Core Spatial Strategy. Provision for housing and affordable housing has been made largely at the District's four main towns, which are the most sustainable locations for housing development. The southern extension of Gillingham is a key site, which is critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period. Policy 21 – Gillingham Strategic Site Allocation allocates and provides further detail on how the development of this site will be taken forward.
- 5.9 In the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages) the focus is on meeting local housing needs; primarily through neighbourhood planning and, where a local housing need can be demonstrated, on rural exception sites, as set out in Policy 9 – Rural Exception Schemes.

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<sup>85</sup> Paragraph 159, National Planning Policy Framework, DCLG (March 2012)

<sup>86</sup> Paragraph 47, National Planning Policy Framework, DCLG (March 2012)



- 5.10 The amount of housing proposed at each of the four main towns has been determined following an analysis of the key constraints and opportunities. The amount of affordable housing to be sought at each of the four main towns also takes account of the viability of provision in different parts of the District.
- 5.11 The scale of housing and affordable housing provision in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages) will reflect cumulative local and essential rural needs and local viability considerations.

### District-wide Housing Provision

- 5.12 For the purposes of preparing a SHMA, North Dorset falls entirely within the Bournemouth and Poole Housing Market Area (HMA). All the local planning authorities in the HMA commissioned consultants to produce a SHMA in 2008<sup>87</sup>.
- 5.13 In the light of the reforms of the planning system and the economic downturn, the original SHMA was updated in 2012<sup>88</sup>. In relation to North Dorset, the updated SHMA states that “trend-based data suggests household growth of around 273 per annum for the period from 2011 to 2031 and so a housing delivery figure (on the basis of this figure) might be around 280 per annum (to take account of a small vacancy rate”<sup>89</sup>.)
- 5.14 280 dwellings per annum equate to 4,200 homes over the fifteen years from 2011 to 2026 and this has been used as the basis for ~~is~~ the District-wide housing provision figure used of 4,350 in the Local Plan Part 1.

### District-wide Affordable Housing Provision

- 5.15 The 2012 SHMA Update used the CLG housing needs model, which estimated that 387 additional units of affordable housing would need to be provided annually over a five year period to meet the identified need.
- 5.16 The 2012 SHMA Update also considered that the provision of 40% of additional housing as affordable would be a sensible level in the context of the role played by the private rented sector<sup>90</sup>. An assessment of viability<sup>91</sup> provided a more fine-grained analysis suggesting that the Council should seek at least 40% affordable

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<sup>87</sup> The Bournemouth and Poole Strategic Housing Market Assessment, including the Housing Need and Demand Survey for North Dorset, Fordham Associates (June 2008)

<sup>88</sup> Bournemouth / Poole Housing Market 2011 Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update, JG Consulting in association with Chris Broughton Associates (January 2012)

<sup>89</sup> This statement appears in Paragraph 5.10 of the summary report for North Dorset, which forms part of the 2012 Updated SHMA.

<sup>90</sup> This statement appears in Paragraph 5.11 of the summary report for North Dorset, which forms part of the 2012 Updated SHMA.

<sup>91</sup> North Dorset District Council: Affordable Housing Provision and Developer Contributions in Dorset – Three Dragons (April 2009)

housing on sites across most of the District; 30% on sites within Gillingham (where residual land values are lower) and, subject to viability testing, 35% on the southern extension to the town.

- 5.17 The provision of affordable housing in line with these percentages would deliver ~~1,480~~1,540 additional affordable homes in the four main towns by 2026. The Council will seek to deliver this level of provision, whilst also having regard to any site-based assessments of viability which could, where justified, result in a level of provision below that being sought.

### **Determining the Spatial Distribution of Housing Development**

- 5.18 A number of factors, many of which reflect aspects of the District's vision and objectives, have influenced the determination of how future housing growth should be accommodated in North Dorset including:

- Policy 2 - Core Spatial Strategy, which establishes the Council's overall approach to the distribution of development in the District;
- the need to deliver thriving self-contained market towns and stronger, more sustainable communities in the rural area;
- the need to protect and enhance the environment and in particular a recognition of the environmental constraints affecting different settlements;
- the availability of developable land at different settlements, as evidenced largely by the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)<sup>92</sup>; and
- the need to avoid increasing dispersed populations, as has occurred in the past through high levels of 'oversupply' in rural areas<sup>93</sup>.

### **The Spatial Distribution of Housing in the District**

- 5.19 Figure 5.1 below sets out how the new homes proposed in the Local Plan Part 1 will be distributed in North Dorset. More detail on the background to the spatial distribution of housing development in North Dorset is given in the Sustainable Development Strategy Background Paper.
- 5.20 Gillingham will accommodate about ~~35%~~ 34% of housing growth in North Dorset over the 15 years between 2011 and 2026 reflecting its economic potential, the availability of suitable sites and the relative lack of environmental constraints<sup>94</sup>. The vast majority of new housing at Gillingham will be built on the southern extension to the town. The figure of 1,490 new homes at Gillingham by 2026 does not reflect the full capacity of the southern extension to the town and assumes that the development of this allocated site will continue beyond the end of the plan period.

<sup>92</sup> North Dorset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, North Dorset District Council (August 2011)

<sup>93</sup> As discussed in the Housing Background Paper, North Dorset District Council (August 2013)

<sup>94</sup> The potential for growth at Gillingham, both in the period up to 2026 and beyond, has been examined in detail in Assessing the Growth Potential of Gillingham, Dorset, Atkins (December 2009)

Policy 21 - Gillingham Strategic Site Allocation, provides detail on how this development will be taken forward to 2026 and beyond, and shows how new housing will be delivered in step with infrastructure and facilities.

Figure 5.1 – Proposed Spatial Distribution of Housing Development

Location	Homes Proposed 2011 to 2026	% of Total
Blandford	About <del>960</del> <u>1,110</u>	<del>23%</del> <u>26%</u>
Gillingham	About 1,490	<del>35%</del> <u>34%</u>
Shaftesbury	About 1,140	<del>27%</del> <u>26%</u>
Sturminster Newton	About 380	9%
Countryside (including Stalbridge and the Villages)	At least 230	Minimum of <del>6%</del> <u>5%</u>
Total	About <del>4,200</del> <u>4,350</u>	100%

- 5.21 Blandford will accommodate about ~~23%~~ 26% of housing growth. The figure of ~~960~~ 1,110 new homes by 2026 includes homes on both brownfield sites, such as the Brewery, and greenfield urban extensions. The level of proposed housing growth reflects the town's importance as the main service centre in the south of the District, but also recognises environmental constraints, particularly in the form of protected landscapes, including AONBs, and areas at risk of flooding. At Blandford, the need to encourage self-containment in order to limit levels of commuting to the South East Dorset Conurbation is also important.
- 5.22 Shaftesbury will accommodate about ~~27%~~ 26% of housing growth. The figure of 1,140 new homes by 2026 includes all those that will be built on the eastern extension of the town. This is currently being developed in a phased manner and is likely to be completed well before 2026. Environmental constraints, such as the town's hill-top location and nearby AONB, together with the proximity of the administrative boundary of Wiltshire, limit the potential for further growth on land within North Dorset.
- 5.23 Sturminster Newton will receive about 9% of housing growth recognising the important role it plays as a service centre in the north west of the District, but also its smaller size. The figure of 380 new homes by 2026 includes homes both on brownfield and greenfield sites near the town centre and small greenfield urban extensions.
- 5.24 Concentrating the vast majority of strategic housing growth at the four main towns means that a different approach can be taken in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the District's villages), where the focus is on meeting local housing

needs. No figure for the approximate scale of housing and affordable housing is given for the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages).

- 5.25 Of the ~~identified strategic need~~ housing provision figure of for 4,200 4,350 homes in North Dorset by 2026, ~~3,970~~ 4,120 can be provided at the District's four main towns. This means that in order for the ~~full strategic housing need~~ housing provision figure for North Dorset to be met, a minimum of 230 new homes (or ~~6%~~ 5% of all housing development) need to be built in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages). In the light of the number of new homes that have already been built since 2011 and the number of new homes with planning permission, the level of additional provision required to deliver ~~4,200~~ 4,350 homes District-wide by 2026 is very modest and should be easily achieved.
- 5.26 The figure of 230 new homes should not be seen as a target for, or a cap on, the overall level of housing development that should take place in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages). It is simply the amount of housing required outside the four main towns to ensure that the identified District-wide need is met.
- 5.27 In the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages), the overall level of housing (and affordable housing) provision by 2026 will be the cumulative number of new homes that have been delivered to contribute towards meeting local and essential rural needs identified at the local level. These needs may be identified through: the neighbourhood planning process (for example housing to deliver a new, or support an existing, community facility); local surveys to establish the need for rural exception housing; and assessments to establish the functional need for occupational dwellings.

### **The Spatial Distribution of Affordable Housing**

- 5.28 Affordable housing will be distributed in largely the same way as market housing. This will ensure that it is primarily focussed at the four main towns, where it can best serve District-wide needs in the most sustainable manner.
- 5.29 Outside the four main towns, affordable housing may be delivered through neighbourhood planning or on rural exception sites, in accordance with the policies relating to its provision in this Local Plan.

## POLICY 6: HOUSING DISTRIBUTION

At least ~~4,200~~ 4,350 net additional homes will be provided in North Dorset between 2011 and 2026 ~~at~~ to deliver an average annual rate of about 280 dwellings per annum. The vast majority of housing growth will be concentrated at the District's four main towns of Blandford (Forum and St. Mary), Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton.

The approximate scale of housing development at the four main towns during the period 2011 - 2026 will be as follows:

- a Blandford (Forum and St. Mary) – about ~~960~~ 1,110 homes;
- b Gillingham – about 1,490 homes;
- c Shaftesbury – about 1,140 homes;
- d Sturminster Newton – about 380 homes.

The approximate scale of affordable housing development that will be sought at the four main towns during the period 2011 - 2026 will be as follows:

- e Blandford (Forum and St. Mary) – about ~~380~~ 440 affordable homes;
- f Gillingham – about 500 affordable homes;
- g Shaftesbury – about 450 affordable homes;
- h Sturminster Newton – about 150 affordable homes.

In the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages) the level of housing and affordable housing provision will be the cumulative number of new homes delivered to contribute towards meeting identified local and essential rural needs. A minimum of 230 dwellings will be provided in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages) during the period 2011 – 2026.

## Appendix 2

### Track Changes - Policy 16 - Blandford

## Policy 16 - Blandford

### Introduction

- 8.6 'Blandford' comprises the main town of Blandford Forum to the north of the River Stour and the smaller built-up area of Blandford St Mary to the south. Effectively, they function as a single settlement which is the main service centre for the southern part of the District. The town lies in the 'Blandford Gap', where the River Stour cuts through the chalk downland and is embraced by two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB and the Dorset AONB.
- 8.7 Blandford has expanded significantly in recent years, more than 1,400 new homes being built between 1994 and 2012, with over 100 being completed in the last year<sup>220</sup>. This rate of growth has given rise to sustainability concerns, especially the potential for increased commuting to Bournemouth and Poole<sup>221</sup>.
- 8.8 Much of the recent development has taken place on land between the existing built-up area and the by-pass. However, this has not always been in places that are accessible to key locations, such as the town centre. Recent research<sup>222</sup> suggests that there is potential for further growth in more accessible locations, which will help to support the settlement's service centre function and increase self-containment. Nevertheless, accommodating further growth within the town's environmental constraints is a challenge.
- 8.9 Although Blandford has a fairly diverse economic base, Blandford Camp (a large military site located to the north east of the town) is a significant employer of local people and supports a variety of local businesses. It is anticipated that the Camp will remain a military establishment for the foreseeable future but changes to its role during the Plan period could have implications for the local economy.

### Sustainable Development Strategy

- 8.10 Blandford's role as the main service centre in the southern part of the District will be maintained. Housing growth will be matched by employment growth and the provision of supporting infrastructure with the aim of increasing self-containment and reducing the need for commuting, particularly to the South East Dorset conurbation.

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<sup>220</sup> Annual Monitoring Reports, North Dorset District Council (2004-2012)

<sup>221</sup> This issue was raised during the Examination in Public of the former draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). A brief summary of the debate is set out in paragraphs 5.38 to 5.42 of Topic Paper: Spatial Strategy for North Dorset, North Dorset District Council (August 2009)

<sup>222</sup> North Dorset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010, North Dorset District Council (August 2011) and the North and north East Dorset Transport Study: Emerging Transport Strategy, Buro Happold (November 2009)

- 8.11 The key spatial aspects of this strategy will be:
- focusing housing in accessible locations, particularly locations close to the town centre and other facilities;
  - locating mainly B-Class employment uses on the northern edge of the town in locations accessible to the strategic road network;
  - focusing a mix of employment uses (including offices) on the regenerated Brewery site close to the town centre;
  - providing an enhanced green infrastructure network focused primarily on the Stour Valley and the disused railway line that runs through the town; and
  - accommodating growth within environmental constraints: notably heritage assets; two AONBs; and the floodplain of the River Stour; ~~and the town's by-pass.~~
- 8.12 The strategy for the town will see the building out of sites already allocated for development or with planning permission in the early part of the Plan period, with additional greenfield sites being brought forward after that date. New development will be supported by the necessary grey, social and green infrastructure, both to meet the overall needs of the town and the more local needs associated with each new development area.
- 8.13 At the time this plan was written, Blandford Town Council together with Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Council were discussing the possibility of establishing a single neighbourhood area to cover all three parished areas. In the event that such a neighbourhood area is designated, the four local councils would work together, under the name Blandford +, to produce a single neighbourhood plan.

### Environment and Climate Change

- 8.14 The main issues for Blandford resulting from climate change are most likely to include flood risk and the implications of development on groundwater resources.
- 8.15 The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment<sup>223</sup> shows that parts of Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary are at risk of flooding from the River Stour. Parts of Blandford Forum are also at risk of flooding from the Pimperne Brook. Groundwater and surface water flooding<sup>224</sup> could also be issues in Blandford.
- 8.16 Although protected by a flood defence scheme, any proposal within the areas at risk of fluvial flooding in Blandford would be subject to the sequential and exception tests advocated in National Policy, as explained in more detail in Policy 3 - Climate Change. Flood risk, from all sources, will need to be taken into account in

<sup>223</sup> Bournemouth, Christchurch, East Dorset, North Dorset and Salisbury Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Halcrow Group Ltd (February 2008)

<sup>224</sup> Severe rainfall can raise groundwater levels rapidly, especially in chalk, and cause flooding while surface water flooding occurs where the water running from roads and other hard surfaces overwhelms the drainage system.



considering new development in the town and flood mitigation measures such as sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), in line with Policy 3, will need to be included, where required.

- 8.17 The eastern edge of Blandford lies within a Groundwater Source Protection Area, which needs to be protected from any threats of pollution and demands for water from groundwater sources will need to be managed. All development in the town will need to comply with the principles of the Environment Agency's groundwater protection policy<sup>225</sup> and water efficiency will be encouraged (in line with Policy 3 – Climate Change).
- 8.18 The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB lies to the north and east of Blandford and the Dorset AONB lies to the south west. Small parts of the existing built-up area of Blandford lie within both AONBs. Any development will need to consider the potential impacts on the AONBs and, in particular, the views into and out of the designated areas. A landscape impact assessment of potential housing sites at Blandford and Shaftesbury was undertaken in 2010, which considered potential impacts on AONB landscapes.
- 8.19 The Milldown (to the north west of Blandford Forum) and Stour Meadows (in the floodplain of the River Stour between Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary) are both Local Nature Reserves. The Cliff, which is an area of ancient woodland on the western bank of the River Stour extending from Blandford St Mary to Bryanston, is also designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). A colony of protected Greater Horseshoe Bats is located at Bryanston and the bats feed over the Milldown and this part of the Stour Valley, including Stour Meadows. The River Stour itself also supports a range of different species, including otters.
- 8.20 Blandford is a historic town and the Georgian town centre has long been recognised as being one of the finest in England. Newman and Pevsner say that the centre of the town 'forms one of the most satisfying Georgian ensembles anywhere in England'<sup>226</sup>. A Conservation Area was designated in 1972 to preserve and enhance Blandford's historic character. It was expanded in 1990 and sub-areas within it were subsequently identified<sup>227</sup>. The town also includes a wide range of listed buildings.
- 8.21 The Council seeks to protect and improve the natural and historic environment of the town and all applications for growth will need to consider the impact on these features and designations.

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<sup>225</sup> Groundwater Protection: Policy and Practice (GP3) Environment Agency (November 2012)

<sup>226</sup> Page 95, The Buildings of England: Dorset - Newman, J. and Pevsner, N. (1972)

<sup>227</sup> These Character Areas are identified and described the Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary section of the 2003 Local Plan.

## Meeting Housing Needs

- 8.22 It is anticipated that about ~~960~~ 1,100 dwellings will be built in Blandford between 2011 and 2026. In recent years, the greenfield site off Shaftesbury Lane (on the northern edge of the town) and the land behind the new Archbishop Wake Primary School (on Black Lane on the eastern edge of Blandford) have been developed for housing. There remains significant potential to meet housing needs on brownfield sites within the existing settlement boundary<sup>228</sup>. A large mixed-use regeneration scheme for the Hall and Woodhouse Brewery site in Blandford St Mary already has planning permission and other smaller sites, such as the site of the former Magistrates Court on Salisbury Road, will also come forward for housing.
- 8.23 Nevertheless, additional greenfield land will be required for housing development but there are a limited number of potential options for further growth<sup>229</sup> due to environmental constraints. Much of the land around Blandford is constrained by the Dorset AONB, the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB and the floodplain of the River Stour. Within these constraints, there are three main options for further growth, which are:
- Land ~~around~~ west of Blandford St Mary and west of Blandford Forum, largely outside the Dorset AONB (with capacity for about 500 dwellings);
  - Land to the south east of Blandford St Mary, outside both AONBs (with capacity for ~~at least 200~~ about 300 dwellings); and
  - Land to the north-east of Blandford Forum beyond the by-pass outside, but surrounded by, the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB (with capacity for about 800 dwellings).
- 8.24 The Council's preferred approach is to develop land ~~west of Blandford Forum and~~ to the south east and west of Blandford St Mary. Development in these locations would be more accessible to facilities and services and would have less impact on the ~~landscape~~ natural and historic environment than the other options. These issues are discussed in more detail in the Market Towns: Site Selection Background Paper.
- 8.25 Specific sites to take forward housing growth in Blandford will be identified in the Local Plan Part 2. The allocation of specific sites will need to be supported by site-based studies including Site Level Flood Risk Assessments and Transport Assessments. Further sites may come forward through the neighbourhood planning process.

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<sup>228</sup> The settlement boundaries around Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary are shown on Inset Maps 2 and 2A of the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan (First Revision) – North Dorset District Council (January 2003)

<sup>229</sup> Potential housing sites around Blandford are identified in the North Dorset Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010, North Dorset District Council (August 2011)

## Supporting Economic Development

- 8.26 The general economic prospects for North Dorset were outlined in the 2008 Workspace Strategy,<sup>230</sup> which was updated in 2012 in respect of employment land projections<sup>231</sup>. The latter study indicates that in order for job growth to match housing growth at Blandford there is a need for at least 6 hectares of employment land to be provided by 2026. The 2012 Workspace Strategy Update showed that there was more than sufficient land already identified to meet these needs, although some of the 10 hectares available in Blandford<sup>232</sup> has subsequently been granted consent for retail uses.
- 8.27 The 2003 Local Plan allocated 5.1 hectares of employment land off Shaftesbury Lane, of which some 4.8 hectares remained in 2011. About 1.1 hectares of this site has subsequently been given planning permission for a 'mixed use' scheme, including an Asda supermarket and a petrol filling station. The remainder of this site will be brought forward for employment uses. 0.4 hectares of land on Stour Park now forms part of a planning consent to extend the existing Tesco store in that location. About 3 hectares of the mixed-use regeneration scheme for the Brewery site will provide a range of employment opportunities. A new brewery building (occupying 0.3 hectares) has recently been constructed and is now operational on the site. Other smaller areas of undeveloped employment land exist at Blandford Heights.
- 8.28 Together, these sites will provide a range and choice of sites to meet the town's needs for employment land until 2026. The provision of this land will help to maintain and enhance the town's employment base and give existing and new residents the opportunity to work locally, rather than having to commute to Poole or Bournemouth. The introduction of fibre optic high speed broadband will also help to consolidate Blandford's economic role in the south of the District.
- 8.29 All these sites (other than the Brewery site, which was recognised as having the potential for mixed use regeneration) were considered to be 'fit for purpose' in the Council's Employment Land Review (ELR)<sup>233</sup>. The retention of existing and developing industrial estates continues to be supported, but the Council now has a more flexible approach to the non B-Class uses that may be permitted on such sites, as set out in Policy 11 - Economy. Additional sites could be brought forward as part of the neighbourhood planning process, augmenting the allocated sites that will be identified in the Local Plan Part 2.

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<sup>230</sup> Bournemouth Dorset Poole Workspace Strategy and Delivery plan - GVA Grimley (2008).

<sup>231</sup> Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Study Employment land projections update 2012 - Dorset County Council (March 2012).

<sup>232</sup> Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Study Employment land projections update 2012 - Dorset County Council (March 2012).

<sup>233</sup> Employment Land Review: Review of Existing Sites, North Dorset District Council (April 2007)

- 8.30 Blandford Camp is the home of the Royal School of Signals and is a major training facility for service personnel. This was due to change with the proposed relocation of the training function to Wales, but those plans were scrapped in 2010, pending further review. Defence Estates had previously identified Blandford Camp as a 'Core Site' (which meant that the site would remain in military use for the foreseeable future) with potential to consolidate the Signals presence<sup>234</sup>. However, the further review of military training has increased the uncertainty about how its role might change during the Plan period.
- 8.31 In the event that existing buildings or other previously developed parts of Blandford Camp become available for non-military uses, the Council will investigate the possibility of using these areas for additional employment use in the longer term, if needed.
- 8.32 Blandford town centre provides a range of shops and other services for local people. The main convenience outlets in the town centre are the Morrison's supermarket off Greyhound Square (known locally as Greyhound Yard) and a small Iceland store in Salisbury Street. The Co-op has an edge-of-centre supermarket to the south east of East Street with another, smaller Co-op store in a more suburban location on Salisbury Road. A Tesco supermarket occupies an out-of-town site, on Stour Park in Blandford St Mary.
- 8.33 The town centre has reasonable representation from national multiples (such as Boots, W H Smith, Argos and Holland and Barrett) and a wide range of independent retailers, both convenience and comparison outlets, mostly occupying the town's smaller stores. The town also has range of other uses such as banks, estate agents, public houses and restaurants.
- 8.34 The Joint Retail Study<sup>235</sup> identified a need for additional convenience goods floorspace in Blandford, but recognised that this need could be met in full if the store now occupied by Morrison's supermarket were to re-open. Since the study was undertaken this store has re-opened and Iceland and the Co-op have also opened new stores in the town, providing adequate additional floor space to meet the town's convenience shopping needs up to 2026.

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<sup>234</sup> The Royal School of Signals, Blandford was identified as a Core Site in Annex B of the Defence Estates Development Plan 2008 – Defence Estates (June 2008). Paragraph 13 stated 'The Core Estate consists of Core Locations that are either: large bases or groups of sites that have an indefinite operational future; or individual Core Sites, which are expected to support Defence outputs for at least 15 years'. The Estates Development Plan 2009 updates the previous Plan and states that 'Once vacated by Defence Training Rationalisation in around 2013 there is the potential to backfill the site and create a Signals centre of gravity through co-locating 10 and 14 Sig Regts at Blandford.'

<sup>235</sup> Joint Retail Assessment: Christchurch Borough Council and East, North and Purbeck District Councils, Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (March 2008)

- 8.35 The amount of additional convenience goods floorspace in Blandford will increase further with the extension of the Tesco supermarket at Stour Park<sup>236</sup> and the new Asda supermarket off Shaftesbury Lane on the northern edge of the town<sup>237</sup>.
- 8.36 The Joint Retail Study identified a need for additional comparison goods floorspace in Blandford. It also identified 18 shop units that were vacant at the time and could provide a further 1,000m<sup>2</sup> gross of additional floor space for either convenience or comparison goods, if brought back into use. In addition, the consent for the Asda supermarket allows one third of the floorspace to be used for selling comparison goods<sup>238</sup>.
- 8.37 Land just beyond the eastern edge of Blandford Town Centre, including the Co-op store off Langton Road, has some potential for providing further additional convenience or comparison goods floorspace. Although much of this area is already protected by a flood defence scheme, any future scheme would need to take full account of flood risk, both from the River Stour and the Pimperne Brook.
- 8.38 South of Market Place and East Street long 'burgage plots'<sup>239</sup> extend down to the River Stour. There may be some limited potential to extend existing retail outlets in this location, but in addition to the flooding issues, any scheme here would also have to have regard to the potential impact on the historic character and visual context of the town centre.
- 8.39 While the primary and secondary shopping frontages (as defined in the 2003 Local Plan) will continue to be used for development management purposes they will be reviewed in the Local Plan Part 2. This will also define a town centre boundary, which is important in relation to national policy and the sequential approach to the location of town centre uses. Alternatively, the neighbourhood plan group may choose to review shopping frontages and / or delineate a town centre boundary.
- 8.40 There is a growing recognition of the importance of tourism to North Dorset's economy and in Blandford specifically. The Council will consider positively applications for development that support tourism and are compatible with the town's historic character.

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<sup>236</sup> The extension to Tesco gained permission in 2012 and will increase the stores floorspace from 2,273m<sup>2</sup> to 3,941m<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>237</sup> Planning permission was granted in March 2013 for a 2,300m<sup>2</sup> Asda supermarket and petrol filling station on land off Salisbury Lane.

<sup>238</sup> This equates to potential additional comparison goods floorspace of about 770m<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>239</sup> 'Burgage plots' are tracts of land within the medieval town which were allocated to the burgesses, who were freemen of the town, with narrow frontage development and long rear gardens. The plots are based directly on the ploughland strips of the pre-existing agrarian settlement.

## Infrastructure

- 8.41 Within Blandford, the emphasis in terms of grey infrastructure will be on providing better facilities for walking and cycling between residential areas and key destinations, such as the town centre, employment sites, schools and other community facilities. At present, the brewery is a private site which acts as a barrier between Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary. The mixed use regeneration of the site will enable pedestrian and cycle links between the two parts of the settlement to be improved.
- 8.42 Public transport, cycling and walking links with the surrounding villages (and Blandford Camp) also need to be improved in order for Blandford to maintain its function as a service centre for the surrounding area. Parts of the former Somerset and Dorset Railway line have been transformed into the North Dorset Trailway, which now extends northwards from Blandford to Sturminster Newton. Better linkage is required to the part of the Trailway south of Blandford, which is likely to include a crossing of the A354 and improved signage through the town. Any scheme to develop the land south east of Blandford St Mary should re-establish the Trailway on the line of the former railway. A route for the Spetisbury and Charlton Marshall Bypass should be safeguarded within the site and will be defined in Part 2 of the Local Plan.
- 8.43 It is intended that the Corn Exchange in the town centre be refurbished so that it can function as the main community venue for the whole town; a key social infrastructure component. In addition, neighbourhood facilities are required in the northern part of the town and at Blandford St Mary. At Blandford St Mary a facility will be provided as part of the regeneration of the Brewery site.
- 8.44 Blandford Leisure Centre offers a wide range of indoor and some outdoor sport activities to the local community in the south of the District. These facilities will be retained and upgraded during the Plan period.
- 8.45 Residents have stressed that the growth of Blandford will require improvements to school provision. Dorset County Council has indicated that there is a need for a further two forms of entry (2FE) for primary education in Blandford. Feasibility work shows that this can be achieved through careful use of the existing capacity within the school pyramid and by extending the existing primary schools in the town. In addition the existing primary school in Pimperne, which also serves the Blandford school pyramid, will be replaced.
- 8.46 Following direct consultation with all surgeries in 2012, the Whitecliff Surgery in Blandford responded that healthcare provision is already under pressure and that a new or improved / extended surgery is required. Blandford Community Hospital also provides many services to people in the local area. The Council supports the retention of the community hospital and the enhancement of the range of healthcare services offered.

8.47 The main areas for informal recreation at Blandford are the Milldown to the north-west of the town, the North Dorset Trailway through the town and Stour Meadows between Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary. ~~Additional open space will be provided in the Crown Meadows in association with development to the west of Blandford Forum to providing foraging areas for the Greater Horseshoe Bat colony at Bryanston SSSI and informal recreation space to reduce pressure on other high value wildlife sites.~~ These main sites, other smaller greenspaces and green links, together with other new green infrastructure items provided with new development will provide the basis for developing a green infrastructure strategy for the town.

8.48 There is a need In Blandford for further sports pitches, particularly football pitches<sup>240</sup>. Land to the north of the by-pass was allocated for this purpose in the 2003 Local Plan and a feasibility study<sup>241</sup> was produced with a view to taking this scheme forward. The Council has attempted to pursue the implementation of this project but without success. Consequently, Blandford Football Club, Blandford Rugby Club and the Town Council are developing an alternative approach that re-arranges the use by clubs of Larksmead Playing Field, Park Road Recreation Ground and land at Blandford School. Dorset County Council is intending to provide a new Astroturf sports pitch and floodlit netball court at Blandford School which will be available for community use, including by local football and rugby teams.

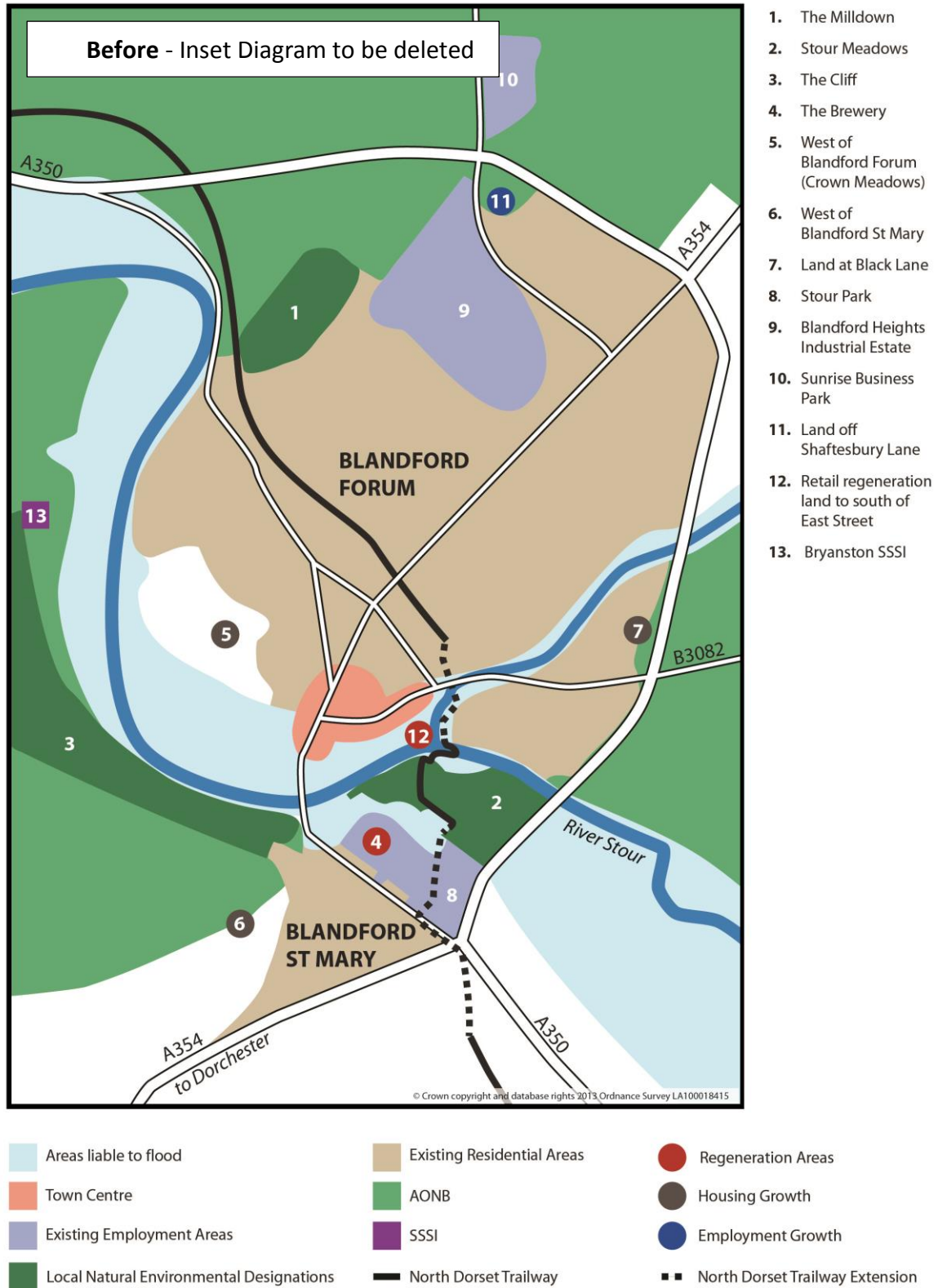
The Council will seek to conserve and manage existing green spaces and aims to improve the connectivity, quality and functionality of such sites and links at Blandford in line with Policy 15 – Green Infrastructure. The Council will work with the neighbourhood plan group in developing a green infrastructure strategy for the town and, if required, additional land will be allocated either through the Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations document or through the neighbourhood planning process.

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<sup>240</sup> As identified in Open Space Audit & Assessment of Local Need - Strategic Leisure (February 2006)

<sup>241</sup> Blandford United Football Club, Facility Development (January 2009)

Figure 8.1 - Blandford Inset Diagram







1. The Milldown
2. Stour Meadows
3. The Cliff
4. The Brewery
5. South east of Blandford St Mary
6. West of Blandford St Mary
7. Land at Black Lane
8. Stour Park
9. Blandford Heights Industrial Estate
10. Sunrise Business Park
11. Land off Shaftesbury Lane
12. Retail regeneration land to south of East Street
13. Bryanston SSSI



## **POLICY 16: BLANDFORD**

### **Sustainable Development Strategy**

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

- a development and redevelopment within the existing built-up area; and
- b extensions, primarily of housing to the ~~west of Blandford Forum and to the south east and~~ west of Blandford St Mary; and
- c employment uses on land within the bypass on the northern edge of the town and the mixed use regeneration of the Brewery site close to the town centre.

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.

### **Environment and Climate Change**

The impact of 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; and
- e incorporating sustainable drainage systems into new developments; and
- f the protection and management of valuable groundwater resources.

The town's natural and historic built environment will be protected and enhanced.

### **Meeting Housing Needs**

About ~~960-1,100~~ homes will be provided at Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary during the period 2011 - 2026. In addition to infilling and redevelopment within the settlement boundary, Blandford's housing needs will be met through:

- g mixed use regeneration of the Brewery site; and
- h ~~the development of land to the west of Blandford Forum~~ the development of land to the south east of Blandford St Mary; and
- i the development of land to the west of Blandford St Mary.

### **Supporting Economic Development**

Employment needs in the town for the period up 2026 will be met through:

- i the mixed use regeneration of the Brewerv site; and

**POLICY 16 (CONT'D): BLANDFORD**

- k the development of land off Shaftesbury Lane; and
- l the development of vacant sites on existing industrial estates; and
- m the retention of existing employment sites.

In the period up to 2026, additional retail floorspace will be provided through:

- n the extension of the existing Tesco supermarket at Stour Park; and
- o the provision of a new (Asda) supermarket off Shaftesbury Lane.

The main focus for town centre regeneration, which may include additional retail floorspace, will be land to the south of East Street, including land around the existing Co-op store. The extension of existing retail units south of Market Place and East Street may also be permitted.

**Infrastructure**

In the period up to 2026, grey infrastructure to support growth will include:

- p the provision and enhancement of walking and cycling links within Blandford between residential areas and key destinations, such as the town centre, employment sites, schools and other community facilities; and
- q the provision and enhancement of public transport, cycling and walking links between Blandford and nearby villages (and Blandford Camp); and
- r 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
- rs 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.

In the period up to 2026, social infrastructure to support growth will include:

- st the refurbishment of the Corn Exchange to form the main community venue for the town and the provision of neighbourhood halls to serve new development in the northern part of the town and Blandford St Mary; and
- tu the retention of Blandford Leisure Centre in community use and the upgrading of its facilities; and
- tv the extension of the Archbishop Wake and Milldown primary schools; and
- vw a new doctors' surgery or the expansion or relocation of existing doctors' surgeries.

### **POLICY 16 (CONT'D): BLANDFORD**

A network of green infrastructure will be developed in and around Blandford, focussing on linking existing sites (such as the Milldown and Stour Meadows) 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 at Crown Meadows associated with housing development to the west of Blandford Forum; and~~
- x new sports pitches and associated facilities on land within the built up area of Blandford.

