

Shillingstone Neighbourhood Plan Site Selection report

The following report outlines the site selection procedure as it worked for the Shillingstone Neighbourhood Plan, from initial site appraisal through to more detailed investigation, that influenced the choice and wording of the plan.

Initial site selection

The initial sites investigated were sourced from those put forward by landowners through the District Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment database and included as having development potential (the map of SHLAA sites is a "living document" updated as and when new sites are submitted), plus sites suggested through landowners or their agents contacting the Parish Council / neighbourhood plan group following the neighbourhood plan publicity and consultation (two sites were identified through this process that was not already in the SHLAA - these were Antells Haulage Yard and land off Candy's Lane). A copy of the SHLAA map (showing both included and excluded sites) is re-produced in Appendix A.

At that time there are 3 houses completed or under construction since 2011 (land adj 22 Wessex Avenue (1 unit) 2/2012/1569/PLNG and Mowbray The Cross (2 units net) 2/2010/0091/PLNG)

There were also a number of sites with outstanding or lapsed consent that had the potential to deliver up to 16 dwellings. These sites were also included in the housing land supply (although acknowledging that not all may be delivered). These were

- DJM Cookswell: 9 units, 2/2013/1231/PLNG
- TF Townsend Farm: 2 units, 2/2014/1008/OUT
- WEST Westleigh Blandford Road: 4 units, 2/2013/1325/PLNG
- SR Station Road lapsed consent for 1 unit

All the above were noted as part of the potential housing land supply, and therefore not included in the subsequent site evaluation (unless they were to be removed from the settlement boundary).

As such, 13 potential sites were identified as potential sites for consideration through the neighbourhood plan process. These were:

- AH (Antells Haulage Yard) = 0.2ha
- CAN (land off Candy's Lane) = 0.1ha
- COB (adjoining the Cobbles) = 0.1ha
- HTL-North (land off High Town Lane north of the Old Ox) = 0.7ha
- HTL-OX (land adjoining the Old Ox) = 0.5ha
- HTL-South (adjoining Honeysuckle Gardens) = 0.2ha
- LOD (adjoining the Lodge) = 0.3ha
- RED (land east of the Red House) = 1.2ha
- WPF-B (White Pit Farm buildings) = 0.6ha
- WPF-L (land adjoining White Pit Farm) = 4.0ha

The following maps show the sites:



Shillingstone CP 



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In total, these sites were estimated to provide capacity in the region of 160 dwellings, considerably in excess of the likely level of housing need. As such not additional sites were actively sourced.

Initial site investigation

The following table summarise the main issues identified through an initial sieve of constraints information available online

Key No issues identified Potential constraints identified Major constraints identified likely to preclude development

Ref	Flooding	Contamination	Wildlife	Heritage	Landscape
AH	No fluvial flood risk or surface water flood risk	No record of contamination, however previous industrial / vehicle repair use means further investigation would be appropriate	No known wildlife sites in close proximity.	Partially within the Conservation area. Possible archaeological interest (post-medieval orchard). Manor Farmhouse (Grade II) on opposite side of Blandford Road	No constraints identified in close proximity.
CAN	No fluvial flood risk or surface water flood risk	No record of contamination, undeveloped greenfield site	No known wildlife sites in close proximity.	Within the Conservation Area. Possible archaeological interest (post-medieval orchard).	Within an Important Open or Wooded Area identified in the Local Plan
COB	No fluvial flood risk or surface water flood risk	No record of contamination, undeveloped greenfield site	No known wildlife sites in close proximity.	Within the Conservation Area. Within the grounds of Cobbles (Grade II) and opposite Japonica Cottage (Grade II). Possible archaeological interest (post-medieval orchard).	No constraints identified in close proximity.
HTL-N	No fluvial flood risk – possible surface water flood risk along south-east site boundary	No record of contamination, undeveloped greenfield site	No known wildlife sites in close proximity.	Within the Conservation Area. Possible archaeological interest (post-medieval orchard).	Within an Important Open or Wooded Area identified in the Local Plan
OX	No fluvial flood risk – possible surface water flood risk	No record of contamination, undeveloped greenfield site	No known wildlife sites in close proximity.	Within the Conservation Area. Opposite Cobbles	Includes an Important Open or Wooded Area identified in

Ref	Flooding	Contamination	Wildlife	Heritage	Landscape
	along north-west site boundary			(Grade II) and Wisteria Cottage (Grade II). Possible archaeological interest (post-medieval orchard).	the Local Plan
HTL-S	No fluvial flood risk or surface water flood risk	No record of contamination, undeveloped greenfield site	No known wildlife sites in close proximity.	Within the Conservation Area. Japonica Cottage (Grade II) rear garden diagonally abuts the site. Possible archaeological interest (post-medieval orchard).	Includes an Important Open or Wooded Area identified in the Local Plan
LOD	No fluvial flood risk or surface water flood risk	No record of contamination, undeveloped greenfield site	No known wildlife sites in close proximity.	Within the Conservation Area. Possible archaeological interest (post-medieval orchard).	Adjoins an Important Open or Wooded Area identified in the Local Plan
RED	No fluvial flood risk – possible surface water flood risk across centre and along south-east site boundary	No record of contamination, undeveloped greenfield site	No known wildlife sites in close proximity.	Adjoining the Conservation Area. Includes area of possible archaeological interest (post-medieval orchard).	No constraints identified in close proximity.
WPF-B	No fluvial flood risk or surface water flood risk	No record of contamination, however agricultural use means further investigation may be appropriate	No known wildlife sites in close proximity.	No heritage designations in close proximity.	Site adjoins Dorset AONB boundary
WPF-L	No fluvial flood risk or surface water flood risk	No record of contamination, undeveloped greenfield site	No known wildlife sites in close proximity.	No heritage designations in close proximity.	Site adjoins Dorset AONB boundary. TPO (individual tree)

Initial site investigation - conclusions

The initial site investigation highlighted that almost all of the sites were subject to a degree of constraint, though with careful design and mitigation it should be possible for development to take place.

Site selection focus

The initial consultation has asked “Do you think that farmland outside the existing village development boundary should be built on?”. The majority of local residents had said ‘No’ (168 – 70%), with 64% agreeing that development should be on infill sites within the settlement boundary. In response to the question “Should any of the green spaces within the village (including IOWA’s –shown in green on the map) be built on?” only 24% agreed.

The only site which was both within the settlement boundary and would not include any previously designated green spaces was Antells Haulage Yard, which clearly could not accommodate sufficient development

A review of the green spaces was undertaken with the Kevin Morris – Environment Manager from North Dorset District Council (holding qualifications in town planning, urban design and building conservation). This identified that some of the green spaces within the settlement boundary were not as important as currently undesignated farmland adjoining the village.

The other factor that was considered at this stage was the connectivity of the site to the settlement – particularly in terms of access and whether it would adjoining the main body of the village. Three sites were considered to perform less well in relation to this factor:

- RED (land east of the Red House) = 1.2ha
- WPF-B (White Pit Farm buildings) = 0.6ha
- WPF-L (land adjoining White Pit Farm) = 4.0ha

It was noted that the buildings at White Pit Farm did potentially benefit from permitted development rights, and therefore should also be given further consideration. The other two sites were considered to not merit further investigation at this stage, given that the alternative options were anticipated to more than meet likely requirements and were better related to the village.

The group were also made aware at this time that the landowner of LOD (land adjoining the Lodge) no longer wished to promote their site for development, and as such this was withdrawn from the potential site list.

Options consultation

Following discussions with the District Council in respect of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and potential site options, the decision was taken to consult on the emerging draft plan including the potential remaining site options. This consultation took place during June / July 2015, and included a site appraisal, capacity and potential policy for each of the remaining sites. The draft plan made clear that feedback on these options would help shape the final plan

Ref	Description	Estimated potential	Size
AH	Antell's Haulage Yard	Possible site for housing or live-work units (estimated up to 6 dwellings in total)	0.2ha
CAN	Land off Candy's Lane	Possible site for 1 dwelling	0.1ha
COB	Land adjoining the Cobbles	Possible site for up to 3 dwellings	0.1ha
HTL-N	Hine Town Lane North of the Old Ox	Possible site for up to 12 new dwellings, including some affordable housing for local people	0.7ha
OX	Land at the Old Ox	Possible site for holiday accommodation (bed and breakfast units and tied managers accommodation) plus up to 2 new dwellings	0.5ha
HTL-S	Hine Town Lane South of the Old Ox	Possible site for up to 3 new dwellings	0.2ha
WPF-B	Whitepit Farm buildings	Possible site for up to 16 new dwellings, including some affordable housing for local people	0.6ha

The existing sites with planning consent together with the above sites exceeds the assessed housing need of up to 40 homes by a considerable margin, and therefore the Parish Council is likely to reduce or remove one or more sites before submitting this plan for examination, particularly if the consultation highlights concerns in terms of their development.

The consultation specifically asked:

- > Do you agree with the possible development sites and the suggested maximum number of houses?
- > If you answered 'no' can you explain what you are concerned about (this helps us work out whether we can make changes to address your concerns)?
- > Are there any other sites that would be better than the above suggestions? Please explain where they are and why they would be better?

As part of this consultation, the issues highlighted through the initial searches were included in the draft plan, together with relevant policy text to mitigate the issues were appropriate.

The consultation responses indicated that there was broad support for all of the sites, with the least popular being HTL-N (Hine Town Lane north of the Old Ox), HTL-S (Land south of the Old Ox) and WPF-B (Whitepit Farm Buildings), but even the least popular had more in favour than were opposed. It was clear that including all the sites would provide scope to meet the local needs with some flexibility (ie if one or more sites did not come forward) and would include the potential for affordable housing on larger sites. Removing either of the larger sites would significantly reduce the potential to deliver affordable housing, other than in locations outside the development boundary as 'rural exception sites'.

Detailed site appraisal

More detailed site investigation then took place to ensure that the selected sites were likely to be acceptable in terms of their environmental impacts, following advice from Natural England and Historic England. The results of these studies were incorporated into the issues and mitigation advice contained within the draft plan.

One of the studies was an ecological survey of six of the seven sites. This was undertaken by Dorset Environmental Records Centre. The seventh site (Hine Town Lane North of the Old Ox) had recently had a similar study done as part of a very recent planning application. The sites were visited by a suitably qualified ecologist on 8th October 2015 and assessed from public footpaths and roadsides. In addition a search was made for Protected Species and Biodiversity Priority (BAP) Species from the DERC database. This noted that there is very little habitat of high ecological importance in any of the areas surveyed. The grasslands are either improved or semi-improved and species-poor with very few herbs apart from common species. The main ecological interest was in the old hedgerows associated with the small fields between the houses and Hine Town Lane. In addition, the old farm buildings at Whitepit Farm provide suitable habitat for bats and there is a 2007 record of 6 Brown Long-eared Bats *Plecotus auritus* from here. Therefore a bat survey would be required before any work is carried out in the vicinity of the buildings.

The other study undertaken was a heritage assessment, with the assessment work undertaken by a heritage conservation expert. This considered the proposed mitigation contained in the draft plan proposals and the likely magnitude of effect on heritage assets in the area. It concluded that, with the exception of the development within the setting of the Cobbles, the impact of development on the setting of other designated heritage assets would be negligible. Following receipt of the report minor changes were made to the draft plan text to better reflect the heritage interest and potential mitigation.

The Dorset AONB team confirmed that in their view, subject to careful design, there is potential for the identified sites to be developed as outlined without undue harm to the character of the AONB. Similar comments in respect of flood risk were also made by the Environment Agency and Dorset County Council in their response, with some wording changes suggested to better reflect the flood risk situation locally.

Appendix A: SHLAA map

