

Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan 2011 - 2029

Report by Independent Examiner

Janet L Cheesley BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

CHEC Planning Ltd

10 February 2017

Contents	Page
Summary and Conclusion	3
Introduction	4
Legislative Background	4
EU Obligations	5
Policy Background	6
The Neighbourhood Plan Preparation	6
The Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan	7
Meeting the housing needs of the Parish	8
Retaining the distinct character of the Parish	8
Preserving the natural and rural environment	9
Residential development in Sherborne St John	11
Referendum & the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan Area	17
Appendix 1 Background Documents	19

Summary and Conclusion

1. The Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan 2011 - 2029 has a clear vision and sets out clear objectives.
2. I have found that there is a justified requirement for a mix of size of dwellings and that SSJ Policy 1 meets the Basic Conditions.
3. I have recommended the deletion of SSJ Policy 2. In its current form it undermines the approach to protecting the Strategic Gap in Policy EM2 in the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011-2029) (BDLP). Necessary modifications to SSJ Policy 2 would virtually be repeating BDLP Policy EM2, and it is not the role of a Neighbourhood Plan to repeat existing policy.
4. I have recommended that a map identifying important views accompanies SSJ Policy 3.
5. I have recommended modifications to SSJ Policy 4. In particular, I have recommended that the range of the provision of 12 – 18 dwellings is an approximate range. I do not consider that the requirement to provide a shop as part of the proposed development meets the tests in the *Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010*. In addition, I have no robust and credible evidence before me to determine whether such a proposal would ensure the viability of a housing development of such a small scale. This has implications for the delivery of the housing development. Therefore, I have recommended that SSJ Policy 4 is modified to safeguard land for the provision of a local shop, rather than to require such a provision as part of the development.
6. In the interest of precision, I have recommended the inclusion of reference to the revised Settlement Policy Boundary within SSJ Policy 4.
7. **Whilst I have set out my reasoning under individual policies, my overall conclusion is that, subject to my recommendations, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions. It is appropriate to make the Plan. Subject to my recommendations being accepted, I consider that the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan 2011 - 2029 will provide a strong practical framework against which decisions on development can be made. I am pleased to recommend that the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan 2011 - 2029, as modified by my recommendations, should proceed to Referendum.**

Introduction

8. I was appointed as an independent Examiner for the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan 2011 - 2029 in December 2016.
9. On 27 March 2013 Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) approved that the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Area be designated in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Area covers the whole of the parish of Sherborne St John.
10. The qualifying body is Sherborne St John Parish Council. The Plan has been prepared by the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The Plan covers the period 2011 - 2029.

Legislative Background

11. As an independent Examiner, I am required to determine, under Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, whether:
 - the policies in the Plan relate to the development and use of land for a designated Neighbourhood Area in line with the requirements of Section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (PCPA) 2004;
 - the Plan meets the requirements of Section 38B of the 2004 PCPA where the plan must specify the period to which it has effect, must not include provision about development that is excluded development, and must not relate to more than one Neighbourhood Area; and
 - that the Plan has been prepared for an area that has been designated under the Localism Act 2011 and has been developed and submitted for examination by a qualifying body.
12. I am obliged to determine whether the Plan complies with the Basic Conditions. The Basic Conditions are:
 - having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;
 - the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan for the area of the authority; and

- the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations and human rights requirements.
13. Subject to the modifications I have recommended in this report, I am content that these requirements have been satisfied.

EU Obligations

14. A Neighbourhood Plan must be compatible with European Union obligations, as incorporated into UK law, in order to be legally compliant.
15. Directive 2001/42/EC and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended) (EA Regulations) set out various legal requirements and stages in the production of a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
16. BDBC has prepared a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report, dated January 2016. BDBC published a letter to Sherborne St John Parish Council dated 21 November 2016 confirming the findings of the Report.
17. The Report states: *as a result of the assessment undertaken to assess the effects on the environment resulting from the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that significant effects on the environment are not likely.* It concludes that a SEA is not considered to be required.
18. Subject to identified mitigation measures, Historic England has concluded that a SEA is not required. Natural England and The Environment Agency have concluded that a SEA is not required.
19. Based on the screening determination and consultee responses, I consider that it has not been necessary for the Plan to require a full SEA Assessment. The SEA screening accords with the provisions of the European Directive 2001/42/EC.
20. The Screening Report relies on the Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment for what was then the emerging Local Plan. This demonstrates that no part of the Neighbourhood Plan area would be within 10k of any European sites. The Report concludes that a HRA is not required. The relevant consultees agreed with this conclusion.
21. On the basis of the Screening Report conclusion and consultee responses, I consider that the Plan does not require a full HRA under Articles 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive.
22. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Plan and no negative impacts have been identified. I am satisfied that the Plan is

compatible with EU obligations and does not breach the European Convention on Human Rights obligations.

23. The Parish Council decided to complete a Sustainability Assessment of the four policies in the Plan. Whilst this has not been necessary, it does assist in determining the contribution that the Plan makes towards sustainable development.

Policy Background

24. *The National Planning Policy Framework* (2012) (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. *The Planning Practice Guidance* (2014) (PPG) provides Government guidance on planning policy.
25. Sherborne St John Parish is within the local authority area of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC). The development plan for the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan Area includes the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (BDLP) (2011 to 2029) adopted on 26 May 2016. The Neighbourhood Plan was prepared in the context of this new Local Plan. The strategic policies in this Local Plan include policies regarding housing, the environment and the economy.

The Neighbourhood Plan Preparation

26. I am required under The Localism Act 2011 to check the consultation process that has led to the production of the Plan. The requirements are set out in Regulation 14 in The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
27. The initial consultation process included a formal launch in February 2014. A series of focused group events were held and a business survey and Housing Needs Survey were undertaken. During September and October 2014 a community questionnaire was circulated to every household. Engagement with landowners was undertaken to identify development sites. A public exhibition and further consultation to choose a preferred development site ensured public engagement.
28. The Consultation period on the pre-submission draft of the Plan ran from 1 April 2016 to 16 May 2016. The Draft Plan was available to view on a dedicated web site and publicized in the Village Magazine. Paper copies were available to view at either the village hall or the Chute Pavilion. Many local residents, businesses and interested groups were notified by email.
29. I am satisfied that the pre-submission consultation and publicity has met the requirements of Regulation 14 in The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. It is clear that the qualifying body went to considerable

lengths to ensure that local residents, businesses and landowners were able to engage in the production of the Plan. I congratulate them on their efforts. In addition, I congratulate them on the production of the extremely comprehensive Consultation Statement which has been very helpful to my understanding of the background and the process of the production of the Plan.

30. BDBC publicised the submission Plan for comment during the publicity period between 28 November 2016 and 16 January 2017 in line with Regulation 16 in The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Comments were received from 16 respondents, in addition to comments from BDBC as the Local Planning Authority. I am satisfied that all these responses can be assessed without the need for a public hearing.
31. Some responses suggest additions and amendments to policies. My remit is to determine whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions. Where I find that policies do meet the Basic Conditions, it is not necessary for me to consider if further suggested additions or amendments are required. Whilst I have not made reference to all the responses in my report, I have taken them into consideration.

The Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan 2011 - 2029

32. It is necessary for Neighbourhood Plans to provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency as stated in the core planning principles in paragraph 17 in the NPPF. I do refer to precision with regard to a number of recommendations to modifications to the Plan. Where I do so, I have in mind the need to provide a practical framework in accordance with the core principles in the NPPF, thus ensuring that the Plan has regard to national policy in this respect.
33. I have been provided with a detailed evidence base in background supporting documents. This has provided a useful and easily accessible source of background information. The Parish Profile in Section 3 in the Plan provides an overview of the Parish and draws heavily on the evidence base produced in support of the Plan.
34. For ease of reference, I have used the same headings and policy titles as those in the Plan.

Vision and Objectives

35. The Plan has a clear vision as follows: *a dynamic and sustainable Parish all can enjoy in harmony with the wishes of the community as a whole where the needs of current and future residents are met and the cherished local*

environment is preserved and enhanced. Objectives to achieve the vision help to inform the policies in the Plan.

Meeting the housing needs of the Parish

SSJ Policy 1: Delivering a mix of housing sizes to meet local needs

36. The social role of sustainable development includes the need to provide the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations. The NPPF seeks, at paragraph 50, to ensure that there is provision of a wide choice of quality homes and that *local authorities plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community.* BDLP Policy CN3 seeks a range of market housing types and sizes to address local requirements.
37. The Sherborne St John Housing Need Survey Report (December 2014) identified that there is a current shortfall in smaller properties of between one and three bedrooms. In the Parish Questionnaire, a large majority of respondents identified a need for smaller units suitable for first time buyers or for elderly residents to downsize. In my opinion, this is justified planning evidence to support the requirement in SSJ Policy 1 for a mix of size of dwellings to meet the needs of the Parish, irrespective of whether they are market or affordable dwellings.
38. The justified requirement for a mix of size of dwellings in SSJ Policy 1 has regard to national policy, contributes towards the social role of sustainable development and is in general conformity with strategic policy. SSJ Policy 1 meets the Basic Conditions.

Retaining the distinct character of the Parish

SSJ Policy 2: Avoidance of coalescence with Basingstoke town

39. Paragraph 58 in the NPPF requires local and neighbourhood plan policies to aim to ensure that developments establish a strong sense of space. One of the mechanisms for achieving this aim in BDLP Policy EM2 is by identifying Strategic Gaps, including a Strategic Gap between Basingstoke and Sherborne St John. I consider this to be a strategic policy.
40. PPG states that in deciding whether a neighbourhood plan policy is in general conformity with strategic policies, one of the criteria for consideration is *whether the draft neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal provides an additional level of detail and/or a distinct local approach to that set out in the strategic policy without undermining that policy* (Paragraph: 074 Reference ID: 41-074-20140306).

41. SSJ Policy 2 broadly re-iterates the objectives of BDLP Policy EM2, with the intention of avoiding coalescence with Basingstoke town. However, the wording of SSJ Policy 2 undermines the BDLP approach to protecting the Strategic Gap. The approach to restricting development in the Strategic Gap is stronger in BDLP Policy EM2.
42. In order to ensure general conformity with strategic policy, it would be necessary to modify the last paragraph in SSJ Policy 2 to refer to where development *will only be permitted* rather than where development *will not be permitted*. The resultant policy would virtually be repeating BDLP Policy EM2 and it is not the role of a Neighbourhood Plan to repeat existing policy. For the above reasons, in these circumstances, I recommend deletion of SSJ Policy 2.
43. I realise the importance of retaining a separate and distinct settlement in perpetuity as referred to in supporting text in paragraphs 105 and 106. Whilst I have recommended the deletion of SSJ Policy 2, the supporting text and Map 4 can remain in the Plan in a modified form, with reference to BDLP Policy EM2 rather than SSJ Policy 2. It is not for me to rewrite the Plan and it may be appropriate to move this section into the preceding Parish Profile. I will leave this as an editing matter.
44. **Recommendation: to meet the Basic Conditions;**
I recommend the deletion of SSJ Policy 2; and
I recommend modification to paragraph 106 to read as follows:
The avoidance of coalescence is of utmost importance and proposals for a strategic gap were firmly supported by the Parish. It is one of this Plan's objectives that the closing of the gap between Sherborne St John village and Basingstoke town should be avoided. BDLP Policy EM2 seeks to ensure that this erosion is avoided. The area of countryside referred to in this policy as separating Sherborne St John village from the town is shown as the area shaded green on Map 4.

Preserving the natural and rural environment

SSJ Policy 3: The rural character of the Parish

45. The NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment. BDLP Policy EM1 seeks to ensure that new development is sympathetic to the character and visual qualities of the landscape. BDLP Policy EM4 is a policy concerned with biodiversity, geodiversity and nature conservation.
46. At paragraph 74, the NPPF seeks to protect open space, unless surplus to requirements, is replaced by equivalent or better provision or alternative sport or recreation provision that would clearly outweigh the loss. BDLP Policy EM5 is concerned with green infrastructure and amongst other

matters reiterates these objectives. SSJ Policy 3 does not preclude the loss of open space, but states that there is a strong presumption for its retention. I consider this aspect of SSJ Policy 3 to have regard to national policy and be in general conformity with strategic policy.

47. The background evidence in the *Landscape Capacity of Sherborne St John* Report clearly emphasises the rural character of the Parish. SSJ Policy 3 seeks to conserve and, if possible, enhance the rural character and natural assets of the Parish. There is a pro-active approach to conserving natural assets through the ongoing Sherborne St John Wildlife Map Project. This will eventually form a graphical representation of the key habitats and species found within the Parish. I applaud local people for their ongoing efforts to create such a comprehensive record.
48. I am concerned that the way SSJ Policy 3 is worded could inadvertently conflict with other policies in the development plan, particularly regarding the protection of the Strategic Gap. In the interest of precision, I recommend that similar wording to that in the fifth paragraph with regard to development being *acceptable in all other respects* is included in the preceding two paragraphs.
49. It appears from the background evidence that reference to important views in the last paragraph in SSJ Policy 3 refers to the significant views identified on the map on the last page of the Village Design Statement (2004). In the interest of precision, rather than a description of some of the views, I recommend that SSJ Policy 3 cross refers to a map identifying the important views. These should indicate the position they are taken from and the area within each view. The map should be included in this Plan.
50. Subject to the proposed modifications above, I consider SSJ Policy 3 would contribute towards the environmental role of sustainable development, have regard to policy in the NPPF and be in general conformity with strategic policy in the BDLP.

51. **Recommendation: to meet the Basic Conditions:**

**I recommend the inclusion of a map identifying the important views;
and**

I recommend modification to SSJ Policy 3 to read as follows:

Development should ensure that the rural character and natural assets of the Parish are conserved and, if possible, enhanced.

There is a strong presumption that existing open space within the village must be retained where it is considered to have either an important social function (such as a meeting place, an established recreational use, or somewhere that facilitates local events), or where it adds to local character.

Where development is acceptable in all other respects, it will be permitted where it:

- Conserves the rural character of the Parish; and
 - Conserves the important habitats of the Parish; and
 - Retains or enhances the network of green habitats within the Parish.
- This applies to both the scale and location of development and to any additional impact caused by light or noise pollution.

Where development is acceptable in all other respects, it will be permitted where it takes proper account of evidence provided by the Sherborne St John Wildlife Map Project, which provides essential local knowledge and identifies the area's natural assets and green corridors.

Where development at the edge of the village or in open countryside is acceptable in all other respects, it should provide for sufficient landscaping and, where appropriate, screening to ensure that the character of the surrounding countryside is conserved and, if possible, enhanced.

Development should respect visual amenity by protecting important views out of the village or towards the village, as identified on Map [X].

Residential Development in Sherborne St John

SSJ Policy 4: Residential development - land at Cranes Road, Sherborne St John

52. BDLP Policy SS1 explains how it is proposed that the scale and distribution of new housing in the Borough will be provided. The list of criteria includes:
- Permitting development and redevelopment within the defined Settlement Policy Boundaries, which contribute to social, economic and environmental well-being; Sites outside of defined Settlement Policy Boundaries will be considered to lie in the countryside; and*
- Supporting the delivery of new homes through Neighbourhood Planning, in line with Policy SS5.*
53. BDLP Policy SS5 supports the identification of housing sites through Neighbourhood Plans. Sherborne St John lies within a group of 13 settlements which are required to identify sites for a total of 150 homes between them. The exact split is not defined but BDLP Policy SS5 does specify that *it will be necessary to identify sites/opportunities to deliver at least 10 homes within and adjacent to each of the settlements with defined Settlement Policy Boundaries.*
54. Supporting paragraph 49 has interpreted BDLP Policy SS5 as indicating a pro rata requirement of around 15 houses for the village of Sherborne St

John. This is not what is stated in BDLP Policy SS5. In addition, paragraph 57 states that BDLP Policy SS5 suggests that this Plan should set a framework to deliver around 15-20 homes. Again, this is not what is stated in BDLP Policy SS5. In the interest of precision, I recommend modification to paragraphs 49 and 57 to reiterate the requirement to deliver at least 10 homes as outlined above.

55. The Neighbourhood Plan Examination process does not require a rigorous examination of district wide housing land requirements. I note that the Plan has been produced in discussion with BDBC and that BDBC has not objected to the general scale of development proposed in the Plan. The Questionnaire responses gave the Neighbourhood Plan a strong mandate to deliver a limited number of houses. In these circumstances, I consider that the general scale of development proposed would be a relevant contribution towards the wider housing needs of BDBC. I will consider the range of 12-18 dwellings identified for the site at Cranes Road in more detail below.
56. A call for suitable development sites resulted in the initial identification of 17 potential sites. This was subsequently reduced to 11 sites following further correspondence with landowners and developers. Based on the voting at a consultation event and the previous feedback from the Housing Needs Survey and Questionnaire, the options for developing the preferred choice – ‘Bob’s Farm’ – was pursued. This site was subsequently withdrawn by the developer. At a second public consultation event, local people were invited to vote on a new site. Residents decided that the site at Cranes Road was a suitable site.
57. From the evidence before me, I consider that there has been a transparent process in the choice of development site, where local people were included in the process of site selection. As a result of this process the 1.2 hectare site at Cranes Road is allocated in the draft Plan for a low density development of a mix of homes of between 12-18 new homes.
58. The NPPF in paragraph 185 is clear that outside the strategic elements *neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area*. National policy emphasises that development means growth. The Neighbourhood Plan has sought to provide for sustainable growth by allocating one site for housing development and identifying the provision of between 12 – 18 dwellings on that site. I note that there is supporting evidence of a scheme on an Illustrative Layout prepared by Rydon Homes.
59. I have visited the Parish and have seen the site at Cranes Road and the surrounding area. The suggested low density of development is supported by the character of the area, particularly the location of the site on the edge of the village adjacent to open countryside. However, I have some concern with regard to the restrictive cap of 18 dwellings on the allocated site. There may be circumstances where sustainable low density development can be achieved on this site with a greater number of dwellings. In order to ensure

that the Plan contributes towards sustainable development, whilst at the same time achieving a low-density small-scale of development, I recommend that the range of dwellings is referred to as an approximation in SSJ Policy 4 and supporting paragraphs 111 and 114.

60. There has been suggestion that reserve sites should be identified in the Plan to help contribute to housing provision should sites not come forward elsewhere in the Borough. By allocating the site at Cranes Road for approximately 12-18 dwellings, SSJ Policy 4 is in general conformity with the strategic housing requirements in BDLP Policy SS5. I see no need to identify reserve sites to meet the Basic Conditions.
61. Paragraph 173 in the NPPF states: *Plans should be deliverable. Therefore, the sites and the scale of development identified in the plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their ability to be delivered viably is threatened.*
62. Developer contributions can only be sought where they meet the tests that they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. These tests are set out as statutory tests in the *Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010*.
63. From the evidence before me, I do not consider that the requirement to provide a shop as part of the proposed development meets the tests in the *Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010*. In particular, I do not consider that it is directly related to the development. In addition, whilst I acknowledge the importance of a new local convenience shop to some local people, I have no robust and credible evidence before me to determine whether such a proposal would ensure the viability of a housing development of such a small scale. This has implications for the delivery of the housing development.
64. It is evident from the background evidence that there is strong local support for a new local shop. Whilst I have found that this cannot be a requirement of the development of the site at Cranes Road, this does not preclude SSJ Policy 4 from safeguarding land for a local shop on the site. In the interest of precision, I recommend that both SSJ Policy 4 and the supporting text in paragraph 114 refer to the provision of land for a new shop.
65. Whilst there has been some objection to the provision of a local shop, primarily due to traffic and noise concerns, from my observations, I consider that these concerns could be overcome.
66. The site at Cranes Road lies adjacent to the Sherborne St John Conservation Area, which is a designated heritage asset. The *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* imposes duties requiring special regard to be had to the desirability: at Section 72(1), of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

67. The NPPF advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
68. A Stage 2 appraisal for the site undertaken by Sigma Planning Services (November 2015) concludes that the proposed development at Cranes Road *would not have any direct impact upon the important characteristics identified in the Sherborne St John Conservation Area Appraisal*. However, it does state that views into the Conservation Area would need to be mitigated by the retention and enhancement of front hedgerows and mature trees, with development set back. The last paragraph in SSJ Policy 4 reflects these findings.
69. I have attributed considerable importance and weight to the duty and the presumptive desirability of preserving the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. I am content that the mitigation measures proposed in SSJ Policy 4 would ensure that the character and appearance of the adjacent Conservation Area would be preserved as a result of the proposed development on the allocated site.
70. I note that the western edge of the site is defined by the line of the Roman Road. A letter dated from the County Archaeologist appended to the SEA and HRA Report (January 2016) states that *it seems very unlikely that archaeological issues will be a constraint to development, but it is likely that some archaeological remains or evidence would be encountered during development. I think it likely that an archaeological condition might be attached to any planning permission to secure some level of archaeological survey before or during development*.
71. Due to the potential archaeological significance of the area, I consider that SSJ Policy 4 includes appropriate detailed and proportionate requirements with regard to archaeological investigation.
72. The proposed development site is within the Strategic Gap. BDLP Policy EM2 does allow development in the Strategic Gap if such development is proposed through a Neighbourhood Plan and if it would not diminish the physical and/or visual separation. The allocated site does not sit in open countryside and is not physically located between Sherborne St John village and Basingstoke town. From my observations at my site visit, I consider that the allocated site would not diminish the physical and/or visual separation of these settlements. As such, the allocated site would be in general conformity with BDLP Policy EM2.
73. BDLP Policy SS6 is a restrictive policy with regard to the provision of new housing in the countryside outside Settlement Development Boundaries. One exception is where sites are allocated for development in a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan. BDLP Policy SS1 states that *Settlement Policy Boundaries will be reviewed through a future Development Plan Document*.

74. The site at Cranes Road is outside the Settlement Policy Boundary. Map 5 identifies a revised boundary around the site. Background evidence in the Basic Conditions Statement states: *with the agreement of BDBC, the village settlement boundary is being amended to include this allocation site and is shown as such on the map that accompanies policy SSJ4 in the Neighbourhood Plan.*
75. BDLP Policy SS6 allows for such a site identified in a Neighbourhood Plan to remain outside a Settlement Policy Boundary. However, in this instance, it appears that the intention is to include the site within the Settlement Policy Boundary in this Neighbourhood Plan. In these circumstances, whilst Map 5 identifies a revised Settlement Policy Boundary, this has not been referred to in a policy. In the interest of precision, I therefore recommend the inclusion of reference to the revised Settlement Policy Boundary within SSJ Policy 4.
76. Paragraph 114 refers to the provision of an area of public open space within the proposed development on the Cranes Road site. However, this is not stated as a specific requirement in SSJ Policy 4. In the interest of precision, I recommend the deletion of such a reference in paragraph 114.
77. Paragraph 109 in the NPPF seeks to ensure, amongst other matters that new development does not contribute to water pollution. The Environment Agency has requested the inclusion of reference to development schemes being informed by an infrastructure statement demonstrating sufficient sewerage is in place to support the scheme.
78. BDLP Policy CN6 requires new development to provide infrastructure to meet the needs and requirements that are expected to arise from new development. This policy is referred to in the supporting text to SSJ Policy 4. In these circumstances, as the infrastructure requirement is already stated in BDLP Policy CN6, I do not consider it to be necessary for it to be repeated in the Neighbourhood Plan in order to meet the Basic Conditions.
79. Subject to the proposed modifications that I have suggested above, I am satisfied that the chosen site is deliverable and together with the overall housing strategy in the Neighbourhood Plan will contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development by the provision of sustainable growth. In addition, for the reasons stated above, subject to the proposed modifications that I have suggested, I consider that SSJ Policy 4 has regard to national policy and will be in general conformity with strategic policy. Thus, SSJ Policy 4, as modified, will meet the Basic Conditions.
80. **Recommendation: to meet the Basic Conditions:**
- I recommend modification to paragraphs 49 and 57 to state that BDLP Policy SS5 specifies that it will be necessary to identify sites/opportunities to deliver at least 10 homes within and adjacent to each of the settlements with defined Settlement Policy Boundaries;**

I recommend modification to paragraphs 111 and 114 to state that the range of dwellings to be provided would be between approximately 12 and 18 dwellings;

I recommend modification to the second bullet point in paragraph 114 to refer to the provision of land for the shop.

I recommend modification to the third bullet point in paragraph 114 by the deletion of the offer of its own area of public open space; and

I recommend modification to SSJ Policy 4 to read as follows:

A residential-led development of between approximately 12 and 18 dwellings will be delivered on land within a revised Settlement Policy Boundary as defined on Map 5 of this Plan.

To meet locally identified needs the site should provide a mix of homes and should meet the requirements of policy SSJ1 in this Neighbourhood Plan.

The site should provide safeguarded land for a new shop unit of around 1,230 square feet (net area), of a format which is suitable to accommodate predominantly convenience floor space.

Development scheme proposals for the site should be informed by a heritage assessment of the site and its setting. This will require investigation of the site's archaeological potential, including the potential for remains associated with the recorded Roman road through a programme of investigation agreed with the Council's archaeological advisor. Where remains are identified as present, consideration of the potential to retain remains in-situ through careful design, including the location of open space and use of sensitive construction techniques, should be clearly set out. Where the loss of remains cannot be avoided and the public benefits of development would clearly outweigh the harm caused by their loss, the recording of those remains will be required.

Preservation of the setting of the conservation area, in particular, will be achieved through the retention and enhancement of the screening vegetation along the northern and western boundaries of the site. In addition, the bulkier proposed buildings on site will be drawn away from these boundaries as far as possible. Development will comprise a high quality of design and materials and it will be of an appropriate scale, to be in keeping with the conservation area to the west. The southern boundary of the site will be well-defined and strongly landscaped, so that it demarks the change to adjacent countryside.

Non-statutory Community Action Plan

81. A number of other issues were identified by the local community in the course of the production of the Plan. These issues are important to local people and have been included as a non-statutory list of actions to be led by Councillors and assisted by the community at large. It is clear that these actions are separate from the land use and development policies in the Plan.

Referendum and the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan Area

82. I am required to make one of the following recommendations:
- the Plan should proceed to Referendum, on the basis that it meets all legal requirements; or
 - the Plan as modified by my recommendations should proceed to Referendum; or
 - the Plan does not proceed to Referendum, on the basis that it does not meet the relevant legal requirements.
83. **I am pleased to recommend that the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan as modified by my recommendations should proceed to Referendum.**
84. I am required to consider whether or not the Referendum Area should extend beyond the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan Area. I see no reason to alter or extend the Neighbourhood Plan Area for the purpose of holding a referendum.

Minor Modification

85. The Plan is a well-written document, which is easy to read. In paragraph 36 there is reference to the Parish Council having the *jurisdiction to withdraw and replace the Plan at a later date*. Whilst the Parish Council would be responsible for producing a replacement Plan, it would actually be the responsibility of BDBC to formally revoke an existing Plan and replace it. Therefore, in the interest of precision, I recommend amendment to paragraph 36 accordingly. I see this as a minor modification to the supporting text in the Plan which has no bearing on whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

86. It is not for me to re-write the Plan. If other minor amendments are required as a result of my proposed modifications, I see these as editorial matters which can be dealt with as minor amendments to the Plan.

Janet Cheesley

Date 10 February 2017

Appendix 1 Background Documents

The background documents include

The National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
The Localism Act (2011)
The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012)
The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations (2015)
The Planning Practice Guidance (2014)
Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011 to 2029 (adopted May 2016)
Regulation 14 Representations
Regulation 16 Representations
BDBC Compliance Check for the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan
and Compliance Check letter November 2016
SSJ Baseline Report R9
SSJ Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement R6
SSJ Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Review R2
SSJ Neighbourhood Plan Site Sustainability Report R1
BDBC SEA and HRA Screening Report (January 2016) and Decision Notice
(November 2016)
SSJ Neighbourhood Plan – Scheme of Delegation R1
SSJ Housing Site Identification, Appraisal and Selection Process R0
SSJ Basic Conditions Statement July 2016 R3
02.03.01_Evidence_Base_Document_R7 09.03.15
Action Hampshire SSJ Housing Needs Survey Report
SSJ NP Questionnaire
SSJ NP Questionnaire Results
SSJ Neighbourhood Plan Draft Report – Revision 4 March 2015
Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites Discussion Paper 12.10.15 R7
SSJ Population Prediction R1
SSJ Water Resources
Landscape Capacity of SSJ
Wildlife Map interim output (with a complete map due late 2016)
SSJ Roads & Traffic Analysis (+ attachments (i), (ii), (iii))
SSJ Village Design Statement 2004
SSJ Parish Map
Plan Showing the Location of the Short-Listed Sites A
Plan Showing the Location of the Short-Listed Sites B
Site Assessments
Local green space policy assessments
Business & Employment
2003 Conservation Area Appraisal for SSJ
2003 Conservation Area Map for SSJ
Glossary
SIGMA heritage assessment report