

Shillingstone Neighbourhood Plan Review

DRAFT

Modifications Statement

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

Date of report: March 2025 (draft for SEA screening and Parish Council approval)

1. Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan regulations require that the Parish Council publish a statement setting out whether or not it considers that the modifications proposed are so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the Neighbourhood Plan, and to give reasons for this opinion.

2. Main Modifications Proposed

The main changes proposed as part of the review of the Shillingstone Neighbourhood Plan, as impacting on the plan's policies, are set out below. Other changes are minor in nature, such as factual updates and improvements to the clarity of the text.

The plan period (2017 – 2031), vision and objectives remain unchanged. The supporting text now notes that is likely to be subject to a further review (when the plan period will be rolled forward) starting by 2029. At that point the Local Plan for the area will have been updated (the new Dorset Local Plan is anticipated to be adopted by the end of 2027).

The section 'about our area' has been updated to reflect more recent evidence now available, as well as information that is pertinent to planning but not previously noted. This includes:

- Reference to 2021 Census data (updating the 2011 data);
- Additional information on employment areas (including tourism), flooding and traffic issues in the parish as well as new sections on infrastructure and the trailway;
- Cross-reference to the landscape and heritage study undertaken on behalf of the former North Dorset District Council to inform policy making, with the section on Shillingstone appended to the plan;
- Reference to the discovery of the Roman Villa in 2004 (noted as an event in the Dorset Historic Environment Record), with some of the footage appended to the plan.

The main changes proposed to the plan policies are summarised below.

☐ Indicates policies where changes are proposed – this applies to eight of the policies, and the nature of the changes are described.

☐ Indicates no changes are proposed – this applies to the site allocation policies 7 - Antell's Haulage Yard (AH); 8 - Land off Candy's Lane (CAN); or 13 - Whitepit Farm buildings (WPF-B). These sites are still capable of delivery within the plan period and no issues have been raised in relation to the policies.

☐ Indicates that the policies will be removed as they no longer serve any obvious purpose – this applies to two policies: 9 - Land adjoining the Cobbles (COB); and 12 - Hine Town Lane South of the Old Ox (HTL-S), as the development of these sites has now finished.

Policy	Main change
1. Local Green Spaces	<p>Burton Orchard and the adjoining play area have been included as Local Green Spaces. These are owned by the Parish Council, and managed for the benefit of the community. These are considered to fulfil the criteria for Local Green Spaces set out in the national planning policy, and for consistency should be treated the same as the Recreation Ground, which was made a Local Green Space.</p> <p>The supporting text notes that consideration will be given to other areas that are being established, such as the wildflower meadow at the Old Ox, and the North Dorset Beekeepers Association site, in a future review.</p>

Policy	Main change
2. Our roads, lanes and tracks	<p>The policy has been renamed and expanded to highlight local issues relating to matters impacting on the safe use of the roads and tracks around the parish, particularly in relation to traffic management, including parking provision and the inclusion of street trees. This helps the plan align more with national planning policy's support for "using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-designed, sustainable and popular places".</p> <p>A new table and map are included in the supporting text to highlight the main issues and possible solutions. The Parish Council have recently secured the expansion of the 30mph limit to further out from the village, and will continue to work closely with Dorset Council as the Highways Authority to explore ways to improve road safety and accessibility in the local area and to ensure the local maintenance of highways.</p>
3. The character and design of new development	<p>The policy has been expanded to include reference to and support for design measures to reduce carbon use and waste and improve biodiversity, water efficiency, in light of Dorset Council's declared nature and climate change emergency.</p> <p>The supporting text explains that such measures are best considered as part of the early design process, in order that they can be successfully integrated into the build, and need not harm the area's local identity and distinctive character, and includes a number of positive examples.</p>
4. Important community facilities	<p>The new Co-op local convenience store has been added to the list of community facilities to be protected under this policy. The supporting text has been updated with regard to the Old Ox, noting its registration as an Asset of Community Value in 2022, and the recent decision (that went against the policy) to reduce the grounds associated with the Old Ox, despite the lack of impartial evidence that this would not adversely impact on its ongoing viability. The policy has been amended to give even clearer direction should a similar situation arise in the future, by adding in a requirement for clear, independently verified evidence that such a loss should not compromise that facility's ongoing viability.</p>
5. Development within the settlement boundary	<p>The introductory section has been updated to reflect the changes in housing, employment and community facilities that have occurred since the plan was first prepared.</p> <p>The review of the neighbourhood plan has tested whether the indicative housing target should be updated based on more recent information, taking account of the higher housing targets based on the more recently published national policy and standard methods. The results of this testing are shown in Appendix 3, and concluded that the target should be revised from 40 to in the region of 54 homes (for the same plan period) – an uplift of 35%.</p> <p>A housing land supply table has also been included, recording the completions since the start of the plan period, the extant planning</p>

Policy	Main change
	<p>consents and remaining allocations, identifying a supply of about 77 homes.</p> <p>On this basis, the policy has been updated to clarify that the release of unallocated greenfield sites for open market housing outside of the village settlement boundary is not necessary at this time, but recognizes that this will be necessary when the plan period is extended and can therefore be guided by the next review of the plan.</p>
6. Housing types and sizes	<p>The policy has been amended to provide guidance on house sizes in relation to local needs in relation to open market housing, so that the mix better reflects the greater need for 2 and some 3 bedroom properties, suitable for young working individuals and families or suitable for older residents wishing to downsize. Any new applications to build 4+ bedroom properties should be justified by evidence to support the local need for their construction.</p> <p>Based on local experience, and research into the number of applications for 9 and 11 dwellings across the Dorset Council area, there is also evidence to suggest that landowners are seeking to duck out of their affordable housing commitments by bring land parcels through in separate applications thus creating sites of under 0.5ha. Given the need for affordable houses, it is important that potential sites that could deliver affordable housing are not artificially sub-divided / reduced in order to avoid the need to provide such homes, and the policy now includes provision seeking to prevent this.</p>
7. Antell's Haulage Yard (AH)	No change to the policy – this site is still capable of delivering up to 6 dwellings within the plan period, linked to the relocation of the existing businesses.
8. Land off Candy's Lane (CAN)	No change to the policy – this site is still capable of delivering a further dwellinghouse within the plan period.
9. Land adjoining the Cobbles (COB)	The development of this site is now complete. The policy has therefore been removed as it no longer serves any obvious purpose.
10. Hine Town Lane North of the Old Ox (HTL-N)	A number of minor changes have been included to highlight the need for affordable and smaller dwelling types, and to provide guidance on building heights (in particular the use of 1 - 1.5 storeys (equivalent) homes to safeguard the rural character of views from Hine Town Lane and protect the privacy and amenity of residents whose properties back onto the site). The policy also clarifies the need for the landscaping to include areas of permanent green space through the development in order to reinforce the rural character of the village. Issues relating to the disposal of surface water are also made clearer, as the current SFRA maps wrong record the local network of culverts, pipes and ditches, and inadequacies in the system have led to localized flooding.
11. Land at the Old Ox (OX)	This policy has been updated to reflect the most recent approval for further housing to the rear of the Old Ox, which if implements would mean that the proposed holiday accommodation (intended to support the

Policy	Main change
	ongoing viability of the pub) is no longer possible. As a result, the focus on the policy is to ensure the retention of the remaining undeveloped area for parking and pub garden / open space (in line with the current plans), which are considered essential to ensure that the pub has a reasonable prospect of remaining viable.
12. Hine Town Lane South of the Old Ox (HTL-S)	The development of this site is now complete. The policy has therefore been removed as it no longer serves any obvious purpose.
13. Whitepit Farm buildings (WPF-B)	No change to the policy – this site is still capable of delivering up to 19 dwellings within the plan period.

3. Consideration

Shillingstone Parish Council consider that the proposed modifications are **not** so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the plan.

The reasons for this are as follows:

- The changes do not look to modify the plan period;
- The changes do not look to add, delete or modify the extent of any of the proposed site allocations, and do not compromise the Plan's ability to address local needs, taking into account a reasonable uplift to the housing target. The policies covering site allocations that have now been completed have been removed as they no longer serve any clear purpose. Changes to the site allocation policy for site HTL-N primarily relate to relatively minor matters of design, and changes to the site allocation policy for site OX reflect its partial completion and extant consent;
- The clarification in relation to house types and ensuring affordable housing is brought forward through the efficient use of land does not change the thrust of these policies in meeting local housing needs, in line with national planning guidance;
- The addition of two new Local Green Spaces into the policy protecting green spaces does not change the thrust of the policy, is uncontroversial given the land is within Parish Council ownership and has been managed as a community orchard and play area for many years;
- The addition of the Co-op store into the policy protecting community facilities, does not change the thrust of the policy – the Co-op store opened just after the first Neighbourhood Plan was 'made', and has become the community's main convenience store (the shop within the petrol filling station is not of sufficient size to adequately perform such a function - but the petrol filling station remains an important local facility).
- The requirement for evidence on viability prior to determining whether the loss or reduction in a community facility may be allowed does not change the thrust of the policy which is to safeguard important community facilities.
- The additional detail on highways matters reflects the issues raised previously through the Neighbourhood Plan process and align with the concept of a vision-led approach to transport planning promoted through national planning policy. It is accepted that the highway solutions will need further design consideration / checks and will be dependent on funding.
- Additional matters in relation to design are not considered a substantive change, but ensure that due consideration is given to both climate change and retaining local character.