

# Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan Review

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## Basic Conditions Report

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

Plan period: 2016-2031

*Date of report: June 2022*

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## Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Legal Requirements	1
	Has the draft plan been submitted by a qualifying body? .....	1
	Does the proposed neighbourhood plan state the period for which it is to have effect? .....	1
	Is what is being proposed a neighbourhood development plan making provision in relation to land or sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area? .....	1
	Do any of the policies relate to excluded development? .....	1
	Do any of the policies extend beyond the neighbourhood area or cover an area where there is a neighbourhood development plan already in place? .....	2
3.	Consideration of National and Strategic Policies	2
	National Planning Policy and Guidance .....	2
	The Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan area.....	3
	Conformity Testing.....	5
	Conformity conclusions.....	13
4.	EU and sustainability obligations	14

## 1. Introduction

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

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

This report fulfils this requirement, and is known as the Basic Conditions Statement.

As the plan is a review of a previously made plan that was itself subject to a Basic Conditions Statement, the previous statement has been used as a basis and updated accordingly in response to changes in the plan and external factors.

## 2. Legal Requirements

### **Has the draft plan been submitted by a qualifying body?**

Yes – Pimperne Parish Council agreed the submission of the modified neighbourhood plan and supporting documents at its meeting in June 2022.

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

Yes – the plan makes clear in the introduction and in the plan’s title that it is intended to cover the period 2016 - 2031. This is unchanged from the made plan.

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

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

### **Do any of the policies relate to excluded development?**

The policies of the plan are broadly the same as in the made plan, and cover:

- Policy LC: Landscape Character
- Policy LGS: Local Green Spaces
- Policy LDC: Locally Distinct Character
- Policy MHN: Meeting Housing Needs
- Policy MEN: Meeting Employment Needs
- Policy CF: Community Facilities
- Policy DC: Developer Contributions for Social Infrastructure
- Policy HSA1: Housing Site Allocation 1 – land east of Franwill Industrial Estate
- Policy HSA2: Housing Site Allocation 2 – land north of Manor Farm Close
- Policy HSA3: Housing Site Allocation 3 – land west of Old Bakery Close
- Policy SB: Settlement Boundary

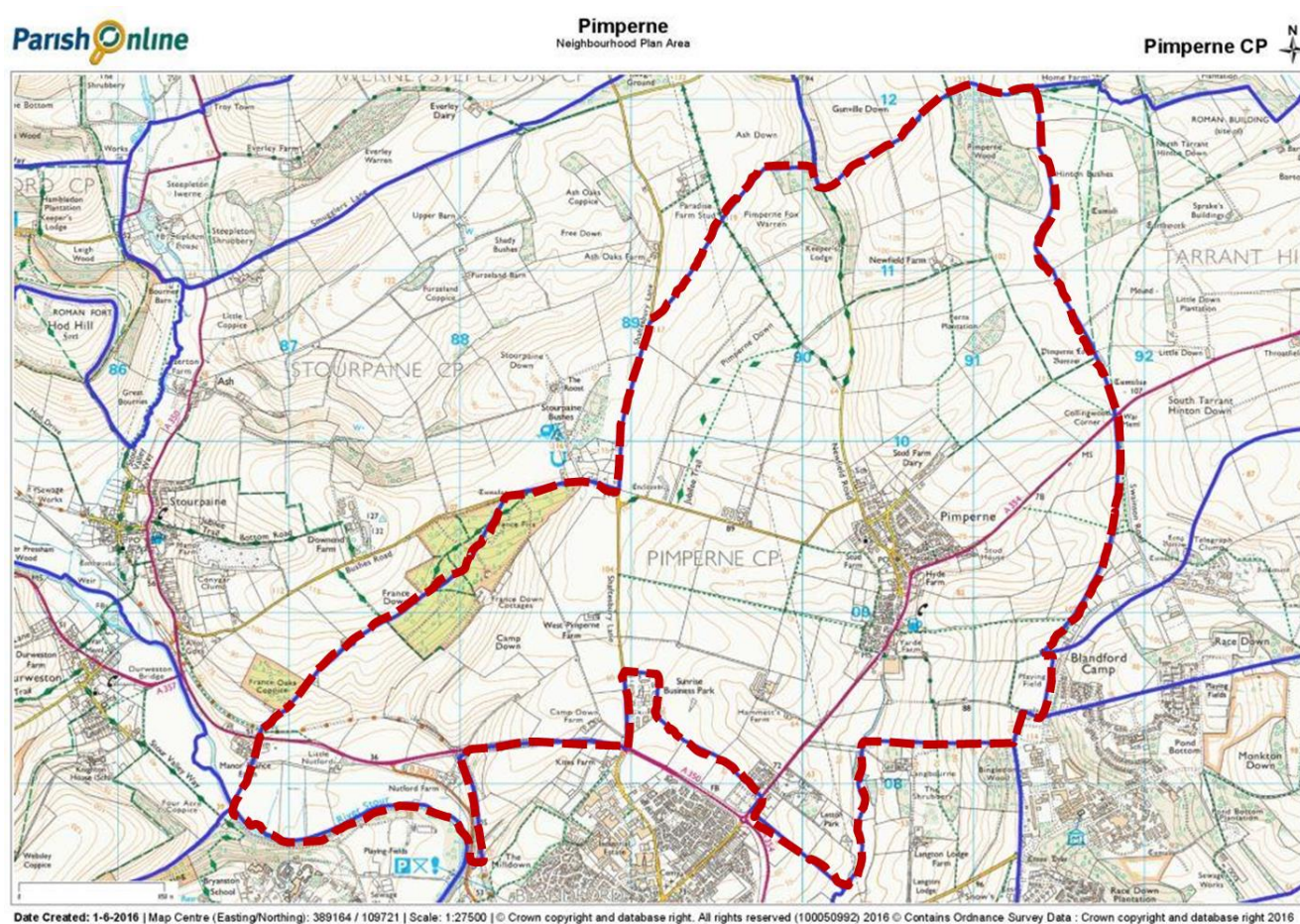
The Neighbourhood Plan policies do not deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or development that falls within Annex 1 to Council Directive 85/337/EEC.

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

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

There are no other neighbourhood plans relating to Pimperne Parish. The adjoining parish of Blandford, to the south, is designated as part of the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan area, and its Neighbourhood Plan was made in June 2021. No other adjoining land has been similarly designated.

**Map 1 – Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area**



**3. Consideration of National and Strategic Policies**

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

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

**National Planning Policy and Guidance**

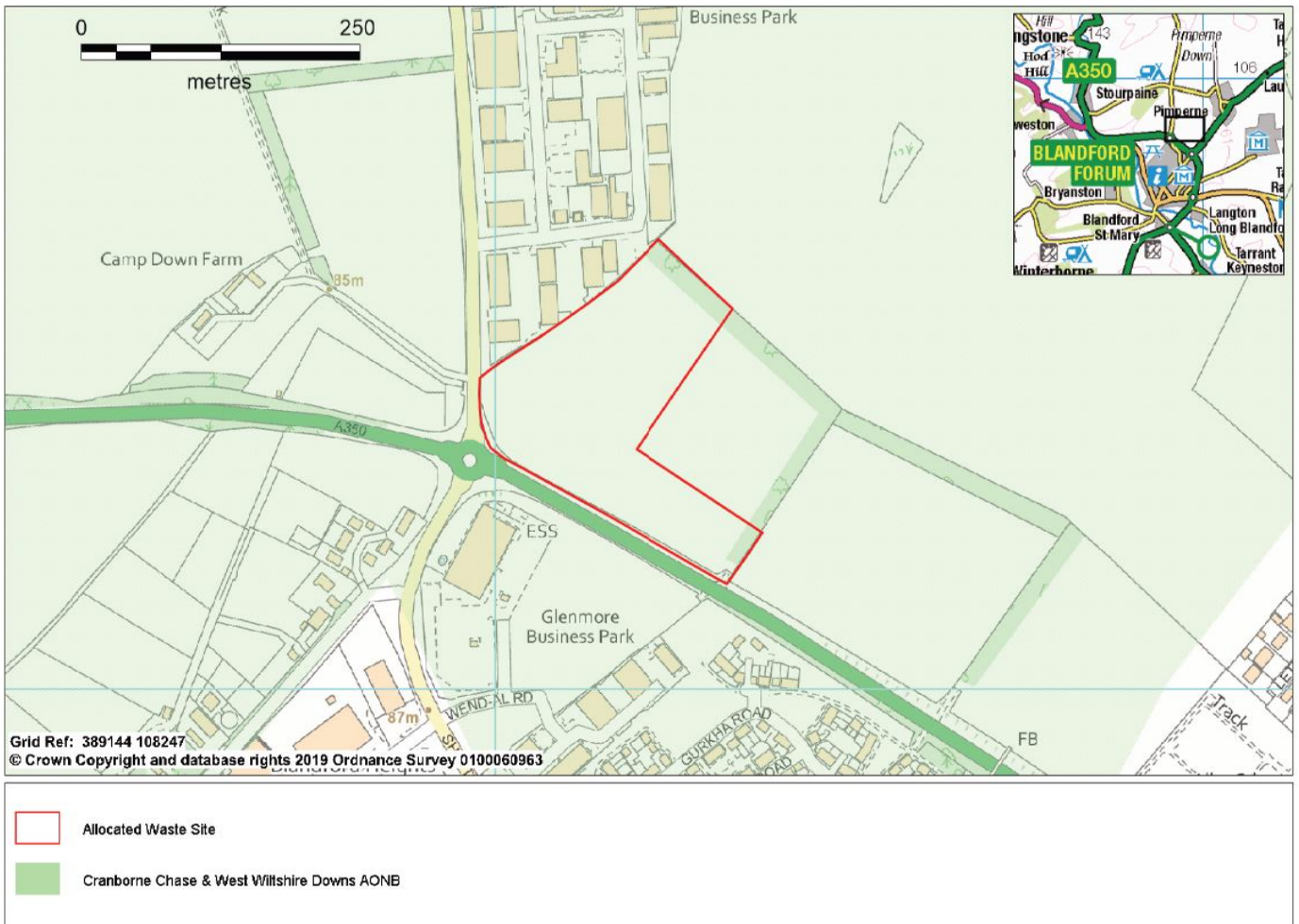
National planning guidance comes primarily from the published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the latest version dated 2021. Where appropriate, reference is made to the online National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) and Ministerial Statements.

The NPPF has therefore been updated since the Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan was made in January 2019, and therefore has been reviewed to check whether any of the relevant statements may have changed or new statements made that may be material to the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

**The Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan area**

The North Dorset Local Plan Part 1, prepared by North Dorset District Council and adopted January 2016, contains the bulk of the strategic planning policies for the area. It includes topic-based policies, place-based policies and development management policies that together are considered to provide the strategic policy framework. The saved policies in the 2003 Local Plan are not considered strategic - in many cases the Local Plan Part 1 makes clear that these can be reviewed through Neighbourhood Plans.

Dorset County Council has a Minerals Strategy (adopted May 2014) that also forms part of the development plan for the area, together with the more recently adopted Minerals Site Plan and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Plan (the latter replacing the 2006 Waste Local Plan that was in place when the Neighbourhood Plan was made). Neither the waste plan or minerals strategy contain proposals for the Neighbourhood Plan Area, other than defining minerals safeguarding areas and these are noted in the SEA. The Waste Plan does allocate a site for the development of local waste management facilities for the transfer and recycling of waste on land south of Sunrise Business Park, this is entirely within Blandford parish, as shown on the map below.

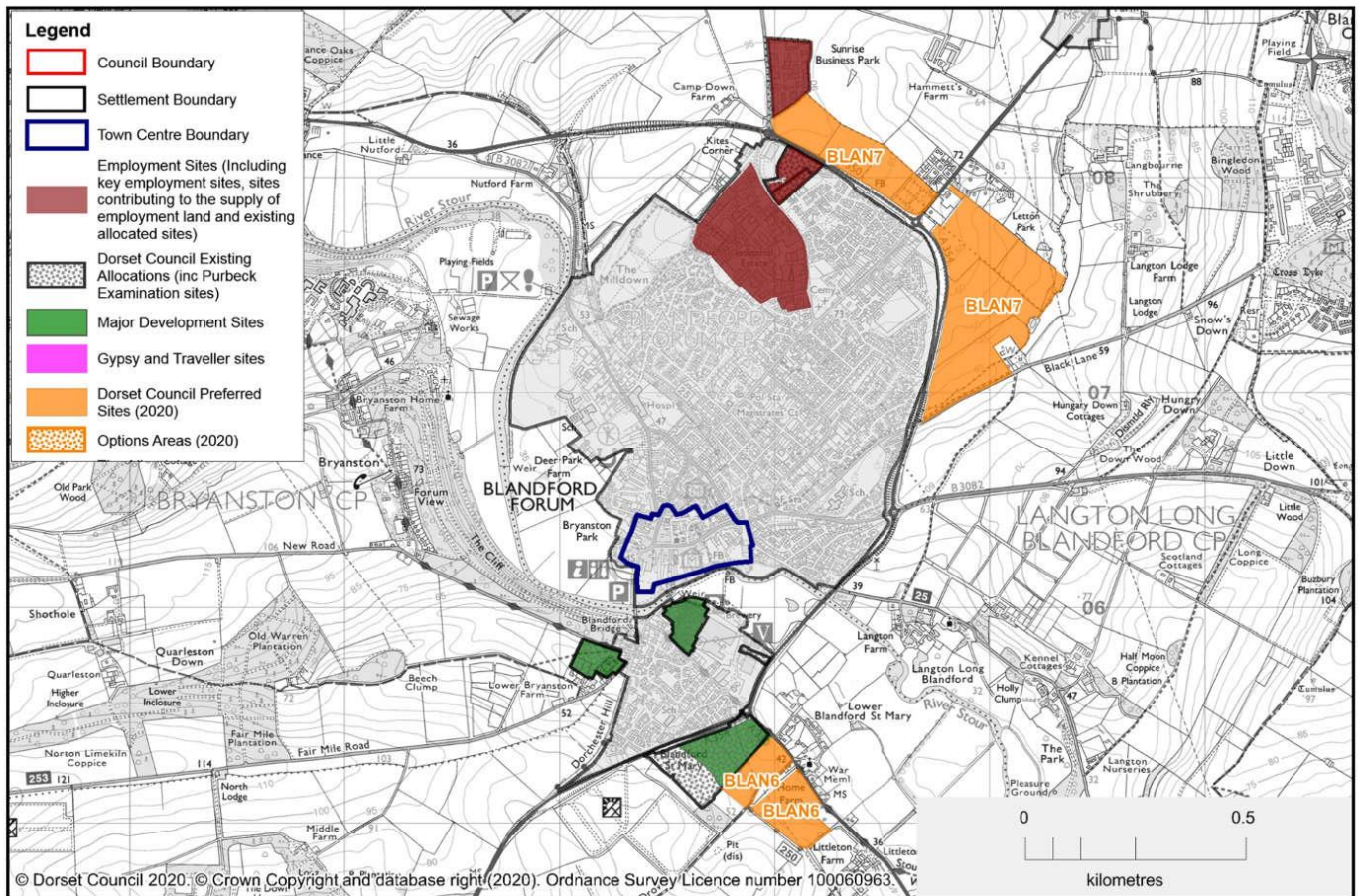


The NPPG makes clear that in considering whether a policy is in general conformity, a view should be taken on whether the neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal supports and upholds the general principle that the strategic policy is concerned with and the degree, if any, of conflict and the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

The NPPG also states that it is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in a neighbourhood plan and an emerging Local Plan, and that the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested.

Work commenced on the review of the Local Plan, including the provision of site specific allocations. At the time the first version of the Neighbourhood Plan was prepared, an Issues and Options paper had been issued for consultation (November 2017). No substantive changes were being suggested in relation to the approach to the sustainable growth of villages, and various options for growth around Blandford were being explored, including a potential site that extended into Pimperne Parish, to which Pimperne Parish Council had responded (in particular, highlighting the importance of maintaining a gap between Blandford and Pimperne and apparent discrepancies in the overall scoring and site selection in the accompanying SEA).

With the merger of the County, various District and Borough Councils into a combined Dorset Council in April 2019, the decision was taken to halt work on the review of the various Local Plans (with the exception of the Purbeck Plan which had already reached examination stage) and to start work on a single Dorset Council Local Plan. The first draft of this was published for consultation in January 2021, and includes strategic allocations at the towns (Tier 2 settlements), including on land north-east of Blandford Forum, which is for a mix of uses including residential, employment, education and community uses. The supporting text (paragraph 10.5.20) recognises that “A large part of this site is [also] allocated for development in the Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant policies will need to be considered when deciding on planning applications on the site.” and further on (paragraph 10.5.29) that “Part of the proposed allocation falls within Pimperne Parish. The Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan identifies land between Blandford and Pimperne as an important gap, making reference to the character of Letton Park within this gap. Detailed proposals for the part of the site within Pimperne Parish will need to respond to the policies within the Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan.”



There are no strategic allocations made at the larger villages (Tier 3) which includes Pimperne village, although the plan (Policy DEV2) would allow windfall and infilling within existing settlements defined by local plan or neighbourhood plan development boundaries. The Local Plan proposes that the housing target for Neighbourhood Plan areas should be based on:

- completions since the beginning of the plan period;
- extant planning permissions;
- housing allocations;
- capacity on major sites (of 10 or more dwellings) within development boundaries as evidenced through the SHLAA; and
- windfall allowance on minor sites (of less than 10 dwellings).

This is explored in more detail in the separate housing needs assessment report.

The Local Development Scheme as published July 2021 had anticipated that the next update to the Local Plan would be published in May 2022. It is understood from discussions with officers that this timetable has slipped, due to the volume of consultation responses and delays in finalising the evidence base, and it is unlikely that the next iteration of the plan will be published before the Autumn. As such, the Local Plan remains at a relatively early stage and is not being given any significant weight in planning decisions at this time.

### **Conformity Testing**

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

<b>Vision and Overview of Plan</b>	The plan’s vision and objectives are set out on page 5, and a one page summary has been provided at the front of the plan setting out the key issues and how these have been addressed
<b>Summary of relevant national policy and guidance</b>	<b>Assessment of general conformity</b>
<p><b>Plan making and decision taking</b> Neighbourhood Plans should set out a positive vision for the future of the area, and provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan includes a vision for the area. The Summary contained at the front of the Plan explains clearly what it hopes to achieve through the policies. The Neighbourhood Plan group worked with the AONB team and Dorset Council to ensure that they consider the plan provides a sound basis for determining the planning decisions that affect the area, and the plan was previously found to meet the basic conditions. Policy wording has been chosen with the aim of being clear and unambiguous, but at the same time recognising that there needs to be flexibility. The plan is aspirational yet flexible, reflecting the distinctive character of the village and its surrounds.</p>

<b>Policy LC: Landscape Character</b>		
General policy intention is to note the specific local landscape features and context relevant to the plan area that should be respected in the location and design of development		
<b>Summary of relevant national policy and guidance</b>	<b>Summary of potentially relevant adopted development plan policies</b> <i>Non-strategic policies also listed</i>	<b>Assessment of general conformity</b>
<p><b>NPPF para 174.</b> Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; and minimising impacts on and</p>	<p><b>Policy 4 The Natural Environment</b> Protects environmental assets which include valued landscape and other features which make the natural environment special. Development should be shaped by the natural environment so that its benefits are enhanced and not degraded. Landscape character will be protected through the retention of the features that characterise the area. Where significant impact is likely that impact must be mitigated and important landscape features incorporated in the development scheme.</p> <p><b>Policy 5 The Historic Environment</b> Seeks to protect the setting of heritage assets</p>	<p>This policy was previously found to meet the basic conditions, and there are no significant changes to national or local policy that would alter this finding. The policy is in line with the general approach to protecting valued landscapes and other locally important features, identifying those characteristics which are locally important. The policy has regard to national policy, particularly given the AONB designation that covers much of the area. It is also in conformity with the relevant local plan policies. The main policy changes bring it more in line</p>



<p>providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 185.</b> Planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.</p>	<p>which could include a landscape which has been identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.</p> <p><b>Non strategic Development Management Policies</b></p> <p><b>Policy 24 Design</b></p> <p><b>Policy 25 Amenity - Artificial Light Intrusion</b></p>	<p>with national policy on the AONB, seek to rectify a drafting error in criterion (g), and include additional reference to the importance of heritage assets as part of the historic landscape character (new criterion (i)).</p>
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<p><b>Policy LGS: Local Green Spaces</b></p>		
<p>General policy intention is to protect the local green spaces that are particularly valued by local residents and should endure beyond the plan period</p>		
<p><b>Summary of relevant national policy and guidance</b></p>	<p><b>Summary of potentially relevant adopted development plan policies</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment of general conformity</b></p>
<p><b>NPPF para 101-103.</b> Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period. The designation should only be used where the green space is: a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.</p>	<p><b>Policy 15 Green Infrastructure</b> Development will be required to enhance existing and provide new green infrastructure to improve the quality of life of residents and deliver environmental benefits. Neighbourhood Development Plans should consider measures that assist in delivering key green infrastructure benefits, including the designation of Local Green Space, where appropriate.</p>	<p>This policy was previously found to meet the basic conditions, and there are no significant changes to national or local policy that would alter this finding.</p>

<p><b>Policy LWCPS: Local Wildlife Corridors and Protected Species</b></p>		
<p>General policy intention is to reinforce biodiversity</p>		
<p><b>Summary of relevant national policy and guidance</b></p>	<p><b>Summary of potentially relevant adopted development plan policies</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment of general conformity</b></p>
<p><b>NPPF para 174.</b> Planning policies and decisions should contribute</p>	<p><b>Policy 4 The Natural Environment</b></p>	<p>This policy was added in</p>

<p>to and enhance the natural and local environment, by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 179.</b> To protect and enhance biodiversity, plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.</p>	<p>Protects environmental assets which include valued landscape and other features which make the natural environment special. Development should be shaped by the natural environment so that its benefits are enhanced and not degraded. Landscape character will be protected through the retention of the features that characterise the area. Where significant impact is likely that impact must be mitigated and important landscape features incorporated in the development scheme. Developers should demonstrate that their proposals will not have significant adverse effects, including cumulative effects, on internationally important wildlife sites. Where this cannot be demonstrated, appropriate mitigation measures will be required otherwise permission will be refused.</p>	<p>through the examination of the first plan and as such did not feature in the previous Basic Conditions Statement.</p> <p>The policy looks to enhance biodiversity, in particular identifying some of the key local areas that support biodiversity and the need for a Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan, in line with the Dorset Protocol.</p>
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<p><b>Policy LDC: Locally Distinct Character</b></p>		
<p>General policy intention is to reinforce the distinct local identity provided by the existing range of building styles, materials, layouts and detailing</p>		
<p><b>Summary of relevant national policy and guidance</b></p>	<p><b>Summary of potentially relevant adopted development plan policies</b> <i>Non-strategic policies also listed</i></p>	<p><b>Assessment of general conformity</b></p>
<p><b>NPPF para 107.</b> If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account: a) the accessibility of the development; b) the type, mix and use of development; c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport; d) local car ownership levels; and e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 127.</b> Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable.</p>	<p><b>Policy 7 Delivering Homes</b> Design and layout of housing development should be of a density that respects local character and amenity. Infilling within settlement boundaries, should respect the amenity of adjoining properties, and local communities are encouraged to develop more detailed policies relating to infilling through</p>	<p>The policy is in line with the general approach to set out the quality of development that will be expected based on an understanding and evaluation of the area’s defining characteristics.</p> <p>There is flexibility in the policy for different approaches to be taken provided that they can be justified as reinforcing the distinctive character of the area.</p>

<p>Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 128.</b> the geographic coverage and level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 131.</b> Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere, that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 152.</b> The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future.</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Plans.</p> <p><b>Non strategic Development Management Policies</b></p> <p><b>Policy 23 Parking</b></p> <p><b>Policy 24 Design</b></p>	<p>The modifications to the policy introduce three new criteria covering improved climate change mitigation through design, tree planting, and providing clearer guidance on the layout of parking (rather than seeking to amend the quantum required) that should result in the more effective use of spaces (as this is hampered by making the spaces less accessible), and highlighting the need or the provision of electric vehicle charging points, so that access to these can be considered prior to building regulations.</p>
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<p><b>Policy MHN: Meeting Housing Needs</b></p>		
<p>General policy intention is to secure an appropriate level and mix of new housing to meet projected local needs, taking into account that almost all of the area is within an AONB where major development would normally be refused.</p>		
<p><b>Summary of relevant national policy and guidance</b></p>	<p><b>Summary of potentially relevant adopted development plan policies</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment of general conformity</b></p>
<p><b>NPPF para 60.</b> To support the government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are</p>	<p><b>Policy 2 Core Spatial Strategy</b> States that all development proposals should be located in accordance with the spatial strategy - which identifies Stalbridge and eighteen larger villages (including Pimperne) as the focus for growth to meet</p>	<p>This policy was previously found to meet the basic conditions. In recent appeal decisions regarding the provision of housing the Local Plans’ Spatial Strategy has been considered to be broadly</p>

<p>addressed.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 62.</b> Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 64.</b> Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer).</p> <p><b>NPPF para 65.</b> Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 66 - 67.</b> Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. Where it is not possible to provide a requirement</p>	<p>the local needs outside of the four main towns. In these villages, the focus will be on meeting local (rather than strategic) needs.</p> <p><b>Policy 6 Housing Distribution</b> 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. At least 825 dwellings will be provided in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages) during the period 2011 – 2031.</p> <p><b>Policy 7 Delivering Homes</b> Says that all housing should contribute towards the creation of mixed and balanced communities. The Council will seek to support the delivery of about 40% of market housing as one or two bedroom properties and about 60% as three or more bedroom properties, with an emphasis on the provision of two and three bedroom properties. About 60% of affordable housing should be delivered as one or two bedroom properties and about 40% as three or more bedroom properties. These proportions will be the starting point for negotiations on all sites with 10 or more dwellings. On sites of less than 10 dwellings, a mix of house sizes appropriate to each specific site will be sought.</p> <p><b>Policy 8 Affordable Housing</b> Requires that development that delivers eleven or more net additional dwellings and which has a maximum combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres, including housing on mixed-use sites, will contribute to the provision of affordable</p>	<p>consistent with the Framework (e.g. Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/W/20/3265743 Land South of Lower Road, Stalbridge, Dorset). The Government’s general approach to housing need is unchanged, although the application of the standard method, with more recent housing needs data, has resulted in a higher target. This higher target has been used to update the housing target contained within the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The amendments to criteria (d) with regard to affordable homes are aimed at bringing it more in line with the latest version of the NPPF which post-dates the Local Plan. This includes the provision for a lower threshold, and the inclusion of a requirement for at least 10% of the total number of homes to be for affordable home ownership. Both of these changes have been discussed with Dorset Council officers who have indicated that they are supportive of this modification. The mix of house sizes is broadly in line with the Local Plan policy, and justified on the basis of more detailed appraisal of local housing need.</p>
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<p>figure for a neighbourhood area through the Local Plan, the Local Planning Authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the Neighbourhood Planning Body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.</p>	<p>housing. <b>Policy 20 The Countryside</b> Recognises Stalbridge and the eighteen larger villages as the focus for growth outside of the four main towns. Development in the countryside outside the defined settlement boundaries is only permitted if it can be demonstrated that there is an ‘overriding need’ for it to be located in the countryside.</p>	
<p><b>Policy MEN: Meeting Employment Needs</b> General policy intention is to allow additional employment, taking into account the limited demand and that almost all of the area is within an AONB where major development would normally be refused</p>		
<p><b>Summary of relevant national policy and guidance</b></p>	<p><b>Summary of potentially relevant adopted development plan policies</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment of general conformity</b></p>
<p><b>NPPF para 85.</b> Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.</p>	<p><b>Policy 11: The Economy</b> Existing employment sites and sites identified for future employment uses will be protected from other forms of development, but permission may be given for community uses, such as community halls; healthcare facilities, such as doctors’ and vets’ surgeries; education and training facilities; and small-scale retail, which is ancillary to a B Class use. Economic development in the countryside will be supported by enabling rural communities to plan to meet their own local needs, particularly through neighbourhood planning and the re-use of existing buildings, the retention and small-scale expansion of existing employment sites; the provision of certain forms of tourist accommodation, and equine-related developments.</p>	<p>This policy was previously found to meet the basic conditions, and there are no significant changes to national or local policy that would alter this finding.</p>

<b>Policy CF: Community Facilities and Policy DC: Developer Contributions for Social Infrastructure</b>		
General policy intention is to support and allow for the improvement of important community infrastructure		
<b>Summary of relevant national policy and guidance</b>	<b>Summary of potentially relevant adopted development plan policies</b>	<b>Assessment of general conformity</b>
<p><b>NPPF para 84.</b> Planning policies and decisions should enable the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 98.</b> Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 100.</b> Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks.</p>	<p><b>Policy 14: Social Infrastructure</b> Existing community halls, places of worship and other non-commercial community facilities are protected and new facilities provided where there is an identified need. In the countryside, such facilities may be permitted on the edge of the built-up area of Stalbridge or the District's villages to support a rural community, where no suitable sites exist within the relevant settlement.</p> <p><b>Policy 15: Green Infrastructure</b> The Council will seek to enhance the provision of green infrastructure in the countryside (including at Stalbridge and the District's villages), especially where it helps to improve recreational opportunities</p>	<p>This policy was previously found to meet the basic conditions, and has simply been updated to reflect the changes that have occurred with the closure of the village shop and more recent closure of the pub (whose future remains uncertain). There are no significant changes to national or local policy that would alter this finding.</p>
<b>Policy HSA1-3: Housing Site Allocations and Policy SB: Settlement Boundary</b>		
General policy intention is to identify those areas allocated for new development through site specific allocations and adjustments to the settlement boundary		
<b>Summary of relevant national policy and guidance</b>	<b>Summary of potentially relevant adopted development plan policies</b>	<b>Assessment of general conformity</b>
<p><b>NPPF para 70.</b> Neighbourhood planning groups should consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites suitable for housing in their area.</p> <p><b>NPPF para 78-79.</b> In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing</p>	<p><b>Policy 2 Core Spatial Strategy</b> States that all development proposals should be located in accordance with the spatial strategy - which identifies Stalbridge and eighteen larger villages (including Pimperne) as the focus for growth to meet the local needs outside of the four main towns. At Stalbridge and all the District's villages, the focus will be on meeting local (rather than strategic) needs.</p>	<p>The site allocations more than cater for the estimated housing need within the plan period - providing a degree of flexibility and allowance for any uplift in projected housing need. They have been subject to sustainability testing through the SEA process, which concluded that none of the policies</p>

<p>developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this. Housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.</p>	<p><b>Policy 6 Housing Distribution</b> 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. At least 825 dwellings will be provided in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages) during the period 2011 – 2031</p> <p><b>Policy 20 The Countryside</b> Recognises Stalbridge and the eighteen larger villages as the focus for growth outside of the four main towns. Development in the countryside outside the defined settlement boundaries is only permitted if it can be demonstrated that there is an ‘overriding need’ for it to be located in the countryside.</p>	<p>should result in an adverse impact (subject to the mitigation measures proposed and incorporated into the policies), and one has planning permission and is under construction.</p> <p>These policies are unchanged, and were previously found to meet the basic conditions. There are no significant changes to national or local policy that would alter this finding. The allocations are unchanged, and the settlement boundary wording has simply been amended to better reflect the Local Plan Policies 2, 6 and 20.</p>
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### Conformity conclusions

The Neighbourhood Plan includes a positive vision for the future of the area and explains how this translated into objectives and in turn relate to the relevant policies. It has previously been tested and found sound, and the proposed changes are considered to be relatively modest in their scope.

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

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

## 4. EU and sustainability obligations

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

A screening assessment in relation to potential requirements for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the European Directive 2001/42/EC and for a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended), has been undertaken, with a draft report produced in November 2021 and updated in May 2022 to include the responses from the statutory consultees.

This report concluded the Neighbourhood Plan would be unlikely to have significant effects on the environment, and no further assessment work is required.

The previous plan was subject to a full Strategic Environmental Assessment, including the relevant scoping stage, assessment of options, and assessment of the pre-submission draft plan. This has been used as a basis to consider the sustainability of the plans policies in a tabular format, as shown below. The objectives against each topic area were as follows:

SEA topic areas	Objective
Biodiversity, fauna and flora	Ensure no ecological interests would be harmed by development, and where opportunities arise, enhance habitats and biodiversity
Landscape	Protect and enhance the AONB, including views and important features that contribute to local character
Cultural heritage	Protect the area’s heritage assets, and where opportunities arise, enhance the historic character of the area
Soil, Water, Air and Climatic Factors	Ensure development does not result in an unacceptable risk of pollution Reduce the impact of climate change, including flood risk
Material assets, including population and human health	Provide housing to meet the needs of the community as far as possible Support the local economy Consider accessibility and impact on the local transport network

**Table: Sustainability Assessment**

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	Biodiversity	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Soil, Water, Air and Climate	Material assets
LC: Landscape Character	✓	✓	✓		
LGS: Local Green Spaces	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LWCPS: Local Wildlife Corridors / Protected Species	✓	✓		✓	
LDC: Locally Distinct Character	✓	✓	✓		
MHN: Meeting Housing Needs	?		?	?	✓
MEN: Meeting Employment Needs	?		?	?	✓
CF: Community Facilities			✓		✓
HSA1: Land east of Franwill Industrial Estate	✓				✓
HSA2: Land north of Manor Farm Close	✓				✓
HSA3: Land west of Bakery Close	✓				✓
SB: Settlement Boundary	✓	✓	✓		?



The assessment has been reviewed to take into account the proposed modifications that were made as part of the previous examination and as part of this review. It concluded that while some of the policy options could individually have relatively minor impacts on the environmental, social and economic characteristics of the parish, collectively this impact may be much more significant. There are no likely significant adverse impacts identified, and overall the policies should secure significant positive benefits particularly in terms of securing biodiversity enhancements on sites that are not of particular ecological merit and securing opportunities for further housing to meet local needs, including a significant proportion of affordable homes. This is considered to hold true in light of the proposed modifications.

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