

FONTMELL MAGNA

Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2031



Referendum Version - November 2018

Prepared by Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
on behalf of Fontmell Magna Parish Council.

Foreword

Welcome to the Neighbourhood Plan for the village and wider parish of Fontmell Magna.

Fontmell Magna is situated in the Blackmore Vale in North Dorset, approximately 5 miles south of Shaftesbury. The Parish includes the village of Fontmell Magna, the hamlet of Bedchester, and settlements in Hartgrove, Kit Hill and Margaret Marsh. The Fontmell Magna village is a designated Conservation Area and the eastern side of the parish lies within the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB; it is mentioned in the Domesday Book when Fontmell Brook powered three mills. Fontmell Magna is a beautiful village with a handsome 15th Century church, a vibrant pub, expanding primary school, a village shop, post office and tea-room and a GP surgery.

This Plan sets out how the parish should be developed over the period to 2031 to achieve a sustainable and thriving community, whilst retaining the distinctive character of the parish which is highly valued by residents and appreciated by visitors.

Since April 2012, local communities have been able to produce Neighbourhood Plans for their local area, putting in place planning policies for the future development and growth of the neighbourhood. In May 2015, the Parish Council decided to commission the development of a Neighbourhood Plan which,

combined with the North Dorset Local Plan, will provide the planning policies for the parish and guide decisions on planning applications.

An initial scoping meeting was held on 7th July 2015, with 40 parish residents attending, to identify areas of interest and concern amongst residents and to determine the scope of the Plan. From there a Working Group was formed of volunteers from the parish, with Dick Stainer as chair, to take forward the work to produce a Plan on behalf of the Parish Council. The Working Group held its first meeting in September 2015 and has met monthly since then to co-ordinate and review the Plan's development, with much of the detailed work done in volunteer Focus Groups looking at housing, environment and infrastructure. The work has been greatly assisted by grant funding from the Locality organisation (a Government agency) and from the Parish Council, and by Jo Witherden, a Planning Consultant, who provided the technical advice. An application for the Designated Area of the Neighbourhood Plan was submitted by the Parish Council in January 2016 and approved by the Local Planning Authority on 22nd June 2016; the Designated Area follows the civil parish boundaries.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been developed through continuous consultation with residents, businesses and interested organisations and groups. A parish-wide questionnaire was conducted in May 2016 to seek views on the

future development of housing, environment, infrastructure, business and employment in the parish; an encouraging response rate of 41% was achieved from 336 households. A supplementary questionnaire on Business and Employment went to all businesses in the parish. The questionnaires were supported by a consultation event in the Village Hall, with 50 residents attending. This provided exhibits and information on local green spaces, housing needs, possible development sites and Local Plan constraints. A Call for Sites process was held in July 2016 inviting landowners to submit potential development sites for housing, employment or recreational use, for assessment and possible inclusion in the Plan; this was supported by a communications event for landowners in July 2016 and generated 15 sites for consideration. A Strategic Environmental Assessment was submitted to the Local Planning Authority and other statutory consultees in March 2017. An options consultation event was held for parish residents in March 2017, covering proposals on housing and the environment, through an exhibition, available online and in the Village Hall, which over 100 people attended. 71 responses were received, and they were broadly supportive of the proposals. A further focus group and online consultation was held in May 2017 covering proposals on infrastructure.

Preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan was accompanied by a Strategic Environmental Assessment which scrutinised the potential site allocations and policies in terms of their likely impact on the environment. This meant that possible harm

could be avoided through careful site selection and the inclusion of specific mitigation measures in the policies themselves. Also, a Conservation Area Appraisal was produced in May 2017 to supplement the body of evidence supporting the Neighbourhood Plan.

A further extensive consultation was held over October-November 2017, the Pre-submission Consultation, centred on an updated Draft Plan, an updated Strategic Environmental Assessment, and a draft Conservation Area Appraisal. The consultation was publicised in both the October and November issues of The Gossip Tree, on posters throughout the parish, and on the Parish Council website. In addition, statutory consultees were invited to participate by email or letter as appropriate. Two open meetings were held in the Village hall and copies of the documents were available in the Village Shop, the Surgery, the School Office and The Fontmell Pub. Residents were invited to provide feedback through a two-page questionnaire; 145 responses were received of which 90 contained comments on specific policies and issues, and suggestions. All policies in the Draft Plan were strongly supported by residents, with positive ratings in the range 77-98% and with the majority over 90% in favour. Residents' comments and those from statutory consultees were collated and analysed, and changes made to the Plan and supporting documents as considered appropriate.

Throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Plan residents have been kept informed through frequent articles in the monthly parish newsletter The Gossip Tree. The notes of all Working Group meetings and all important documents have been published on the Parish web site, www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk, and the Parish Council has received regular updates on progress throughout. Communication events on aspects of the Plan's development were held in the Village Hall in May 2016, July 2016, March 2017 and November 2017 and were all well attended by parish residents.

The Parish Council, on behalf of parish residents, greatly appreciates the time and effort contributed by our consultant, and the group of volunteers from the parish and who have served at various times on the Working Group over the past 30 months. The people involved are:

Dick Stainer (Chair), Jo Witherden (Consultant), Michael Humphreys (Secretary), Chris Bellers, Michael Hobbs, Barbara Humphreys, Roy King, John Knight, Hannah Lister, Robert

McCurrach, Lorna McCurrach, Emma Reeman, Ken Rhodes, Caroline Rhodes, Barry Roberts, Nadine Robson, Sven Thomas, Laura Scott Walby.

Their dedication and perseverance ensured that this Neighbourhood Plan **was** been drawn up and guided through various consultations within the Parish and with other statutory consultees. A version of the Plan, incorporating revisions made as a result of responses to these consultations, was then submitted for scrutiny by North Dorset District Council and an Independent Examiner which included further public consultation.

The last step in preparing **the** Neighbourhood Plan **was** for the final version, incorporating the changes recommended by the Independent Examiner, to be approved by a referendum open to residents living in the parish **on the 15th** November 2018.

The referendum was passed with 91.5% in favour on a turnout of 47.8%

Dick Stainer,

Chairman

Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

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Executive Summary

The Neighbourhood Plan defines a range of policies and proposals for the village and parish of Fontmell Magna to guide its development over the Plan period of 2017-31. The Plan is presented in ten topic sections, focussing on different aspects of the parish and its potential development. The Plan is complemented by two supporting documents: a Strategic Environmental Assessment which scrutinises the potential site allocations and policies in terms of their likely impact on the environment; and a Conservation Area Appraisal, which sets out the special character of Fontmell Magna village and surroundings.

Introduction (p. 1)

The parish of Fontmell Magna in North Dorset is a largely rural area, bordered by Blackven Common to the west and Fontmell Down to the east which is part of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Fontmell village lies at the centre straddling the A350 main highway and is a designated Conservation Area. People have been living in the area for over a thousand years, and today it has a stable population of 730-740 residents.

Provision for development in the area is addressed through this Neighbourhood Plan and the North Dorset Local Plan in combination. A vision statement for the parish is offered, which is supported by a set of objectives published in this document.



Photograph 1: Village-wide view from Fontmell Down

Rural Character (p. 9)

From the public consultations that have been carried out in developing this Plan, it is clear that residents feel strongly that the mix of green, open and wooded areas, the streams such as Collyer's Brook and Fontmell Brook, and the historic and rural nature of the parish are what gives the area its distinctive character and that this should be protected. Policies have been drafted that identify and seek to protect these important environmental features of the parish, including local green spaces, local wildlife corridors and protected species, and panoramic countryside views. Some 19 Local Green Spaces (shown in Map 3)

are identified together with a set of 8 important views (shown in Map 5) which the policies are designed to protect.

A policy is included to preserve and protect the setting of the AONB at the eastern extent of the Parish. There is a policy to protect the local landscape character of the parish and another to retain dark skies.

Built Character and Historic Environment (p. 20)

The built environment of Fontmell Magna village dates from the 15th century and includes 35 Grade II listed buildings. A further 47 non-listed buildings in the parish are considered as contributing to its character, along with notable and important local features. These are highlighted in Map 1 on page vii. A policy is included to protect these undesignated heritage assets in the Conservation Area.

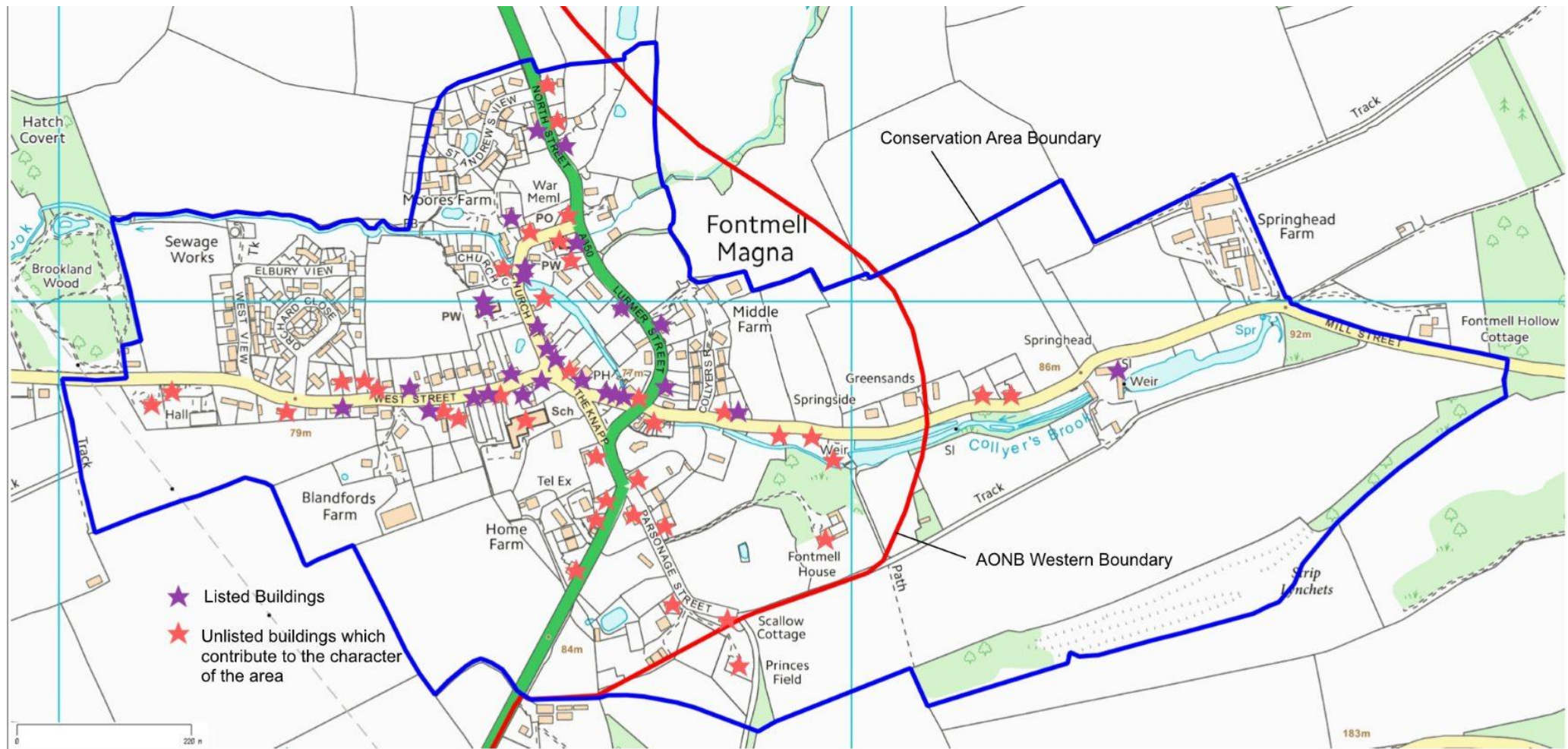


A policy is defined on the layout of developments, which should follow the pattern of existing village lanes in plot sizes, shapes and variation in building lines. For open-market housing the density should not exceed that of nearby properties which contribute to the character of the village. A further policy seeks to regulate the design and materials used in new building in order to prevent harm to the character of the Conservation Area.

Getting Around (p. 29)

The impact of traffic volumes and speed, along the A350 and through the village and parish lanes, is a major concern for residents. Whilst transport policy is outside the scope of this plan, a traffic management project is being pursued by the Parish Council working with the Highway Authority and adjoining parishes.

A map is provided showing the network of existing and proposed footpaths around the village. A policy is presented to safeguard the existing pedestrian network and in any new development to ensure suitable connections are provided for safe walking or cycling access to local facilities. The Plan's proposals include a new vehicular access from the A350 to a new development south of Home Farm, with a further link to land at Blandford's farm. An onward footpath and cycle path would link to the Village Hall and West Street.



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Map 1: Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

Flood Risk, Drainage and Sewage Treatment (p. 34)

A policy on sustainable drainage is included to ensure consideration is given in any new development to surface water run-off and groundwater flooding. Any developer will be required to undertake a flood risk assessment, including where necessary use of boreholes to determine the nature of underlying geology.

A policy is included with a requirement to demonstrate that any necessary upgrades to sewage treatment works will be in place prior to the site's occupation.

Community Facilities (p. 37)

The results of consultation exercises have shown that parish residents greatly value the community facilities available in Fontmell Magna village which support a wide range of community activities enabled by a strong group of volunteers. The Plan provides a list of important community facilities and there is a policy included to safeguard and enhance these facilities.

The Plan acknowledges the importance of effective broadband and mobile phone services to parish residents and proposes that the Parish Council continues to lobby for better services than are currently available. Policies encourage the take-up of renewable energy and energy efficiency in building designs but avoid harming the character of the area. Community **renewable** energy schemes have been considered, with some support emerging for a community Solar PV project.

It is anticipated that the plan will trigger projects to invest funds from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in new community facilities intended to meet local needs. A policy is included to ensure that a new development also supports the maintenance and enhancement of existing social infrastructure and the provision of new social infrastructure in line with national guidance.

Employment Needs (p. 42)

There should be sufficient opportunities for local people to find work in the village, although these will be limited in a rural area. The consultations highlighted support for further employment focused on tourism ventures and small-scale enterprises, particularly where they could re-use existing premises such as redundant agricultural buildings. A policy is defined to facilitate home working and measures for promoting business and employment opportunities.

A project is also defined to encourage the Parish Council to promote the area for tourism and hospitality and to provide information on existing local businesses and amenities.

Housing Needs (p. 45)

The Plan acknowledges the need for housing development, to provide affordable homes for local people, housing for young people, family homes and retirement homes/flats.

The level of housing growth needed in the parish is estimated at a maximum of 40 homes over the 15-year period 2016-2031. A quota of 30 homes would equate to a “fair share” of the North Dorset Local Plan’s minimum target for the rural area. Additional homes above this level could potentially provide much-needed affordable homes and other community benefits.

A housing needs assessment was prepared as part of the research underpinning this plan. A policy is defined setting out the types of housing required to meet the housing needs identified: predominantly 1, 2 and some 3-bedroom properties and suitable for young working individuals and families or suitable for older residents wishing to downsize. A project is also defined to review and update the Housing Needs Assessment over the plan period.

Amount and Location of New Development (p.49)

The plan includes a general policy on the spatial strategy for new developments. Locations for housing growth are proposed, with four sites identified to the west of the A350 highway and adjoining the current Settlement Boundary, as shown in Map 12.

A policy is proposed to amend the current Settlement Boundary to more accurately reflect where development has taken, or is planned to take place and to exclude protected green spaces that are on the edge of the settlement. The proposed Settlement Boundary is shown in Map 11.

Two further policies are included to cover specific locations for sustainable growth in housing:

- A specific policy covering the development of **Spring Meadows** (Site 20);
- A specific policy covering the development of land at Blandfords Farm Barn (Site 22), for employment and/or community uses and some self/custom build or affordable housing. (Self-build is where the owner is responsible for the construction; custom build is where the owner is responsible for the building design.)

Spring Meadows (Site 20) should be allocated for housing and the provision of a public car parking and coach area to accommodate the needs of the school at drop-off and collection time. A development of up to 30 units **is being built**, with a mix of open market and affordable housing. A visual buffer zone must be provided on the south-west and south-east boundaries, creating a more attractive entrance to the village from the South and mitigating the visual impact of new housing.

Housing development on land at Blandford's Farm Barn (Site 22) is proposed with 5-10 units. Development would be conditional on the existing barn being used (or a replacement provided) to support small businesses, particularly those focusing on teaching local skills and crafts, sales of local produce and products, and upon space being adapted for community activities.

Vehicular access to Site 20, and through to Site 22, would be provided via a new junction off the A350 in South Street.

Plan Monitoring and Review (p. 62)

The Plan concludes with arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the Plan over the period of its currency from 2017-31. The Parish Council will assume responsibility for monitoring adherence to the Plan in planning decisions and will review and update the Plan when necessary.

Appendices (p. 63)

Appendices are included to provide references to the evidence base of the Plan, supporting documentation and external background papers. Most of the documentation is available on the parish website:

http://www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk/FontmellMagna-PC/neighbourhood_plan-9778.aspx.

Definition of Policy Wording

The Plan includes policies with a range of applications, including planning for domestic purposes, larger scale multiple sites, and wider ecological and community issues. Because of this, some flexibility needs to be built into the policy tests on occasion. Where the words "will" or "must" have been used, this means that the policy test must be complied with and it is not expected that there will be any exceptions to the policy. Where the word "should" is used, this means that in general it is expected that the policy test will be met, but recognises that exceptions may need to be made due to specific circumstances. It does not imply that the policy is optional. Applicants who consider that their case is an exception should include information explaining the reasons why they consider such an exception should be made.

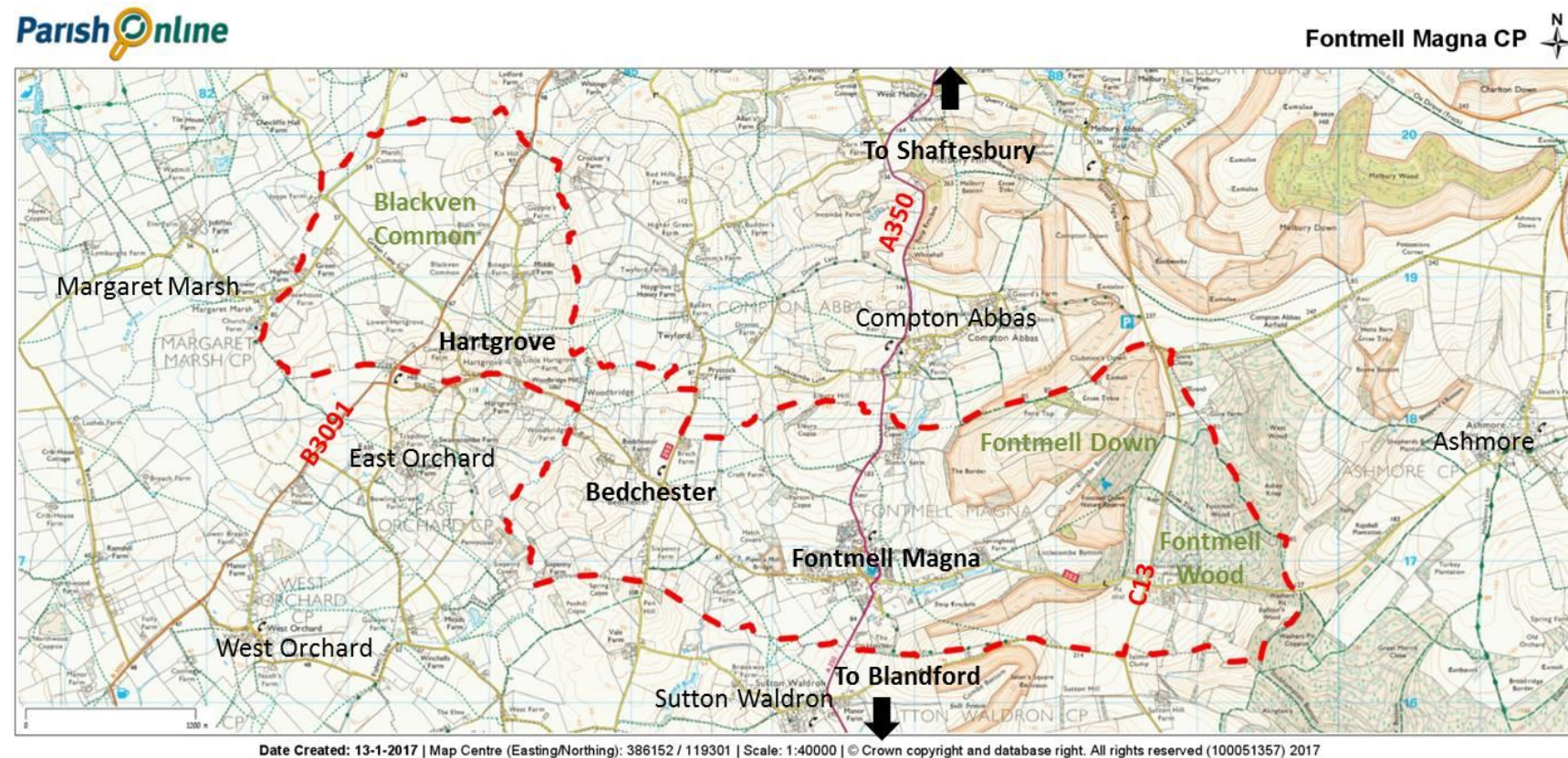
Policies and Projects List

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1. Introduction

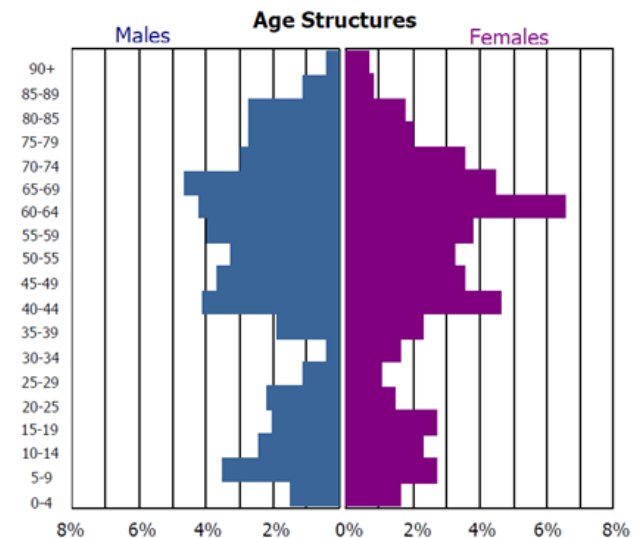
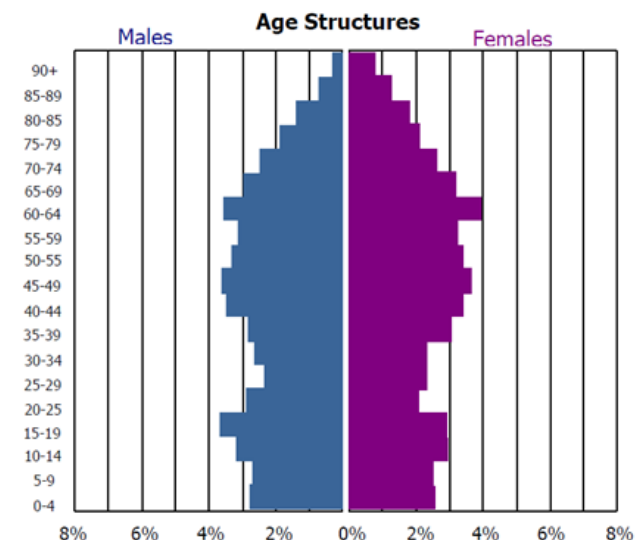
The Area

- 1.1 The parish of Fontmell Magna in North Dorset stretches from Blackven Common, eastwards across the B3091, encompassing the hamlet of Bedchester, settlements in Hartgrove, Kit Hill and Margaret Marsh, and the village of Fontmell Magna (which straddles the A350), before rising up to Fontmell Down in the east on either side of the C13 Higher Shaftesbury Road.



Map 2: Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 1.2 The parish has a population of about 730 – 740 usual residents (2014 Mid-Year Estimates, Office for National Statistics) and 327 homes (2015 Council Tax Records). The area has a fairly typical but slightly 'older' profile than the North Dorset average, with fewer adults in their 20s and 30s, and consequently fewer children. This may be the consequence of lack of affordable housing in the area.
- 1.3 Much of the area east of the A350 is of high environmental value and is nationally protected as part of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Fontmell Down is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (and is part of a larger Special Area of Conservation, the Fontmell and Melbury Downs SAC, protected under the EC Habitats Directive).
- 1.4 People have been living in the area for over a thousand years, with the presence of the springs thought to have been very influential in the early settlement of this area, so there is considerable historic interest in terms of old buildings and archaeological finds. The entire built-up area of Fontmell Magna village has Conservation Area status, and this extends to include a considerable extent of the countryside setting. Springhead is an historical mill site with gardens identified by Dorset Gardens Trust as being of local importance. There are 44 Listed Buildings in the parish, the most notable being the Church of St Andrew within the village (Grade II*), and 4 Scheduled Monuments (a bowl barrow NW of Gore Farm, the medieval strip lynchets south of Springhead Farm and the cross dykes on Fontmell Hill, and in Fontmell Wood).
- 1.5 Much of the land is in productive agricultural use, including areas of high grade farmland. There are also areas prone to flood risk, most notably on either side of the Fontmell/Collyer's Brook, at Marsh Common and along the brook at Woodbridge, but because of the geology and topography other areas

Fontmell Magna**North Dorset**

away from these streams are prone to surface water and groundwater flooding.

The Planning Context

- 1.6 The Neighbourhood Plan, together with the North Dorset Local Plan and the Dorset Minerals and Waste Plans, forms the development plan which sets out the planning policies for the area. The Neighbourhood Plan is important in guiding decisions on planning applications, which by law should be made in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (this is set out in section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).
- 1.7 The strategy set out in the Local Plan (which was the 2016 adopted plan at the time this Neighbourhood Plan was commenced) focuses much of the housing and economic growth needed around the main towns, but it recognises that the larger villages (including Fontmell Magna) have an important role to play as the focus for growth to meet local (rather than strategic) needs for the rural area. The Local Plan makes clear that local communities can review settlement boundaries and allocate sites through their neighbourhood plans. Neighbourhood plans can also develop more detailed policies, such as guidelines for what new buildings should look like, where infill development may be appropriate, which areas should be kept as green spaces, and consider requirements or projects for infrastructure improvements, and actions that will help address climate change.
- 1.8 Although the Local Plan sets no specific housing targets for Fontmell Magna, Policy 6: Housing Distribution refers to the provision of at least 825 dwellings in the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages) during the period 2011 – 2031. So, there is an expectation that the Neighbourhood Plan will make provision for some growth. The latest needs evidence for the housing market area encompassing North Dorset includes a higher housing requirement for the district, which suggests that this overall rural target may well be increased through the review. A more detailed assessment of local housing needs has been carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan volunteers in liaison with the District Council, the results of which are explained in the Housing Needs section (Section 8).
- 1.9 Both the Local Plan and a review of more recent employment evidence indicate that there is sufficient employment land available in the rural area as a whole, so there is no need for communities to allocate more land for employment. But Policy 11: The Economy makes clear that rural communities can still make plans to meet their own local economic development needs through neighbourhood planning, and this is considered in the Employment Needs section (Section 7).

Our Vision

1.10 What do we want our parish to be like in the future? What type of development do we want to encourage over the next 15 or so years? What places or features do we want to protect? The Neighbourhood Plan sets the vision for the area, and the planning framework that allows this to happen, alongside the broader strategic planning policies that are contained in the North Dorset Local Plan. Our vision is set out below:

The parish of Fontmell Magna has a distinctive character that is highly valued by residents and appreciated by visitors. Our aim is to conserve the character of the village and wider parish and achieve a vibrant and thriving community, by guiding developments that will maintain the sustainability of the community and its amenities for the benefit of the local inhabitants.



Photograph 2: Fontmell Magna and the Blackmore Vale from Littledown



Photograph 3: Fontmell Magna set in a tapestry of green fields with the Blackmore Vale beyond as viewed from Brandis Down



Photograph 4: Cranborne Chase escarpment (Fontmell Down) from St Andrew's Churchyard



Photograph 5: Cranborne Chase escarpment from Bedchester



Photograph 6: Cranborne Chase chalk escarpment from Gupples Lane (southern end)



Photograph 7: Blackmore Vale and distant horizon from rolling hills of Hartgrove

The Objectives for our Neighbourhood Plan

Table 1. Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

<p>1. To contribute to environmental sustainability, by:</p> <p>1.(a) Encouraging the use of renewable energy technologies, energy efficient design and technologies and efficient management of water resources while addressing flood risk;</p> <p>1.(b) Influencing the location of new housing to be within safe walking or cycling distance of local amenities;</p> <p>1.(c) Ensuring new housing and business sites minimise the impact on restricted roads, e.g. Mill Street and West Street and minimise additional car journeys within the parish.</p>	<p>2. To maintain the local character and historic environment of the parish, by:</p> <p>2.(a) Ensuring new development respects the quality of the historic built environment, and does not have a damaging effect on any assets of historic or architectural importance;</p> <p>2.(b) Ensuring development contributes to the quality and interest of the local character of the different areas within the parish;</p> <p>2.(c) Preserving the character of the narrow local byways with their high banks, tall hedges and wildflowers;</p> <p>2.(d) Encouraging the growth of the village in a way which maintains its pattern of open spaces between developments and protects the amenity of current and future residents in terms of density and height of new housing, and proximity to existing developments.</p>
<p>3. To conserve the natural environment of the parish, by:</p> <p>3.(a) Ensuring that the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB is protected from inappropriate development;</p> <p>3.(b) Ensuring that nature conservation sites and rare and protected species are safeguarded;</p> <p>3.(c) Enhancing the status of Collyer's Brook/Fontmell Brook watercourse and other important sites as wildlife corridors and habitats;</p> <p>3.(d) Promoting 'soft edges' to the built environment, planting trees near boundaries, and maintaining and encouraging green corridors.</p>	<p>4. To maintain and enhance a thriving local community, by:</p> <p>4.(a) Promoting a range of mixed housing development appropriate to local needs over the period to 2031 in relation to affordability, size and location;</p> <p>4.(b) Supporting the development of the facilities and amenities offered by the Village School to ensure its long-term viability;</p> <p>4.(c) Prioritising affordable housing for households with a 'local connection' to the Parish;</p> <p>4.(d) Enabling the growth of business and employment opportunities to meet local needs;</p> <p>4.(e) Continuing to offer a wide and diverse range of social, sport and leisure activities;</p> <p>4.(f) Encouraging the provision of transport links to local towns;</p> <p>4.(g) Encouraging the adequate provision of health, education and retail facilities.</p>

1.11 These objectives are cross-referenced to the policies proposed in the Plan in Appendix 4.

1.12 Key achievements we hope this Plan will help deliver include:

- setting the context and parameters for where and how much development will take place.
- identifying the locations where the village can grow, to provide affordable homes for local people, housing for young people, modest-sized family homes and retirement homes, and to provide more opportunities for local people to find work locally.
- protecting the important environmental and heritage features, including local green spaces, local wildlife areas, the dark skies, and the many valued views and features of local landscape character
- guiding building designs and layouts so that what is built preserves Fontmell's unique character, whilst encouraging the take-up of renewable energy and energy efficiency in building designs, and the take-up of sustainable drainage solutions
- providing a better network of footpaths and roads around the village, to resolve some of the existing problems with traffic and speeding
- supporting a wide range of community activities and facilities.

Effective pre-application consultation

1.13 The Local Plan (Policy 24) requires developers to engage with the local community and offer realistic opportunities for local people to influence development proposals where practical and feasible to do so. In this respect, developers would be expected to:

- Advertise any consultation events in the Gossip Tree magazine which is distributed monthly to all households in the parish, giving at least 2 weeks' notice of the event
- Provide material to be displayed on the Parish Council website for those unable to attend the consultation events
- Allow at least 2 weeks for feedback on any proposals with both postal and email address for comments
- Report back to the community via the Parish Council about the main issues raised and how these have been reflected in the proposals (or explain why changes couldn't be made).

Plan Period and Review

- 1.14 Our Neighbourhood Plan looks forward to 2031. Like the Local Plan, it can be reviewed before it expires, and the implications of any update to the Local Plan and any new issues that may arise may influence when a review might need to start.



Photograph 8: North Dorset Chalk Escarpment and Blackmore Vale from the AONB, looking west along Longcombe Bottom

2. The Rural Character of the Parish

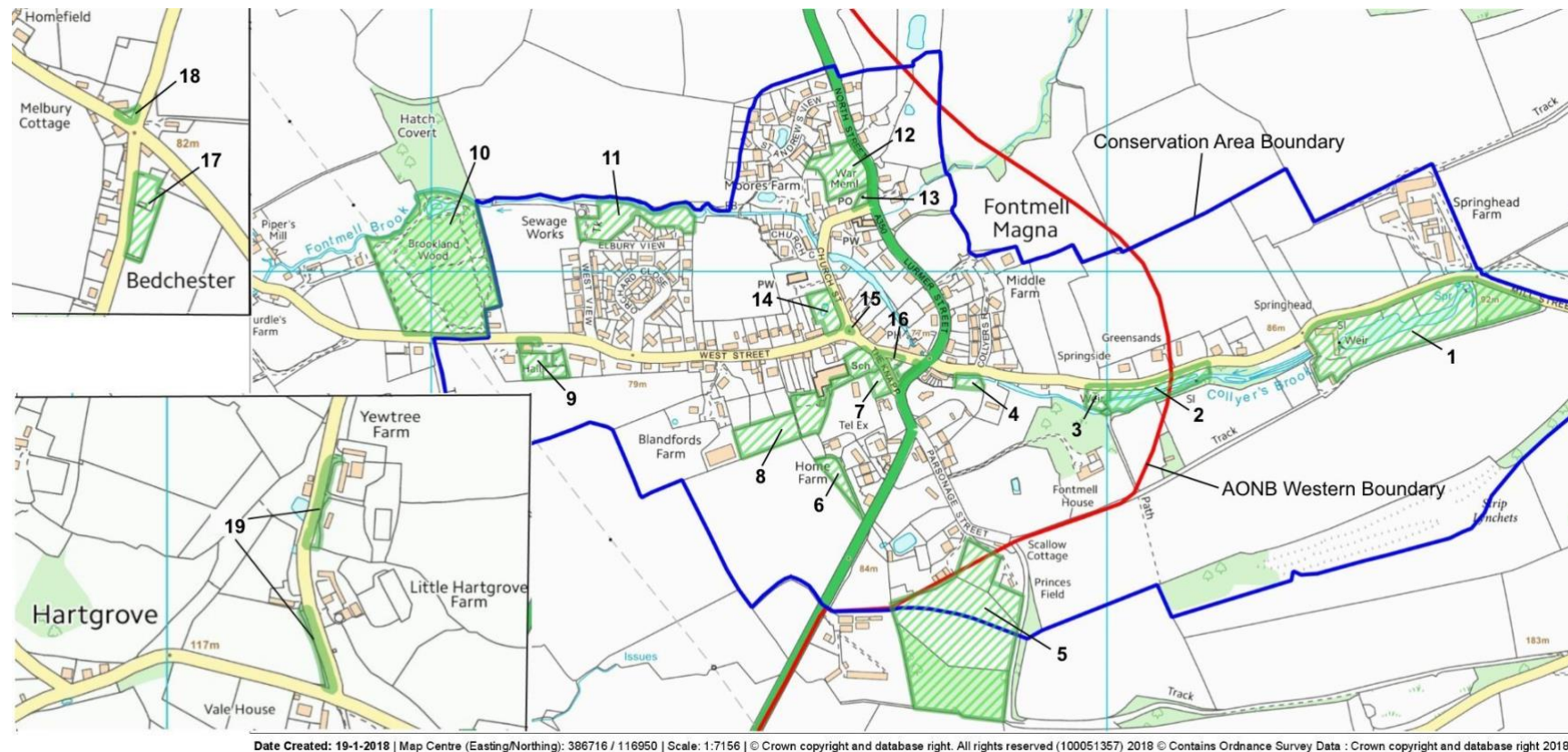
- 2.1 At the first public consultation session on the possible scope of the Neighbourhood Plan (July 2015), and from the answers to a questionnaire distributed to every household in the parish (May 2016), it was clear that residents felt strongly that the mix of green open and wooded areas, the streams, and the historic and rural character of the parish were valued and should be protected.
- 2.2 A further Options Consultation event (March 2017) gave broad support to the objectives and emerging policies on the environment and housing, which have been taken forward into this Plan.

Local Green Spaces

- 2.3 The Government's guidance on open space, sports and recreation facilities states that a Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. The early consultation confirmed that green spaces within the built-up areas and the water courses within the parish, such as Collyer's Brook and Fontmell Brook, were viewed as important elements of the local landscape character. The local green spaces that are proposed form an essential component of the chequer-board pattern of open spaces that are part of the character of the village of Fontmell Magna.
- 2.4 Many of the open spaces within the village were identified as Important Open and Wooded Areas in the 2003 Local Plan. Local communities are encouraged to review these designations and propose the most valued spaces as Local Green Spaces, a status which is recognised in national policy. This can be due to their recreational use, their historic significance, their wildlife value, or simply because they make such a strong contribution to the character of the area.
- 2.5 The following table lists all those spaces that are considered to qualify for designation as Local Green Spaces. This means that development in these locations will be strongly resisted. Not all valued spaces can qualify for this designation, for example large tracts of land, and sites that are unrelated to an existing settlement, do not meet the necessary criteria.
- 2.6 Public open spaces in new developments such as Spring Meadows will be assessed in any future review of the NP for suitability as designation as Local Green Spaces.

Table 2. Local Green Spaces

	Local Green Spaces	Reason for importance
1	Springhead Trust	Historic mill buildings and pond with beautiful informal garden
2	Middle Mill Pond and Collyer's Brook	Historic mill pond, DWLT nature reserve and attractive watercourse
3	Middle Mill Dam Site	Historic and tranquil mill dam site, bought by and for the local community
4	Brookfield garden (north-east corner)	Provides attractive wooded backdrop to Collyer's Brook beside Mill Street
5	Princes Field	Commemorative woodland and buddleia collection open to public
6	Triangular Paddock south of Home Farm	Valuable open space by path, part of pattern of open green spaces in village
7	Knapp House Garden (eastern section)	Site provides a wooded backdrop to this historic area
8	Fontmell Magna School land	Wooded and open areas covenanted for educational use
9	Village Hall grounds	Regularly used amenity area, vital to the village community
10	Brookland Wood	Woodland part funded, planted & much valued by the community
11	Land between Elbury View and Fontmell Brook	Natural wildlife corridor alongside the Fontmell Brook
12	Pasture b/ween War memorial & Dairy Farm Cottage	Green space within the village envelope maintains pattern of open spaces
13	War memorial and surrounds	Historical significance for the village and of great sensitivity
14	69 West Street Garden	Quiet green space in the heart of the village offering good views of Church tower
15	Gossip Tree Triangle	Historical preaching cross site in the centre of the village
16	The Fontmell Pub Garden and Car Park Garden	Central open space provides a setting to a row of historic buildings
17	Allotments at Penn Hill, Bedchester	Amenity site with extensive views of the chalk escarpment
18	Verge at Bedchester crossroads	Historically the centre of the community with shop, chapel, telephone box etc
19	Verges at Gupples Lane, Hartgrove	Remaining evidence of typical wide Blackmore Vale margins



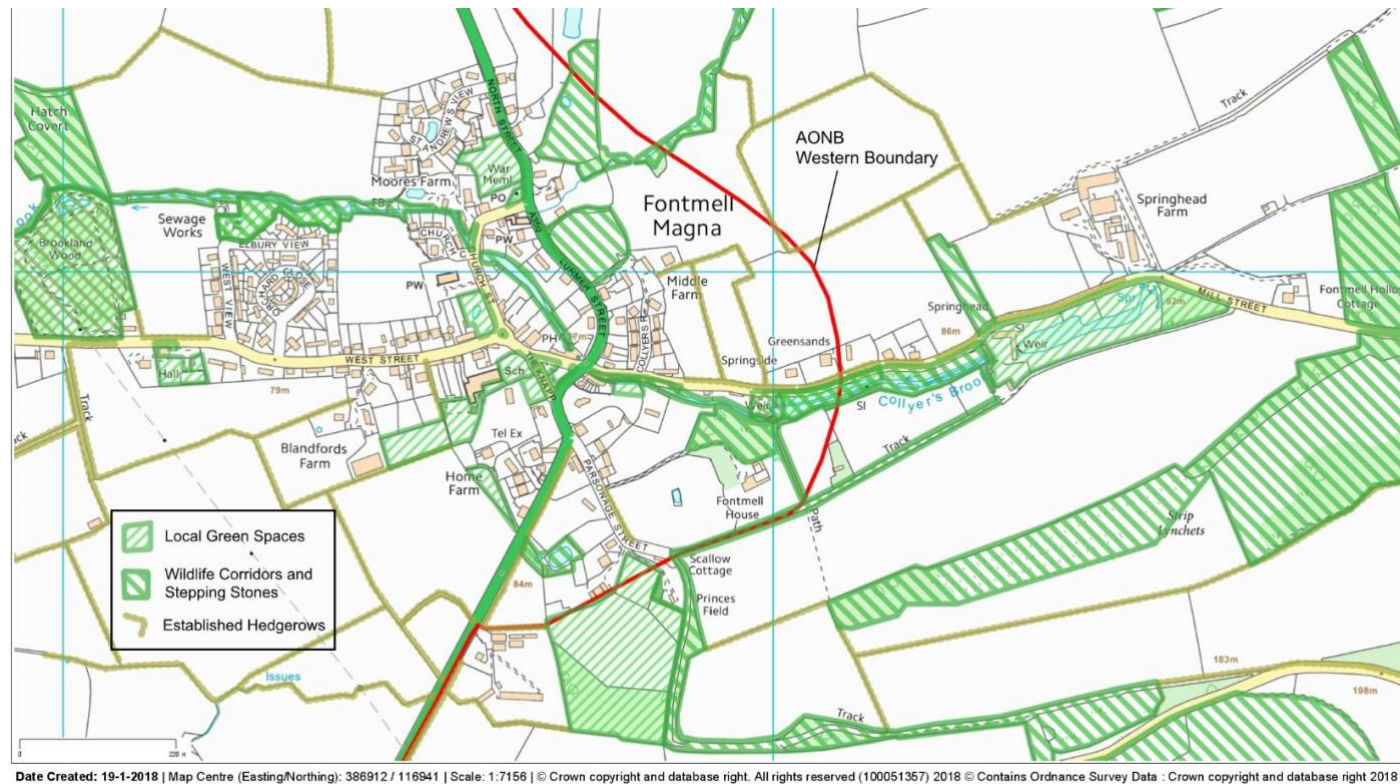
Map 3: Local Green Spaces

Policy FM1. Local Green Spaces

Local Green Spaces (listed in Table 2) have been identified as important to the local community. Other than in very special circumstances, no development may take place which would harm the enjoyment of these spaces or would undermine their importance.

Local wildlife corridors and protected species

- 2.7 The prime area designated as wildlife corridor is the entire length of Collyer's Brook/Fontmell Brook, which affirms the wildlife value of this watercourse as a corridor between other important wildlife habitats. This wildlife corridor includes the banks of the brooks and a buffer of up to 3m on either side to protect against water pollution from road run-off and field run-off. Other important habitats include the SSSIs on the escarpment of the chalk downland and several Sites of Nature Conservation Interest scattered throughout the parish. In addition, there are numerous copses and wild areas which form stepping stones linked by hedgerows forming a valuable network, as shown on Map 4 below.



Map 4: Wildlife Corridors

- 2.8 Over a dozen species of birds that are Red Listed have been recorded in the parish and several species of endangered or threatened butterflies are also present. Otters have also been sighted from time to time.
- 2.9 Within the main settlement area, local biodiversity is to be protected by retaining and extending the chequer pattern of green spaces as greenfield sites are developed. The linear features through the village such as Collyer's and Fontmell Brooks, as well as the green spaces across the village, together with established hedgerows, create important corridors which aid in supporting sustainable ecological networks.
- 2.10 A Biodiversity Appraisal accompanied by a Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan should be submitted alongside planning applications, in line with the Dorset Biodiversity Protocol¹. This is particularly important on greenfield sites and larger infill plots, and where development may require hedgerow or tree removal, is in proximity to a watercourse or pond, or involves a barn conversion or changes to roof structures where bats may be roosting². In particular, developments should incorporate suitable nesting/roosting sites for declining species such as swifts, swallows, martins and sparrows within the house designs. Similar consideration should be given to hedgehog habitation.
- 2.11 The Environment Act (2021) contains provisions for the protection and improvement of the environment, including introducing biodiversity net gain as a statutory requirement. This requirement is expected to come into force in Winter 2023. As a result, there will be a clear mechanism by which habitats will be 'valued' and measures included (either on-site or through off-site measures / credits) to achieve a minimum 10% increase in overall biodiversity value. The Government's consultation in early 2022, to shape the regulations that will detail how this will be applied, suggests that a simpler system may be introduced for small sites, and it is likely that householder applications and changes of use may be exempt from the requirements. Whilst there will be no need to repeat the legal requirements in local policy, a locally-specific policy can help set a more holistic approach and identify local strategies and issues that developers should

¹ <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/countryside-coast-parks/countryside-management/biodiversity/biodiversity-appraisal-in-dorset.aspx>

² See extract: 2.2.1 What is an ecological network? from the Lawton Report 2010 'Making space for nature' in the Appendix 3.

Policy FM2. Local Wildlife Corridors and Protected Species

Any development (other than householder applications, changes of use, or development that due to its limited scale and location would have a minimal impact on existing habitats) will be expected to include a biodiversity gain plan which demonstrates how a minimum 10% net biodiversity gain will be achieved, including measures taken to avoid harm to, and where practical strengthen, the network of ecological sites in the parish, through the provision of wildlife corridors and habitat enhancement.

All new development should have due regard for the network of local wildlife corridors and sites of nature conservation interest identified on Map 4; taking into account national policy to provide net gains in biodiversity where possible. To achieve this, the potential adverse or beneficial impact of the development on these ecological networks should be fully evaluated, and a Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan submitted with any Planning Application on sites over 0.1ha or which are likely to give rise to an adverse impact on biodiversity. The wildlife corridors should where possible be:

- enhanced through improved wildlife-friendly management, reducing sources of harm such as pollution;
- protected through the creation of 'buffer zones' around their perimeters;
- extended where there is opportunity to do so.

Important views

- 2.12 The chalk downland at the eastern end of the parish gives extensive and much valued panoramic views westwards over the Blackmore Vale. The best sites for these views are Fontmell Down and Sutton Hill with a panorama extending from King Alfred's Tower in the north round to Hambledon Hill in the south. Many other points near the edge of the escarpment also give wide views to the west. In the other direction, there are good views of the chalk escarpment of Cranborne Chase looking east from St Andrew's Churchyard, from Bedchester and from the southern end of Gupples Lane.
- 2.13 From Hartgrove near the top of Hannah's Hill there are also views to the northwest over Blackven Common. These views form an important part of the character of the parish giving a sense of how it sits between the chalk downs and the Blackmore Vale.

- 2.14 Significant landmarks are the church **and churchyard** of St Andrew on elevated ground with its 25m tower, the War Memorial, also elevated, and the strip lynchets.

Policy FM3. Important Views

Any development that would harm an important view of the North Dorset Chalk Escarpment or negatively affect views of the parish and Blackmore Vale from the AONB (as identified on page 5, on Map 5, and listed below) will be resisted.

- View of Fontmell Magna and the Blackmore Vale from Fontmell Down (Photograph 1);
- View of Fontmell Magna and the Blackmore Vale from Littledown (Photograph 2);
- View of Fontmell Magna and the Blackmore Vale from Brandis Down (Photograph 3);
- View of the Cranborne Chase chalk escarpment from St Andrew's Churchyard (Photograph 4);
- View of the Cranborne Chase chalk escarpment from Bedchester (Photograph 5);
- View of the Cranborne Chase chalk escarpment from Gupples Lane (southern end) (Photograph 6);
- View of the Blackmore Vale from Hartgrove Hill (Photograph 7);
- View of North Dorset Chalk Escarpment and Blackmore Vale from the AONB (Photograph 8).

Setting of the AONB

- 2.15 Unlike the other settlements along the A350, the boundary of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB skirts around the village of Fontmell Magna on the eastern side cutting through open fields. The AONB Team considers that this area to the east of the A350 forms part of the setting of the AONB. As it is highly visible from Open Access Land overlooking this side of the village it is considered a visually sensitive area and new built development is unlikely to be acceptable because of the impact it would have on the setting of this nationally important landscape.
- 2.16 The AONB boundary to the east of the village is a little unusual as generally the boundary follows fixed features. It was drawn on the OS 1 inch to a mile scale plan and is clear enough to show which side of the A350 it follows and then it clearly indents eastwards. Nevertheless, the parts of the village east of the A350 are closely related to the AONB and hence fairly obviously the setting of the AONB. Not only are there significant public rights of way that overlook the

village but also there are extensive areas of Open Access Land that overlook the eastern side of the village. That eastern side is, therefore, very sensitive.

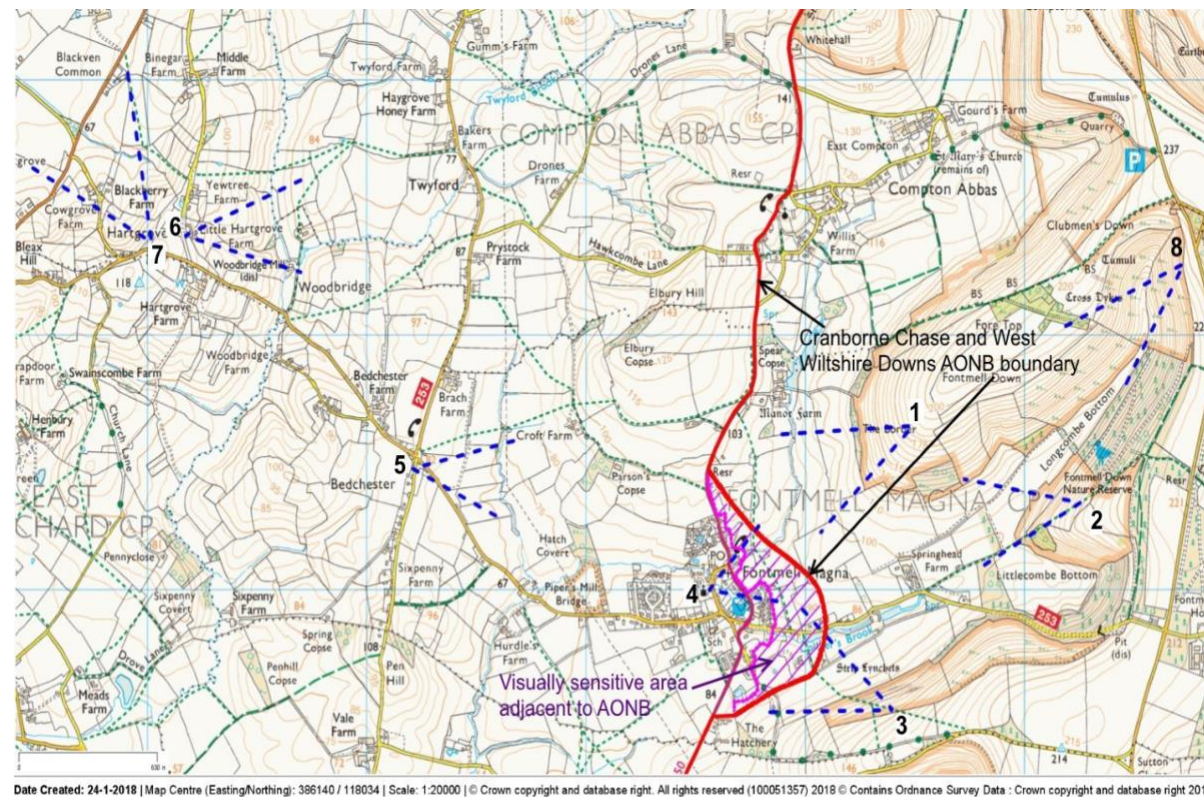
- 2.17 Applicants looking to demonstrate exceptional circumstances to justify development within this location will be required to particularise in what way any proposals would enhance the setting of the AONB. Using natural materials or adopting either a conservative or innovative design would not of itself justify new development here, nor is it envisaged that landscaping could overcome the adverse effects of development in this location.
- 2.18 Key to understanding the qualities of the AONB are the Management Plan, Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Sensitivity Reports available online at <http://www.ccwwdaonb.org.uk/>. The AONB Partnership's Position Statement 3 (Relevance of the Setting for AONB) and 6 (Good enough to approve in an AONB) are also particularly relevant to this policy.

Policy FM4. The setting of the AONB

Proposals for development within the visually sensitive area skirting the eastern extent of the village (shown on Map 5 overpage) which would harm the setting or natural beauty of the AONB will not be permitted unless it is clearly in the public interest to do so.

Local landscape character

The parish extends from the wooded chalk downland of the Cranborne Chase in the east to the flat clay vale of Blackmore Vale in the west. The chalk downland at its western limit drops in a dramatic steep and narrow escarpment with spurs to the west and deep combes between them. This escarpment is mostly unimproved grassland with some hanging woodlands. There are 4 designated SSSIs and several scheduled monuments in this area.



Map 5 Important views (the blue dotted lines) of North Dorset Chalk Escarpment and Blackmore Vale from the AONB. The view numbers correspond to the Photograph numbers on Pages v, 4,5 and 8.

- 2.19 From the foot of the downs at Springhead to Hartgrove Hill in the west the parish lies in the North Blackmore Rolling Vales. This area contains most of the dwellings in the parish and is characterised by small fields with some hedgerow trees and small copses and narrow, twisting lanes with high hedgerows. The brook that has its source at Springhead is the main watercourse in the east of the parish and passes through the village of Fontmell Magna before turning to the south.

Beyond Hartgrove the parish extends into the Blackmore Vale at Blackven Common and Marsh Common with their small to medium sized pasture meadows and clipped hedges.

- 2.20 Local residents were consulted on what they considered to be important characteristics, based on an appraisal of the landscape character descriptions, and all of the following characteristics were felt to be important (with only 1 or 2% of people disagreeing)
- Rural character of the narrow roads and network of local footpaths – the rural lanes have no ‘urban’ pavements or streetlights, and are typically lined by hedgebanks;
 - Stone walls, hedgerows and mature trees;
 - Water courses within the parish, e.g. Collyer's Brook, Fontmell Brook and associated features.
- 2.21 The Conservation Area Appraisal (2017) highlighted further locally important features in the landscape. Trees are a regular feature of the village and exist in such a number that from a distance the dwellings are not easy to see due to the soft blanket of green which enfolds them. Also, the area around the village is characterised by small fields and occasional small copses.
- 2.22 As part of the research into the character of the area, the impact of traffic on some of the rural roads became apparent, such as where the increasing number of large vehicles travelling along the narrow lanes is causing erosion of the hedge banks. One such example is Mill Street, which is single track and bordered by Collyer's Brook, Middle Mill ponds, Springhead gardens, mature hazel hedging and other species-rich margins. There are no pavements or footpaths for pedestrians along this road. Residential and agricultural entrances are used as passing spaces, others are the result of larger vehicles eroding the edges. Some of these passing places are not wide enough for a standard car and tractor, lorry or similarly sized vehicle to pass each other. Although not a main through route, the use of such roads is becoming greater through the increasing use of satellite navigation and is exacerbated when either of the A350 or C13 roads is closed.

Policy FM5. Local Landscape Features

Wherever appropriate, development should protect, and should reinforce, the local landscape character and its typical features, including:

- Collyer's Brook / Fontmell Brook / Sturkel Brook, and their associated features – including the historic bridges, the sheep wash and the structures associated with the mills;
- the character of rural lanes such as Mill Street, Parsonage Street, the road from the Village Hall to Bedchester, Penn Hill, Woodbridge Lane, the road from Bedchester to Hartgrove, Gupples Lane, Hannah's Hill and the roads across Blackven Common and Marsh Common, with occasional wide historic verges, verge-marker stones and finger posts;
- the traditional field and plot boundaries of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- native deciduous mature trees and small native copses.

The character of rural roads is deemed to include the hedgerows and the absence of raised kerbs and footpaths at the roadside.

Dark Skies

- 2.23 The early consultation on the plan highlighted that over 90% of the community felt that dark skies were important. There is no street lighting in the parish, and no desire for it to be introduced. When there is an absence of light pollution thousands of stars are revealed, and many residents enjoy the night sky.
- 2.24 In considering new development, the first factor to consider is whether external lighting is necessary. If there is a case for its inclusion (for example for security or safety reasons) its design should minimise its impact, both on the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties, and in terms of light spillage and glare. Timed PIR lights, down-lighters or 'wall washers' are examples of lighting schemes that generally have less impact.

Policy FM6. Dark Skies

In 2019, the Cranborne Chase ANOB which includes part of the parish of Fontmell Magna, was awarded Dark Skies Reserve Status.

Developments should be designed to conserve and enhance the intrinsic quality of the dark night skies and prevent glare. External lighting should be avoided unless required for security or safety reasons. Where lighting is considered necessary it should be sufficient to meet the local needs and no more and its design should minimise its impact to a level appropriate to a Dark Sky Reserve status. Measures should be taken to ensure any light spillage is directed downwards. Floodlights are particularly problematic as the majority of domestic and industrial fittings are of a 'point and shoot' design which is inconsistent with the desire to conserve and enhance the quality of the dark night skies. As such Floodlight fittings with the correct optics to be dark-sky-friendly should be the first consideration.

As a way of assessing the level of light that may be emitted as a result of development, and the degree of harm, external lighting schemes, should meet or exceed the level of protection appropriate to Environmental Zone 1 (as defined by the Institution of Lighting Professionals), with the addition that external LED lighting should not exceed a correlated colour temperature (CCT) of 2700k

3. The Built Character and Historic Environment

3.1 The built environment of Fontmell Magna that presently exists dates from 15th century, although the tracks and brooks that set the pattern of most of the present roads and lanes would have existed for centuries before. The following are the significant aspects which apply equally across the whole civil parish:

- The settlements have grown up along historic tracks and the brooks feeding into the River Stour. The settlement of Fontmell Magna is located where two tracks cross a brook (the one running north-south being a significant trade route, and the secondary one running west-east). The high church tower (signifying the centre of a community), and the elevated war memorial are local landmarks, the settings of which are to be protected.
- The evolution of farms and smallholdings in the parish, and the presence of several farms and orchards close to the village, has meant that the village of Fontmell Magna has developed in such a way that it has retained a pattern of open spaces, including small fields, penetrating to the very heart of the village. These open spaces are to be retained.
- Although there was a period of major house-building after the Second World War (with the building of Orchard Close and West View by the Local Authority for social housing), followed by Collyer's Rise and then St Andrew's View (on a brownfield site) at the end of the century, development has generally comprised small-scale piecemeal growth. The standard and rather suburban designs seen in the post-war estates do not reflect the rural nature of the remainder of the village, nor does the 'model village' approach at St Andrew's View reflect the character of the village.
- Non-domestic buildings include a pub, a former brewery, a large former rectory, a shop, a former chapel, a primary school and a fine church built in the gothic perpendicular style. Of the buildings which survive from before 1940, most are of brick or stone, often combined with flint, and they are considered to contribute most to the character of the area.
- A number of local features add to the overall character of the area – including the brooks / mill streams and associated spaces and features, historic spaces such as the War Memorial and Gossip Tree, the rural roads, the raised footway and steps by the church, verge-marker stones, the village pump and its thatched shelter, the old pump house at Middle Mill, and the traditional red telephone boxes in Fontmell and Bedchester.



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Map 6: Locally Important Features

Conservation Area

- 3.2 When work on the Neighbourhood Plan began, there was no Conservation Area Appraisal setting out how the area's special architectural and historic interest defines its character and appearance. This, as Historic England pointed out, was a key omission of the type of evidence that should support such a Neighbourhood Plan. As a consequence, local volunteers undertook an appraisal of the Conservation Area using the Historic England guidelines in liaison with the Conservation Officers, in order to provide the required evidence and a clear reference document to guide future development.
- 3.3 The Fontmell Magna Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted February 2018), is annexed to the Neighbourhood Plan, therefore the full text is not reprinted here, but it is to be used in conjunction with the Neighbourhood Plan when considering planning applications and in particular in deciding whether they protect and enhance, or otherwise cause harm to the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Appraisal identified a number of buildings that are considered to make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, and these should be treated as undesignated heritage assets which should be retained and respected in any new development.

Policy FM7. The Conservation Area and Locally Important Features

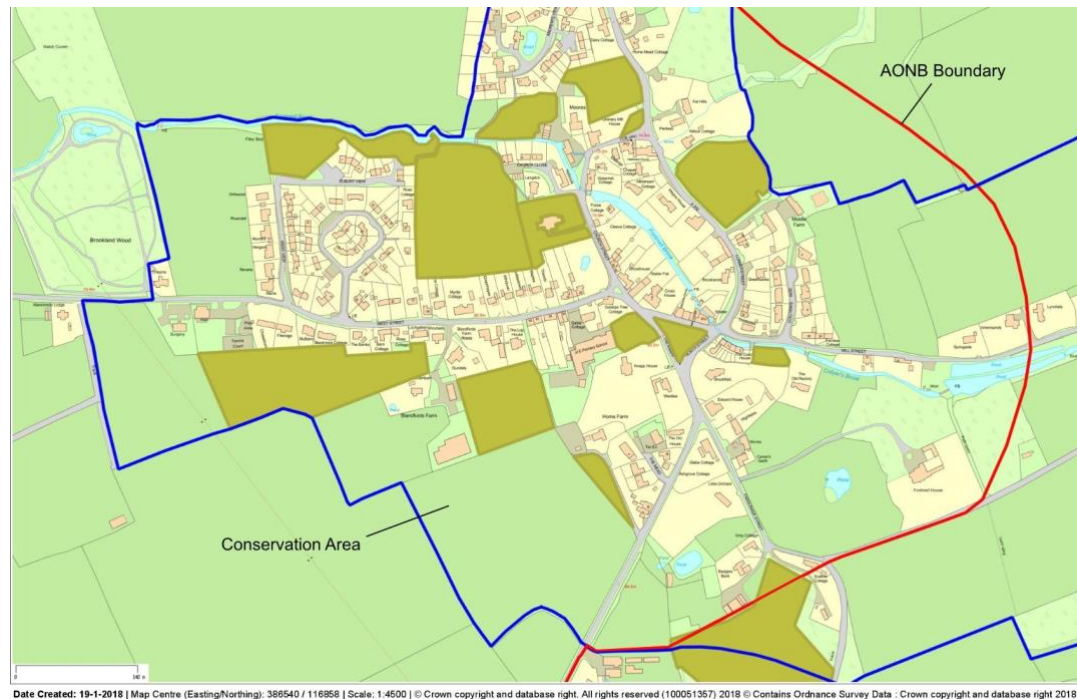
Within the Conservation Area, the Fontmell Magna Conservation Area Appraisal, supplemented by more detailed investigation as may be appropriate to understand the impact of development on the heritage assets, will be used to determine whether any new development will enhance, protect, or is likely to cause harm to the Conservation Area. Layouts and building designs must be designed to have due regard to neighbouring buildings, their setting, and the built and natural environment as described in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

The following local features are considered to contribute to the character of the area as undesignated heritage assets, and should be afforded protection having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset:

- the War Memorial;
- the village pump and its thatched shelter;
- the town mill structure, mill race and former water fountain with curved roof;
- the old pump house at Middle Mill;
- the traditional red telephone boxes in Fontmell and Bedchester;
- the raised footway and steps by the church;
- grassed areas adjacent to the road with verge marker stones;
- unlisted buildings which contribute to the character of the area as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal (*q.v.*);
- the gardens at Springhead.

Layout and Density

- 3.4 The main settlement pattern can be described as having a chequer pattern of open spaces, either fields or other large grassed or wooded areas. This inter-relationship between built and green spaces should very much continue in any new development, the aim being to prevent the village character changing from its open rural nature to a denser suburban area more usually found in towns and cities.
- 3.5 The rural through roads of the area tend to be narrow, bordered with high banks and hazel hedges, and without street lights or pavements. These character traits are to be protected and replicated where possible. Some variation in building orientation and spacing is desirable, but generally dwellings face onto the lanes and create an active street scene. Similarly plot sizes are quite varied, reflecting the building type and history.



- 3.6 The village edge is a transition area between the countryside and the built environment. This transition is to be protected by lower densities of development and also by longer rear gardens backing onto the countryside. This will help assimilate the village within the folds of the landscape as will soft landscaping along this boundary, as opposed to close board fencing or other less sympathetic boundary treatments.
- 3.7 The density of new development should be determined by local characteristics to comply with NPPF para 58 (see Appendix 5). In the main settlement area of Fontmell Magna the housing density for properties which contribute to the character of the area varies from 10.8dph to 15.6dph. It therefore follows that new development should be within this range. However, to answer the stated aim of creating a suitable transition between settlement area and countryside (para 3.5), density should be reduced near the countryside boundary to accommodate a deep area of planting.

Policy FM8. Development layout

The layout of new development should generally reflect the pattern of existing village lanes, with a variety of plot sizes, shapes and variation in building lines, with opportunities for social interaction created by open spaces, verges and front doors and windows overlooking the street. The design, layout and orientation should be appropriate to the character of the surrounding area and should avoid adverse impacts of overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbouring properties. Particular regard should be had to the layout and landscaping of schemes proposed within the sensitive transitional areas lying between the village and the open countryside.

Off-street car-parking will normally be required for two vehicles (or one plus a garage), together with adequate access for service vehicles.

The precise location of affordable housing within a development will be determined having regard both to overall design and layout considerations (which must include the objective of ensuring that it is indistinguishable from other housing) and to the reasonable requirements of efficient management and maintenance.

The design of housing (and other buildings)

- 3.8 The 2018 Local Plan makes clear that special regard will be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. Proposals for any new development, alterations or changes of use to existing buildings and land, which have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, will not be permitted.
- 3.9 The intent of this design guide (intended for any new building, extension or alteration) is to encourage design that complements the vernacular within the Conservation zone and adjacent area, in other words new development must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the locality. It is therefore essential that all new proposals respect the scale of the existing built environment, its traditions and specification of materials. Such an objective does not exclude modern architectural design provided that such new design clearly demonstrates a sensitivity to the environment in which it is to be built.
- 3.10 Being able to own land and build within a Conservation area is indeed fortunate so one surely has an obligation to complement the built environment and that probably necessitates more expenditure to achieve an appropriate standard of design
- 3.11 Should it be intended that the new building works are to follow a more traditional approach then there needs to be some element within the proposed design that is visually 'uplifting' by which is meant a feature or features that are not necessarily essential but are constructed/incorporated in such a way that it adds interest whilst fulfilling a function.
- 3.12 Whether the proposed design be modern or more traditional, the use of natural materials such as clay bricks, local stone, flint, slate, timber, thatch, clay roof tiles, copper and leadwork, are to be preferred to concrete based products sheet metal and uPVC components. External renders in conjunction with natural walling materials may also be appropriate. Whilst natural materials and non-standard components (i.e. windows and external doors) are more expensive than factory produced components, they tend to weather better, and economies can be made to compensate, such as lowering the height of eaves thereby reducing the height of external walling (which incidentally has the advantage of reducing the apparent scale of the building) or perhaps specifying render on side or rear walls where stone or clay bricks have been specified for the front and part side elevations. A further option to consider might be to construct the external wall between ground level and perhaps 50cm above DPC level with an artificial 'stone' as a plinth, above which clay bricks or natural stone can be used. The appearance of that plinth can then be softened by low level planting.

- 3.13 Roof pitch is so important. Invariably a steep pitch of close to 45 degrees is so much more attractive than, say a 30-degree pitch (commonly adopted by housing estate developers) but with modern architectural design a very shallow pitch of, say, 15 degrees can be successful, though are generally more acceptable if terminating on the lower side with a substantial overhang. It is common to see that many of the earlier houses in the conservation area featured not only steeply pitched roofs but also roofs that projected well beyond the external walls (especially gable walls) and in doing so made a feature of exposing the roof purlins, and perhaps some simple but decorative 'barge' boards.
- 3.14 Bungalows tend to have a significantly larger footprint than houses which may mean that achieving a steep roof pitch necessitates significantly more and therefore costly roof tiles, but bungalows tend to be preferred by the elderly who may find staircases unmanageable. However, it is worth considering that if 'live-in' care becomes a necessity constructing carer's accommodation under a 45-degree roof pitch is relatively straightforward, provided that the ceiling joist dimensions satisfy the Building regulations for a habitable room.
- 3.15 Roof mounted photovoltaic solar panels do not look well on clay tiled roofs especially within the Conservation area but if no alternative option is possible a rear or side elevation will be preferred. There are however, new designs of solar panels that fit flush with the roof tiles and tend to look neater.
- 3.16 Rainwater goods, though a necessity, can also be detrimental to the appearance of the building if not carefully considered. Black or dark grey will be better on red/brown brick walls and dark green or grey on local stonework whilst white may be appropriate on light coloured render.
- 3.17 Within the Conservation Area and its' surroundings, timber window frames and external doors (whether painted or natural) are much preferred to standard pvc products (Note that in many locations English Heritage will not permit the use of pvc frames). The use of PVC-u products for windows, external doors, cladding and eaves boards is must be of a standard that meets Conservation Area approval. These tend to be high grade PVC -u products with a wood grain effect finish. Care must be taken in determining the proportion of windows and their subdivision with mullions transoms and glazing bars. Subject to a compliant glass specification, lower cill levels, say about 70cm above FFL will probably look better externally and often permit better views from within the room. Aluminium window frames may be acceptable, certainly in modern architectural designs, but could be acceptable in more traditional buildings for larger windows such as patio 'doors' in which case the preference is likely to be for dark anodised or powder coated finishes. Such features as segmental arches or stone 'hoods' above ground floor windows can be attractive in traditional designs but may look inappropriate above 1st Floor windows when the window head is tight under the eaves. Similarly, the simpler the design of a roof above a 'Dormer' window the better.

- 3.18 The design of Porch roofs, canopies, or entablatures, requires care to be taken to ensure that they are in scale with the entrance door beneath. Too often a clay tiled and hipped porch roof can look overbearing above a standard sized entrance door. If it is proposed to build an extension to an existing building then visually separating the new extension from the original building by means of 'articulation' i.e., a change in material and a short recess in wall or roof alignment is often preferable.
- 3.19 If proposing to extend or alter a building under Permitted development Rights (PDR) bear in mind that PDR within a Conservation zone tends to be more restrictive, and poor design will do nothing to enhance the conservation zone or the value of the property.
- 3.20 New housing developments will need to include a proportion of Affordable Houses. There is no reason for such houses to look unattractive. Whilst natural building materials may not be affordable, good scale, well considered window and façade proportions, and a good roof pitch with a minimum 20cm projection beyond the wall face should certainly be affordable.
- 3.21 Fontmell Magna is a small village with over 40 listed buildings and a great many simple but attractive traditional houses. Before embarking on the design process of your project It is therefore well worth walking around the village noting the attractive features and finishes employed by builders a hundred years ago or more.
- 3.22 Finally, if you have decided not to appoint a qualified Architect (a member of the RIBA) and instead opted to appoint a builder to design your project, a member or two of the Neighbourhood Plan Group may be available to offer some design guidance before you seek a pre-Application meeting with the Planning Department. This offer is primary for individual residents.

Size scale and form of buildings

- 3.23 The Conservation Area Appraisal exercise revealed that 50% of the existing buildings are either single-storey or 1½ storey, i.e., where the upper storey is built substantially within the roof space. Eaves heights for two-storey buildings are relatively low with 55% being below the head of the upper windows. Very few buildings (3%) are three storeys high, including those where the third storey is within the roof space and these were largely public or commercial buildings built on lower lying ground. Some recent buildings such as Home Farm are overly large in size and have been created with disproportionate entrance features which are not typical of local traditions. Such a scale and massing, and such features, are not considered appropriate and will not be acceptable in new development.

3.24 Although the Neighbourhood Plan cannot set specific technical standards for energy or water efficiency (as these are covered under Building Regulations), it can encourage the take-up of renewable energy technologies and sustainable building designs. Such designs will need to avoid harming the character of the area. The inclusion of energy efficient measures on buildings, designed to be in keeping with the character of the area, such as frameless in roof PV panels or air-source or ground heat pumps, is encouraged. Rain-water recovery system are encouraged for use to flush toilets and gardening use.

Materials and design features and finishes

3.25 Material choices should reflect those found within the parish in buildings constructed before 1940, as subsequent developments tended to ignore regional variations, and finishes were imported which were not in character with the area.

3.26 Building materials for external walls and roofing should match the local vernacular (see table 3a). Several listed buildings use coursed Greensand on the front elevation whilst the side elevations are in rubble or brick and such a variation would not be out of character. Table 3a does offer a wide pallet of materials and textures. The use of PVC-u products for windows, external doors, cladding and eaves boards is must be of a standard that meets Conservation Area approval. These tend to be high grade PVC -u products with a wood grain effect finish. Concrete materials for walls and roofs are inappropriate.

3.27 Proportions, especially of the windows and external doors, should be carefully considered in relation to the elevations in which they occur, with a solid to void ratio that reflects local characteristics of scale, symmetry and rhythm, thus avoiding large unrelieved expanses of walling. Where windows are sub-divided with mullions, transoms and glazing bars, face dimensions of these components, and the proportions of the glass panes need to be sensitively considered. Casements should always be of the flush-faced types, being more appropriate to the village vernacular. Glazing bars for small frames belong to an age when glass was not so affordable as it is now, and are best avoided in new construction. Lower sill heights should be considered in order to have improved visibility and more natural lighting – even if this means the use of toughened glass on the windows.

3.28 Porch designs should provide adequate shelter, but not be ostentatious or out of scale with the elevation in which they occur.

Examples that show the design and character of Fontmell Magna dwellings are shown in Table 3b. The

Fontmell Magna Conservation Area Appraisal (August 2018) – which can be found on the PC web site, shows numerous photos of the character of the villages houses

Acceptable materials and design detailing would be:

Table 3a Materials and design features and finishes

Walls	Roofs	Doors and Windows	Other Design Features
<p>Red brick of suitable tone and texture.</p> <p>Flint with brick lacing courses and quoins</p> <p>Stone (Greensand rubble, coursed or random)</p> <p>Chequerboard pattern flint and Greensand rubble</p> <p>Hardwood weatherboarding</p>	<p>Plain clay tile</p> <p>Slate</p> <p>Thatch</p>	<p>Vertical plank front door</p> <p>Door canopies of simple bracketed design with tile or slate roof</p> <p>Gabled dormers, especially breaking through the eaves</p> <p>Upper window heads tight to eaves</p> <p>Timber framed casements (if PVC it should be the flush-faced type to reduce frame profiles)</p>	<p>Chimneys, if provided, with dogtooth pattern to top corbel course</p> <p>Exposed purlins at verges</p> <p>Flemish bond headers of deeper colour</p> <p>Segmental arches over windows</p> <p>Square hoodmoulds to windows</p>

3.29 The **colour** of window frames and doors should be white or natural wood. Other colours of paintwork may be used if sympathetic to the colour of stonework or brickwork.

3.30 **Garden fences** should be wooded picket or post and horizontal rails no higher than 1.2m with a hedge planting. Tall 1.8m wooden fences around a garden should be avoided as this is not in keeping with the Parish look.

3.31 Further policy on house size appropriate to fulfil local need is included in the policy on housing needs.

Planning for Climate Change - Guidance and Position Statement – Dorset Council policy

3.32 The guidance and position statement seeks to clarify existing planning policy requirements within the Dorset Council area in relation to planning for the climate and ecological emergency. Fontmell Magna Parish Council have adopted the same policy for its Neighbourhood Plan.

3.33 The Dorset Council National and Local List of Requirements (adopted 1 October 2022) states that a Sustainability Statement is required to support planning applications to demonstrate how sustainable design and construction have been addressed. This is to meet the requirements of policies relating to sustainable design and construction in the adopted local plans covering the Dorset Council area. FMPC will apply the same policy to all new dwellings and all significant extensions to existing buildings. Full details of the policy can be found in Dorset Council Guidance Note – “Sustainability statement and checklist for planning applications”.

3.34 For Listed Buildings – Dorset council have a document aims to explain what can be achieved to save energy and at the same time conserve the special interest of listed buildings.

Policy FM9. Building design

New construction and alterations to buildings should respect the local rural character of the area in terms of scale, form, materials and layout, with an appropriate level of detailing to add interest and reinforce local character. Materials and detailing should have regard to the vernacular features described in the preamble to this policy, including those described in Table 3a and drawings in Table 3b.

Roof-mounted photovoltaic panels should be frameless to reduce their visual impact and may not be appropriate where they would be clearly visible and detrimental in the context of Listed Buildings, the Conservation Area or from the AONB.

The inclusion of energy efficient measures on buildings, designed to be in keeping with the character of the area, such as frameless in roof PV panels or air-source or ground heat pumps, is encouraged. Rain-water recovery system are encouraged for use to flush toilets and gardening use.

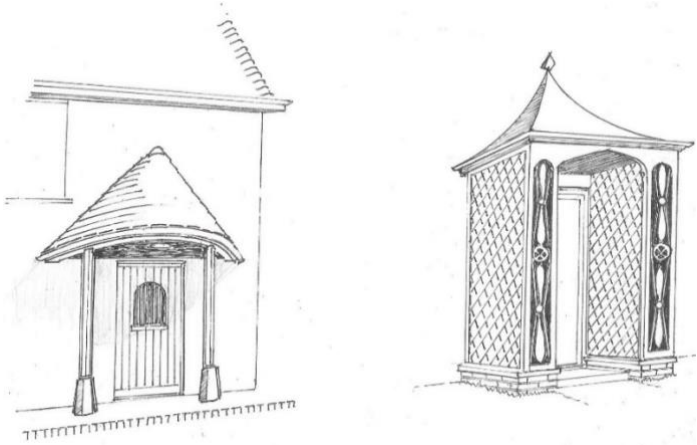
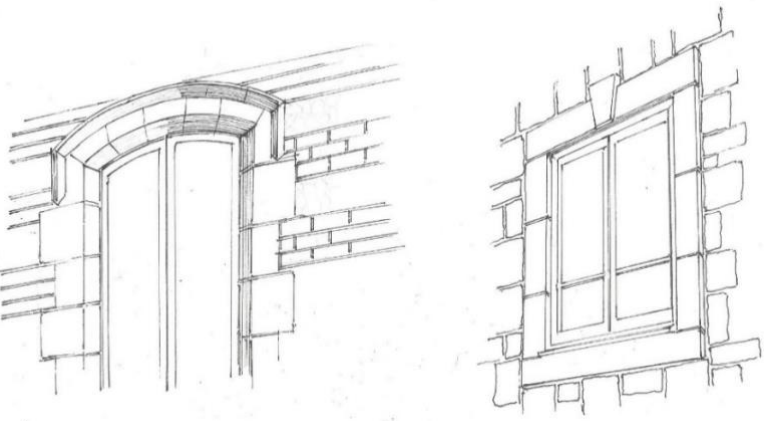
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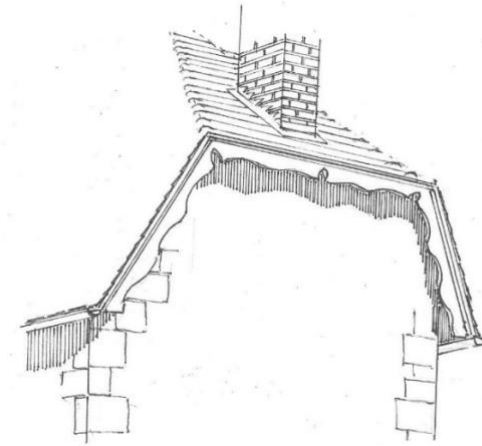
A Sustainability Statement is required to support planning applications to demonstrate how sustainable design and construction have been addressed in order to comply with the Dorset Council National and Local List of Requirements (adopted 1 October 2022). This applies to all new builds and all significant extensions / alterations of existing property. For Listed Buildings – Dorset Council have a document aims to explain what can be achieved to save energy.

Table 3b Examples that show the design and character of Fontmell Magna dwellings

 <p>Examples of Porches</p>	 <p>Window and stonework surround</p>
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Dormer window and exterior cladding



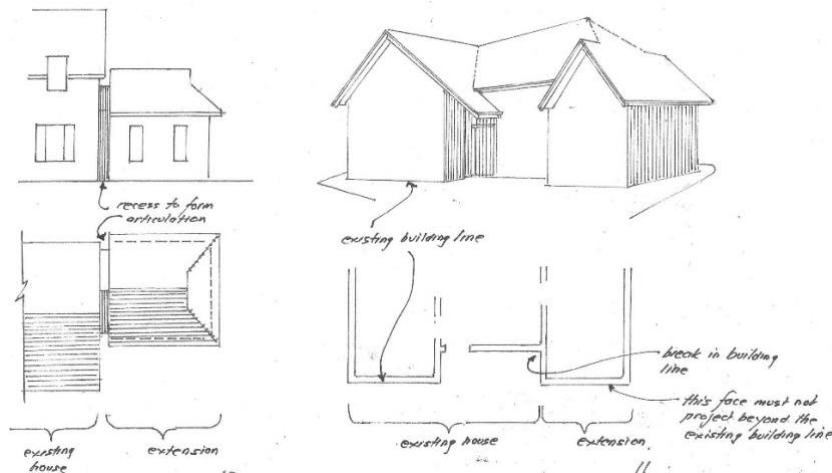
Chimney and end view of roof pitch with stonework



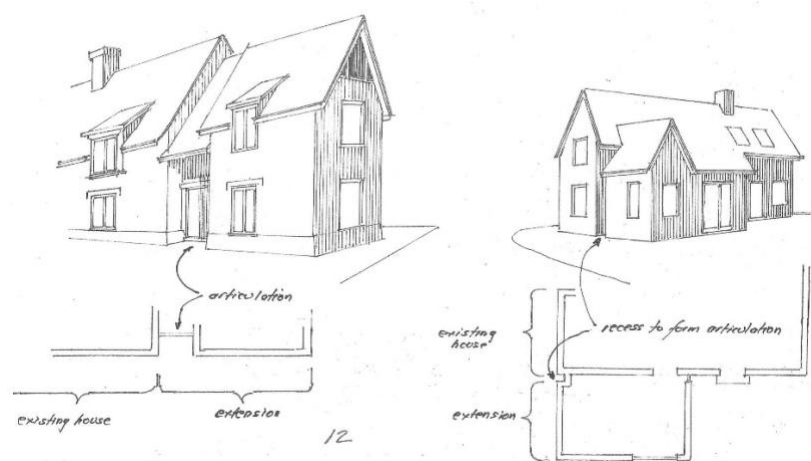
New house No. 34 is out of scale within this street scene



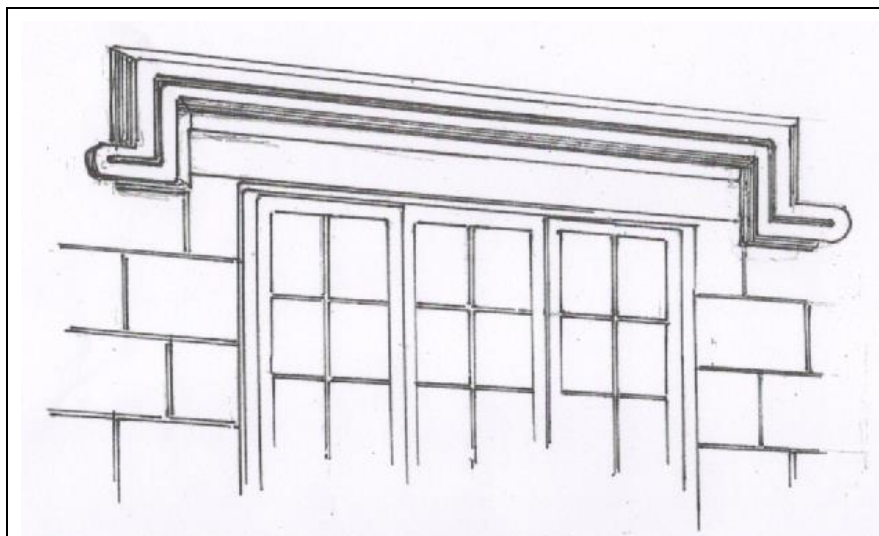
Example of poorly proportioned of windows and unsatisfactory relationship of each window frame



Example of good extension design break in building line



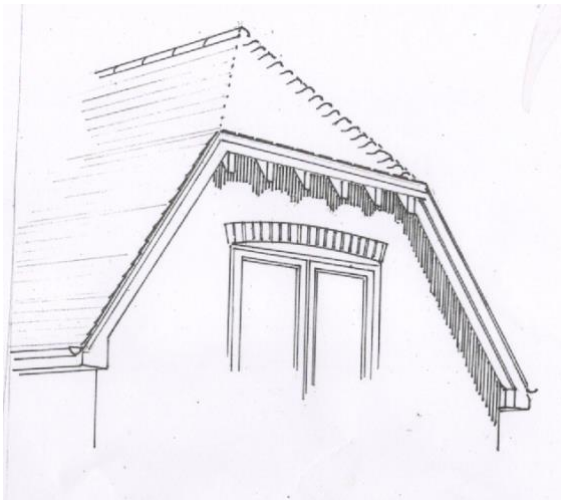
Another example of extension design



Example of cast hood over window




Low profile Dormer window and matching style porch



Example of exposed rafters under roof

Exposed purlins with roof extension over end wall

	
<p>Solar panels shown in various roof positions</p>	

4. Road Safety: Getting around – Roads, Buses, Walking and Cycling

- 4.1 The overriding concern for many years and remains about the A350: the lack of a footpath; difficulty crossing the road safely because of the general speed, volume and weight of traffic; lack of safe crossing points; and pinch-points contributing to minor collisions. Further concerns include general traffic speeds and safety of pedestrians along West Street and Mill Street, lack of adequate signage to prevent heavy vehicles using these roads, seasonal frequent use by agricultural contractor vehicles. The need for better access and parking for the school had been previously highlighted, as parking causes traffic problems along West Street and Church Street. Map 8 shows the hazardous crossings and the blind bends where pedestrians are forced to walk on a major road.
- 4.2 The current bus routes, serving Shaftesbury and Blandford Forum, are used by residents. Bus routes to Salisbury and Blandford have had services reduced and this is regretted. The full-time surgery is located in Shaftesbury, four miles to the north. The nearest minor injuries unit and local hospital beds post 2018 will be located in Blandford eight miles to the south. The nearest accident and emergency hospital is in Salisbury 22 miles to the north east. The nearest maternity hospital is in Dorchester, 25 miles to the south west. Inadequate transport services mean car ownership is higher than average, which needs to be considered in strategic housing decisions.
- 4.3 In a rural area, it is inevitable that any development that supports growth will lead to more vehicles using the local road network. Much of the growth on roads is likely to be a result of changes in business and patterns of travel originating from outside the area. An increase in traffic is acceptable to facilitate new house and businesses, provides traffic management is planned to maintain safety, avoid congestion, and protect those local landscape features that characterise the rural roads.

Creating safer roads and pedestrian routes

- 4.4 The concerns over traffic volumes and speed, both on the A350 and through the village, have been known for some time, and in 2014 the Parish Council supported the need for a village traffic management scheme, recognising the impact the A350 has on the safety and daily lives of the village residents. The A350 through Fontmell Magna has no pavement along most of its 30-mph limit, forcing pedestrians onto the carriageway. The village has no Pelican crossings to help pedestrians to safely cross the A250. It is far too narrow for the volume of lorries that pass through the village in both directions, and the road winds through the village limiting drivers' forward sight lines thus making it difficult for pedestrians hoping to cross the road to gauge the presence and speed of on-coming vehicles.

- 4.5 The Parish Council paid for a Highways traffic survey to be carried out in March 2022 and the results of the four site locations can be seen in the Table below. The results were such that the Parish could justify the installation of a SID (Speed Indicator Device) which will be operational in March 2023 – shared between the three sites at South Street, North Street and West Street. A post installation traffic survey will be done by Highways to verify any speed reduction.
- 4.6 Further evidence of the issues is available in the study “Sight Lines at Crown Crossroads” (see Evidence Base). Crossing the A350 relies on agility, hearing and vision, plus the absence of vehicles obscuring vision of traffic coming in both directions at the same time. Any long-term solution will inevitably take years to deliver. The east-west link, although not carrying such heavy traffic, also experiences similar problems associated with perceived speed, absence of pavements, and parked vehicles. This is especially notable at school opening and closing times, when the street is often full of parked vehicles dropping off and collecting children. Some of them have to walk a considerable distance between their vehicles and the school, with obvious safety implications.
- 4.7 FMPC do not have officially reported evidence of accidents, but we do have residents’ direct experience of accidents and near-misses. Ten near misses have been advised to the Fontmell Parish Community Speed Watch Team. Accidents do happen and the cause is always high speed. Moreover, there are virtually no safe places to walk along the road and daily (a) HGVs have to skid to a stop and reverse to get past each (b) when the road is clear the speed of cars increases dramatically and (c) at night when drivers (especially HGVs) think they can tell if nothing is coming towards them, increase their speeds. (See pictures below taken from Middle Farm House on A350).
- A local study estimated the time interval available to safely cross the A350 at the Mill Street intersection at approximately 5 seconds for a vehicle travelling at 30mph (see Appendix D). This short time presents a severe challenge for elderly pedestrians and for vehicles crossing the A350.
- 4.8 In 2022, the Parish Council carried out a survey of residents regarding speed limits. The results were:
- 95.2% of Fontmell Residents support 20mph through the village.
 - 82.5% support 20 mph on A350 through village.
 - 34.5% use car for local short trips because roads are too dangerous to walk on.
- 4.9 One of the main tasks the Neighbourhood Plan took on was to identify a network of safe and pleasant routes for pedestrians that connected the village, so that people living in the village could get to the main community facilities easily and safely. Having surveyed the routes, there were a number of areas where this network could be improved, by

either making the existing route more pedestrian-friendly. Existing footpaths and proposed new footpaths are shown in Map 8.

4.10 The rural nature of roads, lack of dedicated parking spaces including garages and increased levels of car ownership have created problems where levels and location of on-street parking on narrow streets make it difficult for road users to pass parked cars. The consequences of such poor layouts, the lack of turning and parking provision, cause aggravation and road safety concerns to residents, pedestrians and cyclists. This adverse impact should be considered in the planning balance. As a guide, all new homes will be required to provide safe water permeable off-street parking for at least two vehicles AND one for visitors.

4.11 A new vehicular access is from the A350 to the new Spring Meadows development (site 20), which had a requirement to provide a further road link to join with land at Blandford's Farm (site 22). The design of this link should be as a village lane, with dedicated space for pedestrians and cyclists. An onward footpath and cycle path from site 22 will link to the Village Hall and West Street (see Map 8) is proposed.

4.12 Any development should adhere to the Rural Roads Protocol as adopted by the Highway Authority, specifically to:

- Balance the safety and access needs of users with care for the environment and the quality of the landscape and settlements;
- Use local materials with designs sympathetic to the character of the rural settlements;
- Consider the landscape adjacent to the road, address ecological and historical needs and interests; Address sustainability and consider the potential impacts of climate change, ensuring that the management of rural roads and streets does not create or contribute to foreseeable environmental problems in the future;
- Keep signs, lines and street furniture to the minimum and remove intrusive roadside clutter;
- Where signs and markings are needed, adapt standard designs wherever possible to make them the best possible fit with local surroundings;
- Encourage and test innovative approaches and make full use of the flexibility in national regulations, standards and codes of practice.

Policy FM10. Creating safer roads and pedestrian routes

Pedestrian routes must be safeguarded. Proposals should contribute to the safety and attractiveness of the pedestrian routes, so that more people walk rather than drive locally.

In addition to safeguarding the important pedestrian routes, the design of new development (Site 22 Blandford Farm) will be required to create footpath and cycle connections to access West Street in order to provide a connection to the school, the shop, the village hall and playground, and public amenity woodland.

Where possible, developments will be required to enable onward vehicular and pedestrian / cycle links with Spring Meadows, in order to create permeable layouts that provide for a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists and allow traffic flows to be safely distributed.

Development should ensure suitable connections for safe walking or cycling access to local facilities, with any new paths and connections designed in a manner in keeping with the rural character of the area. Developments will be required to enable onward vehicular and pedestrian links where such routes would contribute towards a more permeable layout that encourages walking and cycling and allows traffic flows to be better managed.

Development should not be located where it would lead to a level of on-street parking or traffic that would adversely impact on the safe use or crossing of local roads. Development will not be permitted where an existing narrow access is not suitable for increased use, for example, Mill Street and West Street.

The design of any road improvement scheme should be consistent with the Rural Roads Protocol set out in 4.8.

Map 8: Pedestrian Routes

Fontmell Magna: Survey Results on Speed and Volume of Traffic		
Results from Highways Traffic Survey: 28th Feb to 6th March 2022		
Location	5 day Av. Flow Number per day	7 day Av. 85%ile MPH
A350 South of FM Northbound	1684	36.3
A350 South of FM Southbound	1974	42.2
A350 North of FM Northbound	1479	37.9
A350 North of FM Southbound	1726	36.7
A350 Centre of Village	n/a	27.8
West Street Eastbound into village	306	37.3
West Street Eastbound to Bedchester	314	33.6









Map 8: Pedestrian Routes

Project P1. Delivering traffic management solutions

The Neighbourhood Plan has been supporting the following project in which the Parish Council has been working with the Highway Authority and others to achieve the following:

- Identify and improve safe pedestrian crossing points on the A350;
- Ensure the road signage through the parish is appropriate, correctly sited and clean, and the minimum necessary (to avoid too much signage and clutter);
- Improve the safety of pupils, parents, staff and residents at the entrance to St Andrew's School through measures to manage parking and drop-off/collection;
- Facilitate the reduction of and monitor and record incidents of inappropriate vehicle speeds on the A350 and other parish roads;
- Seek the provision of new 20mph speed limits on West Street, Mill Street and the A350 to improve safety.

		
<p>Accidents</p>		<p>Stuck HGVs</p>

		
<p>Touching HGVs</p>	<p>Skid marks</p>	<p>S bends showing no <i>pavements</i> and no verges</p>

5. Flood risk, drainage and sewage treatment

Known flood risk

- 5.1 Reducing the risk of flooding, by not developing housing and similarly vulnerable uses in areas where flooding is likely to occur, is well established in national and local plan policies. Flood risk in the Plan area can be from rivers, surface water or groundwater sources, and can affect both the development itself and future development beyond the site depending on the site's location and drainage.
- 5.2 There are river-related flood risk areas either side of the Fontmell/Collyer's Brook, which runs from east to west through the main village. In the west of the parish there are flood risk areas at Marsh Common and along the brook at Woodbridge. The indicative surface water flood maps also show some potential for flooding on areas of land feeding into this river network.
- 5.3 Most historic development in the Parish has been on lower lying ground; the topography and geology of the Parish means that outlying developments are susceptible to seasonal surface water and ground water flooding, and it is not unusual for the ground to be saturated. However, it is considered that the risk of riverine flooding is minimal due to the proximity of built up parts of the Parish to the spring heads, and it may not be considered necessary to provide fluvial flood risk assessments unless there has been historic incidence of fluvial flooding occurrence. The bedrock ranges (west to east) from West Walton & Kimmeridge Clay, Greensand, Gault Mudstone, Limestone to Chalk, overlain by limited superficial deposits of river deposits of sand & gravel.
- 5.4 The nature of the topography and underlying substrata gives rise to two distinct but related features: springs and seasonal high water tables. On the rising ground to the north and east of the settlement there are a number of springs fed from the sedimentary bedrock of the chalk uplands where the Upper Greensand overlays the sandy Gault clays – whereas those within the gardens of Springhead are constant, many of the others are more seasonal, but nevertheless significant. On the ground south of the Collyer's and Fontmell Brooks, the Gault clays give rise to perched water tables which seasonally overflow towards the brooks, creating a sustained water course along part of West Street (eventually finding its way to road gullies). This clay strata may also account for seasonal local surface water flooding in the area of The Mead.

Managing flood risk

- 5.5 The general Local Plan policy follows national guidance, requiring appropriate sustainable drainage solutions to be incorporated into all new development of ten dwellings or more. However, in an area where there are issues relating to surface water and groundwater flooding, and development tends to be through smaller, incremental developments, it is important that drainage matters are properly considered at all scales of growth.
- 5.6 Where an initial assessment highlights flood risk issues that are associated with nearby sites, the developer is encouraged to make contact with those adjoining landowners to establish whether the mitigation could be extended to alleviate their flood problems (in such situations it is expected that the adjoining landowners would contribute towards any additional cost).
- 5.7 The use of rainwater butts and/or harvesting can help reduce flooding and make efficient use of water and should be encouraged. Water permeable hard surfacing treatments can help reduce surface water run-off, and the use of soakaways as a means of drainage will be viable where groundwater levels and infiltration rates allow. Where infiltration is unlikely to work effectively over the lifetime of the development, alternative techniques for regulating the discharge of surface water will need to be explored. Wessex Water have made clear that no surface water connections will be permitted to the foul sewer system. The use of positive discharge schemes to the brook under licence may provide a solution.

Policy FM11. Sustainable drainage

A site specific and proportionate Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is to be submitted in support of all development proposals that would result in increased surface water run-off. It should include an assessment of site characteristics and identify any prevailing flood risk from all potential sources (i.e. fluvial, surface and ground water, sewers, existing infrastructure).

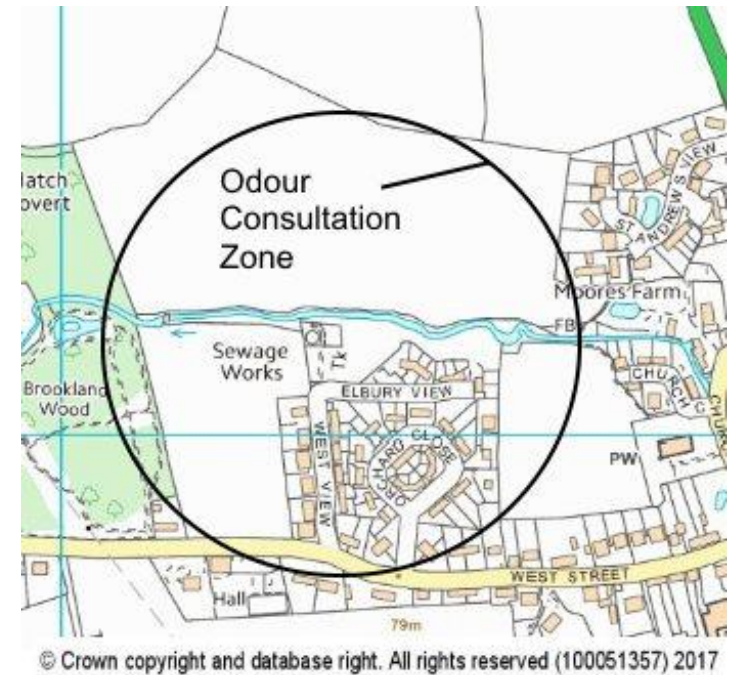
Whilst the supporting FRA should outline any mitigation measures that are to be adopted to ensure that proposed development is not placed at risk, or any off-site worsening generated, there will be presumption against sites or proposed developments with a significant prevailing risk.

Equally all development proposals should be supported by a viable and deliverable strategy of surface water management that reflects relevant ground conditions and which adheres to planning guidance and best practice.

The specific use of infiltration measures and soakaways is to be substantiated by appropriate investigation and testing.

Sewage treatment

- 5.8 The sewage treatment works off West View will require further improvement works during the plan period to support the anticipated level of growth – likely to be triggered when the number of residents connected increases to 250 (it is **presently around 180 increasing to 240 with Spring Meadows**). Developers should therefore contact Wessex Water at an early stage to discuss this issue, as any necessary upgrades to the sewage treatment works will need to be in place prior to the site's occupation.
- 5.9 Land adjoining the plant (approximately trebling the existing sewage treatment works area) is likely to be required for these improvements and should be safeguarded for this purpose. Because the sewage treatment works may give rise to occasional odours, Wessex Water should be consulted, to make sure that future occupants are not likely to be badly affected by such emissions. This constraint is likely to prohibit development to the north and west of Elbury View. Any application within the odour consultation zone should be accompanied by an odour assessment modelling the potential and future odour levels and identifying any mitigation necessary to reduce the potential impact to acceptable levels, to the satisfaction of Wessex Water.



Map 9: Odour Consultation Zone

Policy FM12. Development impacting on the sewage treatment works

New dwellings will not be allowed within the odour consultation zone (as shown on Map 9) unless there is clear evidence that the potential impact of likely odours and emissions on future occupants would be within generally accepted limits. Development will not be permitted within this area if it would compromise the future upgrading of this facility.

Major development will be required to demonstrate that any necessary upgrades to the sewage treatment works (as advised by Wessex Water) will be in place prior to the site's occupation.

6. Community Facilities

- 6.1 At the first public consultation session on the possible scope of the Neighbourhood Plan (July 2015), residents highlighted the importance of village amenities, such as the doctors' surgery, Fontmell Pub, the village shop, post office and tea room, the village school, church, and also raised the possible need for improvements to these facilities, such as extension to the village hall and a better playground. Another issue that most people agreed on was the importance of good quality broadband & mobile networks, both for business and leisure uses. There has been considerable dissatisfaction with the continuing poor quality of mobile telephone service, though some improvement in broadband was evident.
- 6.2 Changes in the population profile can impact on the need and funding available for local services, such as the local school and healthcare provision. More affordable housing, and more affordable open market housing, should attract families with children to the area, and the proportion of young residents should rise.

Important Community Buildings (and associated land)

- 6.3 The results of the household questionnaire (May 2016) showed that the Village Hall was highly valued by the community (92% support) but there were suggestions that it could be improved by the installation of further sports facilities such as a badminton court and improved football pitch, by development of the children's play area, by the installation of Wi Fi and of an audio loop system. An enlarged village hall and additional use of the school premises could provide further educational, training, sport and leisure activities.
- 6.4 There would also be community support for improved use of the Surgery building, through increased surgery hours and the provision of a wider range of medical services including chiropody and a pharmacy (rather than relying on the Child Okeford pharmacy). Any improvements to the public-sector healthcare will depend on the Blackmore Vale Partnership, who run the local service (and at the time this Plan was prepared had not identified a need to change or upgrade the provision locally).
- 6.5 Under the Community Right to Bid, the Parish Council can nominate community buildings and facilities that are important to residents as an 'asset of community value'. Once registered, their sale can be delayed allowing community groups to prepare a bid to buy and run them. The fact that a community asset is listed as an 'asset of community value' in itself can be a material planning consideration. The essential community facilities identified in Policy 13 are those that the Parish Council would be minded to nominate under the Community Right to Bid, if their continued use as a

community facility were likely to come under threat. The following policy provides additional protection whilst recognising that these facilities may need to adapt over time, to remain fit for purpose for future generations. Map 10 on page 39 shows their location. The list does not include green spaces protected under Policy FM1, or the services that do not require planning consent, such as the local bus service, the mobile phone and broadband coverage, or the network of recreational trails in the area, which are also much valued.

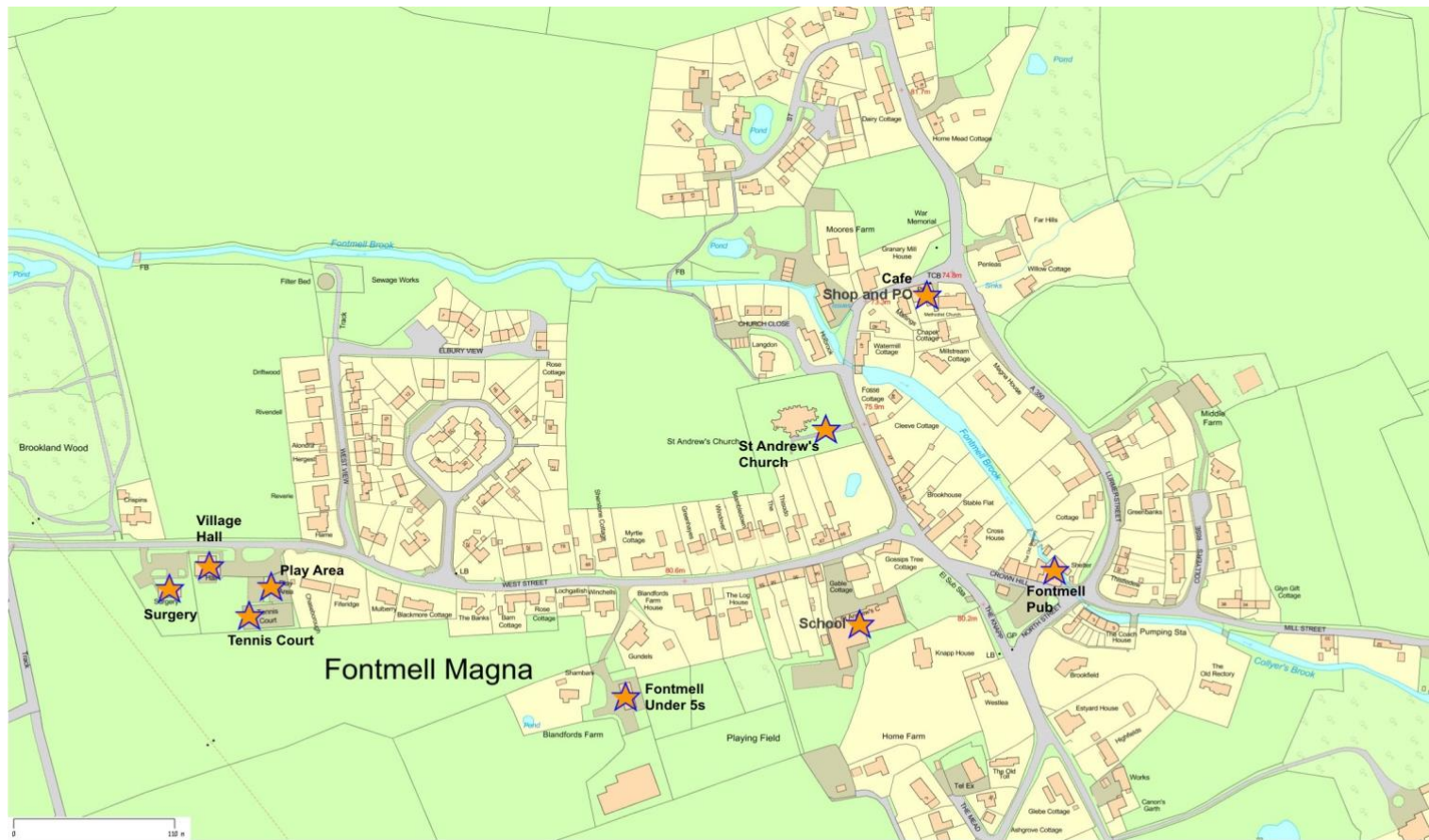
Policy FM13. Important community facilities

Community facilities (as listed below) are important to residents and should be retained where possible. The loss or reduction of such facilities will only be supported if, after involving the local community in assessing potential solutions to retain the facility, it is clear that their retention would be unreasonable on the grounds of viability, or the change proposed has the community's backing. Proposals will be supported that allow such facilities to modernise and adapt for future needs, including diversification schemes linked to the long-term operation of that facility as a viable concern.

- St Andrew's School and Hall;
- St Andrew's Church;
- Village Shop, Post Office and Tea Room;
- The Fontmell Pub; The FMNP recognises that The Fontmell Pub is currently closed and not trading. The community considers a pub to be an important asset for the village and wider parish, leisure and social interaction. Any future use of the asset should remain the same or substantially the same. The asset owners should contact the Parish Council to discuss how best to involve the local community in assessing potential solutions to retain the facility, or to see if any proposed change would have the community's support.
- Village Hall, play area and tennis court;
- Fontmell Magna Under 5's;
- Fontmell Surgery and Clinic. The FMNP recognises that the Fontmell Surgery is currently closed. The community considers a surgery to be an important asset for the health and wellbeing of the village and wider parish. Any future use of the asset should remain the same or substantially the same. The asset owners should contact the Parish

Council to discuss how best to involve the local community in assessing potential solutions to retain the facility, or to see if any proposed changes would have the community's support.

The provision of a new community facility to meet local needs, such as education, health services, cultural facilities, recreation and sport facilities, will be supported and should be well-located in relation to the main population that it is intended to serve.



Date Created: 3-8-2017 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 386496 / 117009 | Scale: 1:3578 | © Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (100051357) 2017

Map 10: Important Community Facilities

Broadband and mobile telephone services

- 6.6 At the time this Plan was written, the rollout of Superfast Broadband was in progress with three existing cabinets providing access for most of the village of Fontmell Magna, and further upgrades planned before the end of 2017 which will provide Superfast Broadband to Hartgrove (and East and West Orchard). Unfortunately, there are still problems with capacity.
- 6.7 Coverage from all mobile phone network providers is poor in general and non-existent in some areas. Discussions with the four major providers initially indicated that there were no plans for improving coverage in the foreseeable future but in July 2017 Vodafone advised the Parish Council that it was considering applying for Planning Permission to install a base station in the village at the Wessex Water Sewage Treatment works: an initial application was refused.

Project P2. Better Broadband and Mobile Telecommunications

The Parish Council will continue to press for better broadband and mobile telecommunication facilities

Community Energy Scheme

- 6.8 The Neighbourhood Plan considered various possibilities for energy conservation schemes. Consultation elicited some interest in hydroelectric, solar and biomass power generation but it was clear that any initiative in this direction would need considerable organisational and financial input.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.9 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008, on development within the area of any local authority in England and Wales. A levy liability is triggered by planning permission for the development and the levy starts to become payable from the commencement of the development. Part of the CIL, known as the Neighbourhood Portion, can be allocated to the Parish Council, to fund the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure. The amount of the Neighbourhood Portion depends on whether there is a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place that has been through a successful referendum and has

been agreed as part of the planning policy, or “made” by the Local Authority. In areas where this has happened 25% of the levy collected from development is available; otherwise it is 15%.

- 6.10 The Neighbourhood Plan would seek to provide a forum for residents to express views as to how the proceeds of CIL might best be used to the benefit of the local community.
- 6.11 North Dorset District Council is reviewing whether to adopt its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule following the publication of the Government's Housing White Paper and the Government commissioned Community Infrastructure Levy Review. In the interim, Section 106 agreements will continue to be used in order to make acceptable development which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms.
- 6.12 The following policy has therefore been included in the plan to highlight that contributions may be required from developments where the adverse impacts of development need to be mitigated, and where appropriate projects have been identified. The infrastructure projects relate to improvements to the pedestrian and cycle network for getting around the village of Fontmell Magna and improvements to recreation facilities. It would therefore be appropriate for any housing schemes whose residents would be likely to use these local recreation facilities, or who would use the walking / cycling routes to access the local community facilities, to contribute to these upgrades. The level of contribution sought should relate to the size and impact of the development and will be a matter for negotiation with the local planning authority. It may appropriate to use the equivalent of 25% of the CIL chargeable amount (which would have been the funding made available to the Parish Council had CIL been in place) as a starting point for such negotiations.

Policy FM14. Social Infrastructure

Development should support the maintenance and enhancement of existing social infrastructure and the provision of new social infrastructure, in line with national guidance on planning conditions and obligations, through the provision on site and/or contributions to provision off site. The facilities listed below reflect the need for improvements to the pedestrian and cycle network and recreation facilities, but other projects will be considered on their merits as appropriate:

- Upgraded footpath to South Street from West Street to make it all-weather for children using the school drop-off;
- Shared footpath and cycle path to Village Hall from Gundels;
- All-weather five-a-side football pitch;
- Upgrade play area by Village Hall.

7. Employment needs

- 7.1 In the initial consultation (July 2015) residents expressed strong support for there being sufficient employment opportunities to enable some people to work as well as live in the parish. The household survey in May 2016 indicated that 80% of employed people work outside the parish.
- 7.2 Typically of rural areas, business and employment opportunities in Fontmell Magna are limited and the number of self-employed people is higher than average for North Dorset. The 2011 National Census indicated that 30% of economically active residents were self-employed, and the household survey in May 2016 indicates that this figure is likely to have risen. At the time of writing, within Fontmell Magna village the main local businesses are the School and Pre-School, the Pub, and Perry and Son building contractors. There are a cluster of businesses operating from units at Black Venn Farm in Hartgrove.
- 7.3 Parish consultations showed support for additional employment opportunities in tourism and small-scale enterprises, particularly where this involved re-using existing premises such as redundant agricultural buildings. In comparison, there was little interest in businesses which would incur a detrimental increase in traffic, for example, storage facilities or which would degrade the rural character of the area such as with large-scale industries.

Supporting a rural economy

- 7.4 The main opportunities for new employment are likely to be through:
- home-based working connecting to a wide customer base via broadband;
 - local enterprises that benefit from the highly attractive rural environment of Fontmell Magna parish;
 - local enterprises that can be sustained by a relatively small rural community, its links and its visitors.
- These options are likely to encompass tourism, hospitality, local services, and companies based around locally produced goods and Dorset related or rural skills.
- 7.5 The Local Plan countryside policies support employment and tourism through:
- the re-use of existing buildings especially redundant farm buildings and other premises suitable for conversion;
 - the retention and small-scale expansion of existing employment sites;

- new built tourist accommodation where needed to support an existing rural enterprise – for example as a farm diversification project, or to support an environmental studies centre;
- small-scale caravan and camping sites close to local services – although suitable sites that wouldn't harm the landscape character of the area may be difficult to find locally.

Recently (March 2017) planning permission has been granted to develop a whiskey distillery re-using some redundant farm buildings along Mill Street on the east side of the village.

- 7.6 The Local Plan makes clear that “Whilst an increase in the floor-space of an existing dwelling in the countryside may facilitate homeworking, such development to enable commercial or business activities will not be permitted.”
- 7.7 However, given the importance of self-employment and the limited number of existing employment sites, the following policy has been included to provide greater flexibility for allowing home working where there is an established business and its expansion would not harm local character or significantly affect nearby residents. Any application for expansion should include information regarding the nature of the existing business, current actual (rather than permitted) and predicted actual traffic movements (both number and size of vehicles), and specific reasons for the proposed expansion. Given that this flexibility is intended to support home working, consideration should be given to imposing conditions or requiring a legal agreement to make sure the outbuilding remains available to support a business use associated with the main dwelling.

Policy FM15. Facilitating home working

The extension of existing homes and provision of outbuildings to support expanded home working may be acceptable, provided:

- the scale and design of the development is sympathetic to the character of the existing buildings and surrounding area;
- the outbuilding or extension will remain available for business use ancillary to the primary use as a dwelling;
- the development would not result in a significant adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity or cause harm by increased traffic movements.

7.8 In keeping with the Local Plan there is a requirement to use existing buildings for business development. For example, Blandford's Farm Barn Site 22 contains a barn that could be adapted to many uses:

- meet the needs of local small-scale business ventures;
- become a venue for showcasing local skills and crafts;
- house relevant local enterprises; and importantly;
- provide facilities that strengthen community relationships.

This requirement is covered in Policy FM20 Land at Blandford's Farm (Site 22).

7.9 Information on the local area including available premises and existing businesses and local skills (which may be complementary) may also support existing and establishing businesses. The following actions have therefore been identified.

Project P3. Business Information

The Parish Council will:

- promote the area for tourism and hospitality, and promote parish initiatives such as the Best Kept Village competition, via its website;
- keep a directory of local businesses and individuals able to provide local skills relevant to the area; The directory can be found and downloaded from the Parish Council website http://www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk/Community_Information_29460.aspx
- keep a register of sites and buildings available for business and employment use.

8. Housing Needs

- 8.1 The initial consultation session with residents (July 2015) highlighted that people thought there may be a need for affordable housing for local people, housing for young people, family housing and retirement homes/flats or sheltered accommodation in the village.
- 8.2 Our research into the level of housing growth likely to be needed suggests that a maximum of 40 homes would be reasonable for the 15-year period from 2016 to 2031. 30 homes would equate to a 'fair share' of the Local Plan's minimum target for the rural area, with any more potentially helping to provide much-needed affordable homes to reverse the outflow of younger people and families, and they could also provide other community benefits. Although there may be evidence of demand from people who 'desire' to live in Fontmell Magna, trying to meet the relatively limitless demand for inward migration would not be sustainable.
- 8.3 The review of housing needs carried out in February 2023 concluded that the target of 40 homes remains appropriate, the current need for affordable housing will be met and therefore there is not a need to identify further development sites.
- 8.4 This chapter sets out the type of housing needed, and the following chapter sets out the locations for new development, with the aim of meeting the projected housing needs.

Housing types

- 8.5 A housing needs assessment was prepared as part of the research underpinning this Plan. This provides the most accurate information on the level and type of housing needed, specific to the local area, and should therefore be used in determining the number and type of dwellings allowed. With support from local volunteers and the Local Planning Authority, the Parish Council intends to review and update this assessment of local needs over the Plan period.

Project P4. Local Housing Needs Assessment Review

The Parish Council, working with local volunteers and the Local Planning Authority, carried out a review of the Housing Need Assessment in February 2023. The results were used to update FM16 to ensure the NP remains relevant to current needs.

- 8.6 The findings of the housing needs assessment show that some sectors of society struggle to find affordable housing, access to jobs and further training and education opportunities. Most households are made up of two adults, and under-occupancy of 2+ bedrooms is common. Residents aged 65 and over comprise the largest age group. Much of the housing stock is in the highest council tax bands (32% of homes with a Fontmell Magna address are in Council tax bands F or G, compared to 13% in Council tax bands A or B), and in 2016 the average property in Fontmell Magna was estimated to be worth £484,000 (which is unaffordable to anyone on an average North Dorset income). There are very few properties for rent available in Fontmell Magna, and typical private rents would require 50% of average earnings.
- 8.7 From our survey, it is clear that there are a significant number wishing to move to a smaller home in order to downsize, a significant number wishing to build their own home if there was an opportunity to do so, and a lack of suitable one and two-bedroomed properties to meet the need for affordable or desirable homes. This evidence, together with a review of Census data, the affordable housing register, Land Registry data on house sales and distribution of stock within the council tax bands, all point towards a need for more starter homes, two and three bedroomed properties, including houses without stairs or otherwise adapted for older residents. There is less need for four bedroomed properties, because of the overbalance towards larger properties in the village.
- 8.8 On larger sites 2 out of every 5 homes should be genuinely affordable, in line with the Local Plan policies and accepted definition of affordable housing, and would include affordable rented accommodation, starter homes and shared ownership. The most recent local housing needs assessment (November 2021) for Dorset projects a requirement of 39% 1 and 2 bedroom homes, 44% 3 bedroom homes and 17% 4+ bedroom homes.
- 8.9 Whilst there is no government definition of eligibility for affordable housing, it is recognised that need is measured in relation to local wage levels and local house prices in the sales and rental sectors. Any household which cannot afford to meet its need with reference to local house prices is eligible for affordable housing, so in practice, people in the Parish with higher incomes than average may still be eligible for affordable housing due to the higher than average house prices and rental costs in this area. Given that development in the area is based on meeting local needs, prioritising the allocation of such housing to local people is justified. Qualifying criteria would include:
- having family, work, residence or education connections in Fontmell Magna or the surrounding villages, or;
 - being on North Dorset District Council's Joint Housing Needs Register.
- 8.10 The Local Plan requires a mix of housing types and sizes, and recognises that a different mix to the district-wide general need may be justified by local circumstances or viability considerations. Emerging households will typically include

smaller sized families due to divorce etc., or single adults such as elderly people living alone after bereavement. As time passes these smaller households 'emerge' as larger households become smaller.

8.11 The census data for 2021 shows an increase over 2011 figures in the number of 4+ bedroom homes and it is above the percentage of 4+ bedroom homes in Dorset. The census 2021 data also shows a decrease in 2 bedroom homes over 2011 to a figure that is well below the percentage for Dorset. This imbalance is partly due to an older more wealthy population but if it continues it will lead to an exodus of younger families and have an adverse impact on the viability and sustainability of local facilities such as the school.

8.12 By increasing the proportion of one and two-bedroom open market homes built, a larger proportion of the housing stock should become attainable to people on local wage levels and older people wishing to downsize. The size of such "smaller" homes should provide sufficient space for storage or working from home and not compromise on space standards.

8.13 Residents in need of affordable housing or wishing to self-build are encouraged to register their need on the appropriate websites:

- www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/housing-register (for affordable rented housing)

- www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/affordablehousing?p

- www.new-homes.co.uk/starter-homes/ (for starter homes)

- [https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/build-your-own-home?p I back url=%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dself-build%2Band%2Bcustom-build%2Bplots](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/build-your-own-home?p%20back_url=%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dself-build%2Band%2Bcustom-build%2Bplots) – (for self-build and custom-build plots)

8.14 Policy FM16 sets out the housing types required in new developments in the parish.

Policy FM16. Housing Types

Where affordable housing is provided in line with Local Plan policies, this should consist of 60% 1 and 2 bedroom homes and 40% 3+ bedroom homes and be allocated to households with a local connection to the Parish, before cascading to those with a local connection to the adjoining parishes, and then to the rest of North Dorset.

New open market housing should predominantly be of 1, 2 and some 3 bedroom properties, and be suitable for young working individuals and families (and capable of adaptation and extension so that residents can adapt their housing to suit their future needs without having to relocate) or suitable for older residents wishing to downsize. The percentage of 4+ bedroom properties is already well above the figure for Dorset and the projected figure for future needs. Any new applications to build 4+ bedroom properties should show evidence to support the need for their construction.

Any changes to this housing mix (set out above) should accord with identified local needs, as evidenced in the housing needs assessment produced to support this plan (and the update in February 2023), and any more recent information specific to the local area from the affordable housing register and other relevant data sources.

9. Amount and location of new development

General principles on sustainable growth

- 9.1 The Local Plan provides the spatial strategy for North Dorset, and makes clear that Fontmell Magna, as one of the District's larger villages, will be the focus of local growth, to meet local (rather than strategic) needs. Outside the village settlement boundary, development will be strictly controlled unless it is required to enable essential rural needs to be met.
- 9.2 The Neighbourhood Plan area is largely rural (only the village of Fontmell Magna has a settlement boundary), and development across the area could harm the tranquillity and rural characteristics that we all value so highly. Although there are a range of community facilities and job opportunities, mainly within the village of Fontmell Magna, inevitably there is reliance on the nearby towns for various needs, and a lot of journeys are made by private car.
- 9.3 The historic pattern of development in Fontmell Magna has grown up around and along its water courses. This has meant that most development in the parish has been on lower lying ground, making less impact on the natural landscape and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Our aim is to continue with similarly sensitive and sustainable development that respects and where possible enhances the natural and built environment.
- 9.4 The level and pace of development is an important consideration. Historically the village has experienced a relatively slow and steady pace of growth, using local materials and labour, and it was only towards the end of the last century that large-scale growth took place. Inevitably large-scale developments tend to look more homogenous, even if efforts are taken to vary the designs and materials used, and meet more than local needs. However, economies of scale associated with larger sites can provide community benefits, such as better infrastructure and more affordable housing. So, although it would be desirable to phase the release of sites to ensure that development does not happen all at once over a short timescale, and that the level and pace of change better reflect the needs of the local community and the organic nature of the village's history, this is likely to be waived where the community benefits will be delivered at an early stage.
- 9.5 The focus of any development will inevitably be directed towards the village. It should encourage residents to use local services and help maintain a vibrant and sustainable local community and avoid creating isolated pockets of development unrelated to historic patterns of housing growth. Further development to the east of the A350 is not desirable, particularly on greenfield sites, due to the greater potential impact on the setting of the AONB and the obvious difficulties crossing the main road safely to access the local facilities. There are no proposals to extend the settlement boundary in the proximity of the AONB, or otherwise allow development that would harm its natural beauty or tranquillity, at the very least not before all

the more sustainable available sites have been developed, and then, and only then, if it is clearly in the public interest to do so. Away from the village, the re-use of existing buildings capable of conversion will provide the main opportunities for growth.

- 9.6 The village is relatively unique in the way that green spaces and fields penetrate into the built-up areas, creating a chequerboard pattern of places and spaces. This pattern underlies the rural character and charm of the village, and perhaps explains why the original Conservation Area was drawn so widely. So, although the infilling of these spaces would in theory create a more compact and walkable form, it would be at the expense of this very precious character. The clear link to farming also serves as a reminder that agriculture and the farming community are custodians, conservators and experts of countryside and landscape management. The benefits of maintaining this character are generally felt to outweigh the benefits of creating a more compact village form, and this has informed our approach to the future pattern of growth.
- 9.7 The locations for growth identified in this plan are on sites to the west of the A350, adjoining the village (see Map 12).

Policy FM17. Spatial strategy for new development

This Plan makes provision for a maximum of 40 new homes to 2031, which is considered a sustainable level of growth. New built development must be focused on sites that lie to the west of the A350, and that are within easy walking distance of the main service amenities in the village (the shop, school and village hall, pub and surgery) and that are not within areas known to be at risk from flooding or otherwise protected.

Unless a countryside location is essential, new open-market development should take place within the defined settlement boundary, on allocated sites, or through the re-use of existing buildings in line with national policy where their existing use is no longer required.

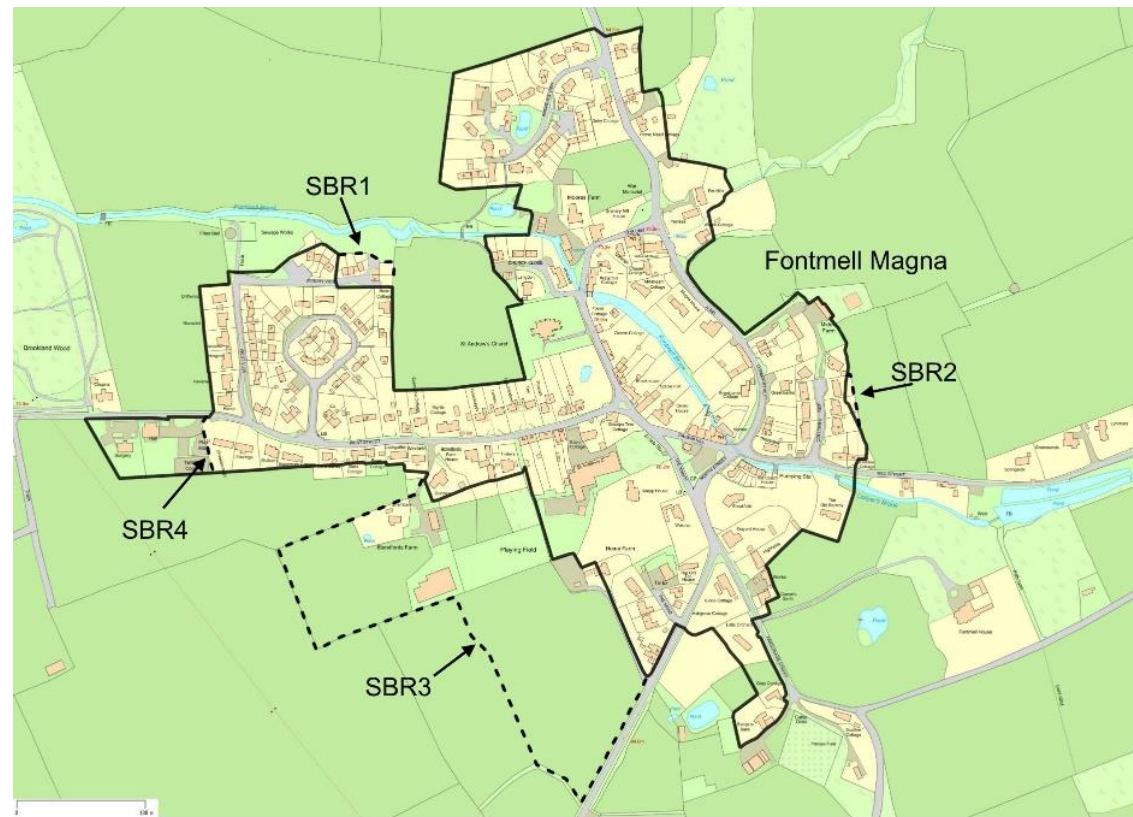
- 9.8 In all cases, further detailed consideration of the impact of development on the Conservation Area and the setting of the many Listed Buildings will be required at planning application stage. More detailed guidance on the character of new buildings and landscaping requirements is provided in Section 3.4 to 3.16.

Settlement boundary

- 9.9 When the Local Plan was updated, the settlement boundary adopted in the 2003 Local Plan was not reviewed, despite the development that has occurred during the intervening period. Settlement boundaries are often used in planning policy as a

means of defining the predominant "edge" between built development and the countryside, and within which infill development, including both housing and employment, would in principle be encouraged. The Local Plan encourages Neighbourhood Plans to review their own settlement boundary, and the updated settlement boundary is shown on Map 11. Key changes (Settlement Boundary Review, shown as SBR below) have been:

- Amendments to the boundary at SBR1 and SBR 2 where developments or other changes have taken place better to follow the settlement edge;
- The inclusion of SBR3 where new development is planned;
- The exclusion of green space which is on the edge of the settlement, SBR4, given that its inclusion within the settlement boundary could be misinterpreted as meaning that development of that area might be acceptable.



Map 11: Settlement Boundary Changes

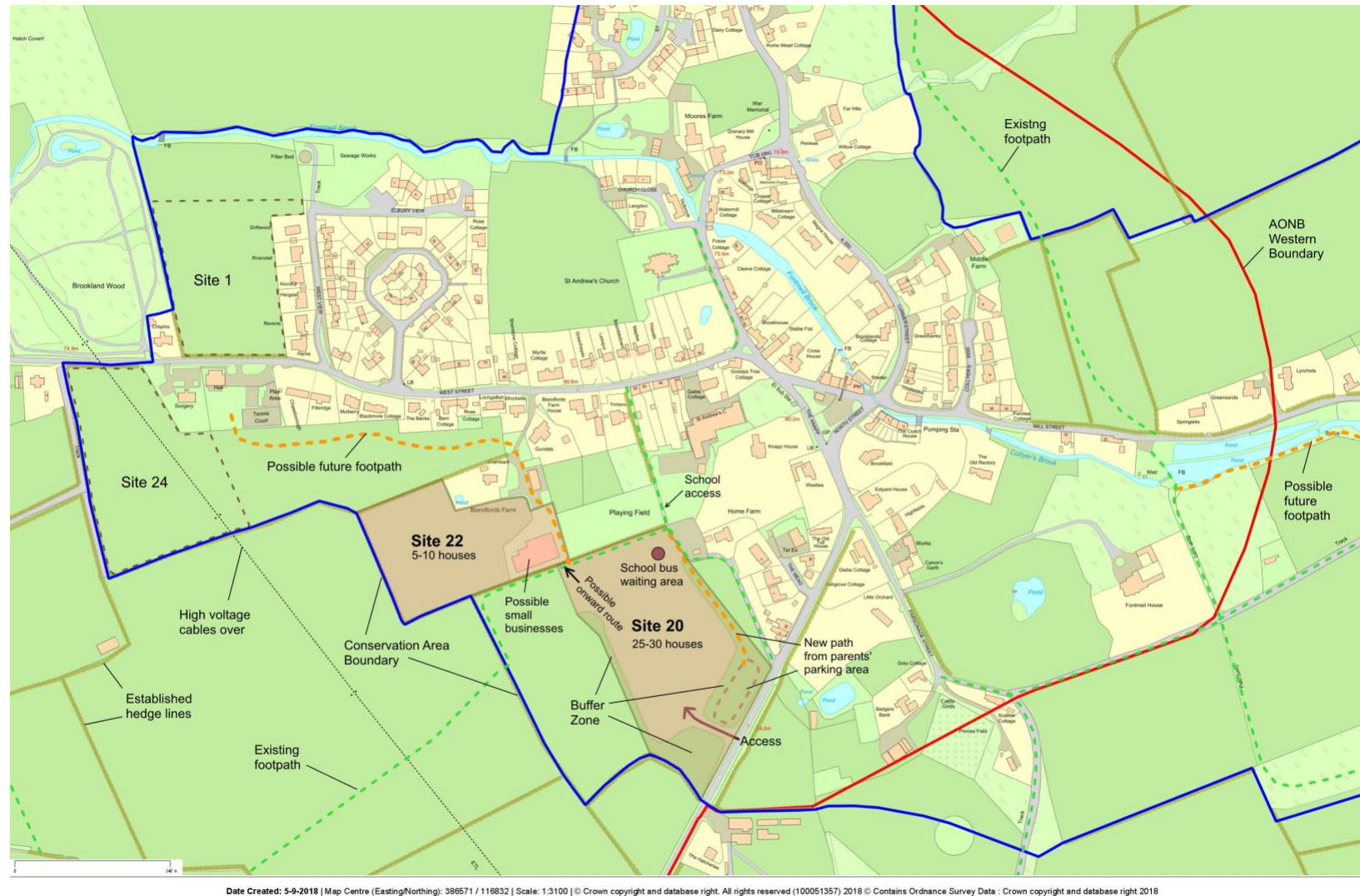
Date Created: 4-8-2018 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 386583 / 116868 | Scale: 1:4250 | © Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (100051357) 2018

Policy FM18. Settlement boundary

The settlement boundary as carried forward into the 2016 Local Plan is amended to more accurately define the existing and proposed built-up area, as shown on Map 11.

Locations for sustainable growth

- 9.10 Following a call for available sites in 2016, potential sites were assessed against a range of sustainability criteria, and subject to consultation. The site assessment procedure, which is expanded in the Strategic Environmental Assessment, highlighted four preferred options, and these were generally supported by the feedback received from residents. These were (in order of local preference):
- Spring Meadows (site 20);
 - Land at Blandfords Farm Barn (site 22);
 - Land adjoining the Village Hall (site 24);
 - Land to West of West View (site 1).
- 9.11 The total developable site area of all four sites is estimated to be more than 6.5ha, giving an estimated capacity of about 80 houses, far in excess of the maximum 40 homes likely to be needed. As such, the two sites most supported by the local community and which had the potential to provide additional community benefits, have been included as site-specific allocations. These should provide improved school parking provision accessed from the A350, a footpath for pedestrians and possibly cyclists (site 22 needs to have access to current footpath between Sutton Waldron and Fontmell Magna) and the potential for employment and some self-building housing.
- 9.12 The other two sites are unlikely to be required to meet local housing need but do provide additional potential as rural exception sites for affordable housing, if the need for additional affordable housing were to arise over the plan period (and this need would not be met through the site-specific allocations). These two sites may be reconsidered when this Plan is reviewed and rolled forward beyond 2031.



Map 12: Preferred Sites for Housing Growth

- 9.13 As part of the work underpinning this Plan, other sites were assessed. These sites were not considered sustainable, and Appendix 2 provides a record of some of the key issues connected with the rejected options. Fuller details are given in the Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Spring Meadows

Table 4 Site 20

	Advantages	Disadvantages
9.14 A largely flat agricultural field (2.3ha in size) at the southern entrance to the village and within the Conservation Area, adjoining the main A350 road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Good access (within walking distance) to facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Highly visible site on the edge of the Conservation Area as the southern entrance to village.
9.15 The options consultation (2017) indicated that the community would support development here if it would achieve a new road access and parking and drop-off facilities for the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Potential to provide road access and parking and drop off facilities to rear of school for coaches and cars, create pedestrian footpath or road to Under 5's Preschool, and link to further development sites to reduce congestion on West Street. → New access onto A350 may help reduce speed of traffic entering village. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Partly visible from Sutton Hill and the strip lynchets in the AONB, although largely screened by the trees along the Hollow from Parsonage Street and seen in the context of the existing village.
9.16 The site will need to be accessed off the A350. This provides potential benefits that increase the overall sustainability of this site. The design of the new junction should be able to reduce the speed of traffic, and the link into the site can provide an alternative access for vehicles travelling to and from the school, including coaches which would otherwise have to travel along West Street. The parking should provide sufficient spaces to meet the likely demand at school drop-off and pick-up times (estimated as at least 1 coach drop-off space and 20 parking spaces), but should be designed so that it can also be used by visitors to the houses and school / pre-school. The new access from the A350 also allows a more permeable network to be achieved,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Potential to improve village edge and entrance to the village, subject to careful design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Large site size could result in much of the housing target being achieved in a short period rather than spread over the plan period.

linking to the footpath network and providing the potential for an onward vehicular link to Land at Blandfords Farm Barn (site 22). This should be designed to encourage low speeds and to avoid creating a rat-run.

- 9.17 The development of the site is not without its challenges, and therefore the design and layout will require careful attention in accordance with Policies FM8 and FM11. This is particularly relevant to the overall scale, density and landscaping, both within the site and along the edges, to achieve an attractive village character which is appropriate to the Conservation Area and as viewed from the A350 and wider footpath network including Sutton Hill. The layout should be sufficiently spacious to allow planting of native tree species such as oak and ash, that will mature and help soften and integrate the built environment in those wider views. The style of new development will need to be in keeping with the local vernacular.
- 9.18 A heritage assessment at the site allocation stage concluded that the chosen sites provided the opportunity to strengthen the underlying character and appearance of the village through good design and limited materials palette and landscaping. The subsequent ecology check flagged the potential importance of the hedgerows which should therefore be maintained wherever possible as they are key features of the wildlife corridors.
- 9.19 If connecting to the existing sewage treatment plant, the capacity and timescales for any necessary upgrades will need to be considered to ensure that the additional waste water can be accommodated.
- 9.20 A particular concern has been the 'village gateway' as viewed from the A350 travelling north when much of the site will be exposed to view. The existing view of the village from this point does not present either a rural image or any suggestion of a historic settlement - the only structures visible are of the twentieth century and are not considered to contribute to the character of the village (see Photograph 9).
- 9.21 By contrast, a more attractive entrance to the village can be achieved by creating a substantial buffer zone alongside the A350 (with trees and hedges planted round the area designated for



Photograph 9: View of Site 20 from the A350

School parking, as shown in Map 12). This planting could be extended along the western boundary to make for an attractive transition from open field to settlement and will provide a significant mitigation measure to the new housing development.

Policy FM19. Spring Meadows (Site 20)

Spring Meadows, as shown on Map 12, is allocated for housing and the provision of a public car parking area to be designed to assist the needs of the school at drop-off and collection times.

The total number of dwellings should not exceed 30 units and will comprise a mix of open market and affordable housing in line with Local Plan policies, and a range of house types and sizes in accordance with Policy FM16 Housing Types.

Design and layout, scale, massing and materials should respect the vernacular character of Fontmell Magna, in accordance with Policies FM8 and FM9, and will be based on a thorough understanding of the character of the Conservation Area and views from the AONB.

The layout, scale and design, including landscaping requirements, will be required to minimise the visual impact of development as seen from the strip lynchets on Sutton Hill and provide an attractive entrance and edge to the village as seen from the approach along the A350. This should include a substantial landscaped edge along the south-west and south-east boundaries, and a pepper-potting of green landscaped spaces within the site. The design must enable the retention of the tree belt along the northern boundary

The hedgerows are potentially important as wildlife corridors and a biodiversity appraisal together with a biodiversity mitigation and enhancement plan will be required as stated in policy FM2 Local Wildlife Corridors and Protected Species.

A flood risk assessment must be undertaken as stated in Policy FM11 Sustainable Drainage.

A parking area for 20 cars for parents of school children should be provided in the area close to the site entrance off the A350, with a new footpath link to the School that avoids crossing roads. Provision must also be made in the northern corner of the site closest to the school for coach drop-off and collection.

Vehicular access will be provided via a new junction off the A350, designed in a manner appropriate to the Conservation Area and Rural Roads Protocol, and with the aim of reducing traffic speeds of all vehicles travelling in both directions along the A350 to under 30mph.

The layout of the development should include a road and pedestrian access connecting to Land at Blandfords Farm Barn (as defined in Policy 20).

Blandfords Farm Barn (site 22)*Table 5 Site 22*

9.22 A largely flat agricultural field within the Conservation Area, with some large agricultural barns and the pre-school nursery building and parking area (total area 1.4ha).

9.23 The options consultation (2017) indicated that the community would prefer the site to be phased after a new road access is provided from Spring Meadows. There is no support for access to this site from West Street and this was confirmed at the Parish Council meeting in March 2023.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Good access (within walking distance) to facilities. → Relatively well-concealed site in terms of landscape setting, and well related to reinforce the village form → Potential for employment / community use of existing farm buildings → Potential for self-build plots → Potential for footpath link to amenity spaces and surgery avoiding West Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Western end is visible from Sutton Hill in the AONB, though impact softened by current hedgerow and hedgerow trees → There is only one suitable access via Spring Meadows

9.24 The landowner has indicated that, in addition to the pre-school community use (which could be further enhanced), the site could potentially be used for small-scale employment units if required by local businesses (that could include the re-use or replacement of the existing farm buildings), and the site would also potentially lend itself to a limited number of self-build dwellings (or could provide affordable housing such as starter homes). These housing types would provide an alternative to the type of development likely to come forward on land South of Home Farm. The delivery of such homes should be driven by local needs, and as such there should be linked evidence of such need as shown in the latest Local Housing Needs Assessment or reference to the Local Planning Authority's Self-Build and Affordable Housing Registers.

9.25 The site is reasonably well screened by existing trees and hedgerows along the site boundaries, these will be strengthened further through an appropriate landscape scheme, of native species, to provide biodiversity benefits. The layout and design of new development will need to be in keeping with the local vernacular and take into account proximity and impact on neighbouring land uses. The westernmost end of the field is the most sensitive in potential views from Sutton Hill and buildings being located close to this edge should be avoided.

- 9.26 A heritage assessment at the site allocation stage concluded that this site also provided the opportunity to strengthen the underlying character and appearance of the village through good design and limited materials palette and landscaping. The subsequent ecology check flagged the potential importance of the hedgerows which should therefore be maintained wherever possible as they are key features of the wildlife corridors.
- 9.27 The site should be accessed via the onward link from the development Spring Meadows (site 20). This will ensure that problems associated with the existing site access and vehicular traffic along West Street are not exacerbated.
- 9.28 Although the majority of the site lies outside any recognised flood risk zone, there is a very small area on the north-western boundary that current (2017) flood maps indicate may be prone to surface water flooding and given the local geological conditions and low-lying nature of the site, further investigation into groundwater conditions and surface water run-off will be required. Discussions with the adjoining property owners are encouraged, as there may be solutions that would also benefit these properties. If connecting to the existing sewage treatment plant, the capacity and timescales for any necessary upgrades will need to be considered to ensure that the additional waste water can be accommodated. The developer will be expected to contribute directly to the costs of any upgrades to the sewage treatment works, under the Water Industry Act 1991.
- 9.29 Subject to viability, the existing barn or a replacement building(s) of at least equivalent volume should be provided for business/community use, with the aim of supporting small businesses, particularly those focussing on teaching local skills, sales of local produce and products and upon space being adapted for community activities.
- 9.30 The development should be comprehensively planned to ensure the juxtaposition of different uses is compatible and the necessary infrastructure, including parking spaces, and mitigation measures can be secured.
- 9.31 The landowner has expressed the wish to retain the privacy of his dwelling house so the layout of the development will be designed in such a way that his wishes are respected and no new housing will be located directly adjacent to his boundary.

Policy FM20. Land at Blandfords Farm Barn (Site 22)

Blandfords Farm Barn, as shown on Map 12, is allocated for employment/community facilities and the surrounding land, within the area shown for Site 22, is allocated for self/custom-build housing, or affordable housing, the majority of which should be 2 or 3 bedroom houses.(Ref FM16.) See also Dorset and BCP Local Housing Needs Assessment Table 9.23

The total number of dwellings should not exceed 10 units, and the release of sites should be phased based on evidence of local need. The range of house types and size should be in accordance with Policy FM16 Housing Types.

Design and layout, scale, massing and materials should respect the vernacular character of Fontmell Magna, in accordance with Policies FM8 and FM9 and be based on a thorough understanding of the character of the Conservation Area.

The layout and design should enable the retention of the tree belt along the southern boundary and hedgerow boundaries, except for access to site 20, and a landscape scheme agreed that reinforces the site's screening and enclosure as viewed from public rights of way.

The hedgerows are potentially important as wildlife corridors and a biodiversity appraisal together with a biodiversity mitigation and enhancement plan will be required as stated in policy FM2 Local Wildlife Corridors and Protected Species. A flood risk assessment must be undertaken as stated in Policy FM11 Sustainable Drainage.

Pedestrian and vehicular access will be provided via Spring Meadows (site 20).

Potential Rural Affordable Housing Exception Sites: Land adjoining the Village Hall (Site 24) and Land West of West View (Site 1)

- 9.32 Land south and west of the village hall, surgery and play area comprises a largely flat agricultural field. On the opposite side of West Street, between West View and Brookland Wood (a deciduous woodland managed by the Woodland Trust and open to the public) is another broadly level agricultural field, sloping down towards Fontmell Brook and the sewage treatment works.
- 9.33 Both of these sites were identified as having potential for development. The options consultation (2017) indicated that the community would support the development of some land on either site, if needed, although concerns were raised regarding further increases in traffic along West Street. Also, there were good reasons why parts of both sites should remain undeveloped - land east of the village hall was more sensitive due to potential flood risk, the setting of the Conservation Area and historic buildings, and also may be required to enable the future expansion of the playing fields. The area immediately alongside Brookland Wood was also considered more sensitive, as development here could impact on the enjoyment of this valuable green space and haven for wildlife. The area towards the brook would need to remain undeveloped due to the possible impact of odour emissions from the sewage treatment works, and also its possible expansion.
- 9.34 Based on the likely housing need, there should be no requirement for either site to be developed within the plan period. However, the Local Plan does allow small sites to be permitted for affordable housing within or on the edge of the existing built-up areas of the village, but only to meet strictly local needs. Small numbers of market homes may be integrated as part of such a rural exception scheme if required to close a funding gap for the provision of the affordable homes, and provided that it is similar (or smaller) in size and type to the rural exception affordable homes being proposed. On this basis, either site could be considered favourably for a scheme of up to 9 dwellings.
- 9.35 Advantages and disadvantages of the two sites are shown on Page 61.

Table 6 Sites 24 and 1

	Advantages	Disadvantages
<i>Land adj the Village Hall (Site 24)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Good access (within walking distance) to facilities. → Potential public open space provision and to extend play area and improve facilities there, and maintain the existing pattern of green spaces between areas of housing → Potential for footpath from the village hall to the school site and A350 avoiding West Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Potentially visible from Sutton Hill in the AONB, though impact softened by distance and current hedgerow and hedgerow trees → Power cables cross the site → The traditional site for the Village Fete south of the Village Hall could be lost if this part of the site were developed → The existing field access onto West Street would need to be improved, and development of this site would increase traffic along West Street → Has the potential to harm the setting of listed buildings in West Street
<i>Land West of West View (Site 1)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Good access (within walking distance) to facilities Potential to facilitate a new, larger, Sewage Treatment Plant which may serve other properties in the village → Potential to create new footpath to north entrance to Brooklands Wood from West View, or even to link with new footpath beside Fontmell Brook so avoiding West Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Potentially visible from AONB, notably Fore Top and Melbury Beacon → Potential impact on tranquillity of Brookland Wood → Possible odour from Sewage Treatment Works → Existing field access onto West Street would need to be improved (visibility splay would require the removal of hedgerow), and development of this site would increase traffic along West Street

10. Plan Monitoring and Review

- 10.1 The Neighbourhood Plan presents the local policies which the residents of Fontmell Magna have voted on, and support. Residents will wish planners to adhere to these policies in making planning decisions, during the Plan's currency from 2017 to 2031. The Parish Council will assume responsibility for monitoring adherence to the Plan over this period and will review and update the Plan when necessary.
- 10.2 The Parish Council will report each year in its Annual Report to residents on how the Neighbourhood Plan is working in relation to the following:
- Developments requiring planning permission, noting whether the planning decision is in line with the Neighbourhood Plan policies and the Parish Council's views;
 - Unauthorised developments, and the action taken by the Council's enforcement team;
 - Housing developments, in particular the number and type of houses built and whether these meet local housing needs;
 - Planning applications that affect a protected community asset;
 - Impact of developments, from the Highway Authority and local developers, on traffic management through the village and wider parish;
 - Projects and changes made by environmental groups, such as Dorset Wildlife Trust and AONB, that may affect the local landscape and heritage of Fontmell Magna parish;
 - Growth of businesses and employment in the parish;
 - Progress on projects identified in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 10.3 External factors may change, such as national planning policy and strategic policies of Dorset's Local Plans, and developments will take place, which may necessitate a formal update to the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure it remains appropriate and effective. The Parish Council will review the position every three years through the Plan period and judge whether a Plan update is needed. The Parish Council will report on whether a formal update is needed in its Annual Report.
- 10.4 The Parish Council's Annual Report will be available to all parish residents and published on the parish website.

Appendix 1: Evidence Base for the Neighbourhood Plan

Community Questionnaire – General

Community Questionnaire – Business & Employment

Community Questionnaire Results – General, May 2016

Community Questionnaire Results – Business & Employment, May 2016

Community Questionnaire Analysis – Housing

Community Questionnaire Analysis – Environment

Community Questionnaire Analysis – Local Economy

Community Amenities List

Conservation Area Appraisal, adopted by Local Planning Authority on 14th February 2018

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning/planning-constraints/conservation-areas/north-dorset/conservation-areas-north-dorset.aspx>

Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 <http://www.ccwwdaonb.org.uk/publications/aonb-management-plan/>

DCC Flood Risk Management, notes from Gary Cleaver in response to SEA document, April-June 2017.

DERC Environmental Records – Ecological Networks

Dorset AONB traffic in villages toolkit

http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/assets/downloads/Dorset_AONB_Partnership/trafficinvillages-web.pdf

Dorset Garden Trust Dorset Gardens of National and Local Significance, October 2014 - Springhead Entry

Ecological Assessment of Selected Sites at Fontmell Magna, Bryan Edwards, DERC, June 2017

FMNP Basic Conditions Statement

FMNP Consultation Statement

FMNP Options Consultation – Summary of Residents General Comments and Responses

FMNP Options Consultation – Summary of Residents Infrastructure Comments and Responses

FMNP Options Consultation – Summary of Statutory Consultee Comments and Responses

FMNP Pre-submission Consultation Comments and Responses for Residents

FMNP Pre-submission Consultation Summary Comments and Responses for Statutory Consultees

FMNP Strategic Environmental Assessment

Heritage Assessment, relating to proposed site allocations, Kevin Morris Heritage Planning, June 2017

Housing Needs Assessment, March 2017

Landscape Character Assessment, Dick Stainer, May 2017

Local Green Spaces, criteria and assessment sheets

Mill Street Rural Character, FMNP Environment FG, 2017

Mobile Coverage Checker <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/mobile-coverage>

National Heritage List for England

<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/advanced-search>

North Dorset Landscape Character Assessment

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/north-dorset/local-plan-part-1/submission/local-plan-evidence-base/pdfs/north-dorset-landscape-character-assessment-addendum.pdf>

North Dorset Local Plan part 1

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/north-dorset/the-north-dorset-local-plan/the-north-dorset-local-plan.aspx>

Office for National Statistics Neighbourhood Statistics

<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk>

Red Listed Birds recorded in the Parish, 2017

Site Assessments for Housing, November 2017

Sight Lines at Crown Crossroads, survey by Dick Stainer, 2017

Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Eastern Dorset Housing Market Area

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/north-dorset/additional-planning-policy-documents/part-of-eastern-dorset-shma/nd-part-of-eastern-dorset-strategic-housing-market-area.aspx>

Superfast Broadband Dorset Project coverage map

<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/broadband/map>

The Fontmell Magna Directory 2018

Traffic Management Scheme, September 2014

Also available on Parish website:

Options Consultation Stage April-May 2017, supporting documents:

http://www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk/FontmellMagna-PC/neighbourhood_plan-9778.aspx

Pre-submission Consultation Stage October–November 2017, supporting documents:

http://www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk/FontmellMagna-PC/neighbourhood_plan-9778.aspx

Appendix 2: Site Analysis showing Preferred and Rejected sites

SEA topic areas	Objective (summarised)	Site 1 - Land West of West View - Brooklands	Site 9 - Field East of 3,4,5, North Street	Site 10.2 - Site 10.2 Middle Farm Dutch Barn	Site 10.3 - Site 10.3 Middle Farm Paddock	Site 12 - Site 12: Land North of Mill Street	Site 20 - Land South of Home Farm (pre-policy)	Site 20 Stage 2 (Policy)	Site 22 - Land at Blandfords Farm Barn (pre-policy)	Site 22 Stage 2 (Policy)	Site 24 - Land South of Village Hall	Site 27 - Land West of Surgery by Marshmoor	Site 31.2 - Slurry Pit, Bedchester Farm	Site 35.2 - St Pennhill Farmhouse Paddock	Site 46 - Land Bordering Hannah's Hill
Biodiversity, fauna and flora	Ensure no ecological interests would be harmed, enhance habitats and biodiversity	👉	👉	👉	👉	👉	👉	-	👉	-	👉	👉	👉	👉	👉
Landscape	Protect and enhance the AONB, views and features that contribute to local character	-	xx	xx	xx	xx	x	-	-	-	x	x	x	x	x
Cultural heritage	Protect and enhance the area's heritage assets and the historic character of the area	-	x	-	x	x	x	-	-	-	x	x	👉	-	x
Soil, water and air	Avoid unacceptable risk of pollution and significant loss of productive farmland	👉	x	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	-	-	👉	-	👉
Climatic factors	Reduce flood risk and support reduction in energy consumption	✓	x	x	-	x	-	✓	👉	✓	👉	x	x	x	x
Population and human health;	Provide housing and/or opportunities for work and community facilities	✓✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	-	✓	-
Material assets	Create safe and accessible places	-	xx	-	-	x	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	x	xx	xx	xx
OVERALL		✓	xx	xx	xx	xx	-	✓	✓	✓	-	x	xx	xx	xx

KEY:	✓✓	significant positive impact likely	x	adverse impact likely
	✓	positive impact likely	xx	significant adverse impact likely
	-	neutral impact likely	👉	impact uncertain

Appendix 3 – Extract from Lawton Report

Extract from the Lawton Report 2010 ‘Making space for nature’

2.2.1 What is an ecological network?

Much of England’s wildlife is now restricted to certain places, our wildlife sites, consisting largely of semi-natural habitats moulded by millennia of human-use. These sites are essential for the survival of many plants and animals and will remain important even if the species and habitats within them change. Surviving in small, isolated sites is, however, difficult for many species, and often impossible in the longer term, because they rarely contain the level of resources or the diversity of habitats needed to support sustainable populations. However, an alternative is to designate a suite of high quality sites which collectively contain the range and area of habitats that species requireand allow species to move between them. It is this network of core sites connected by buffer zones, wildlife corridors and smaller but still wildlife-rich sites that are important in their own right and can also act as ‘stepping stones’ that we call an *ecological network*. ‘Wildlife corridors’ do not have to be continuous, physical connections: a mosaic of mixed land use, for example, may be all that is needed – it is the permeability of the landscape to species that matters

Appendix 4 – Plan Objectives and Policies Cross-Reference

Here the Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan, set out in Table 1, are cross-referenced with the Policies included in the Plan, to show how the objectives are pursued through these Policies.

1. To contribute to **environmental sustainability**, by:

	Objective	Policy
1.(a)	Encouraging the use of renewable energy technologies, energy efficient design and technologies and efficient management of water resources while addressing flood risk	8, 9, 11, 12
1.(b)	Influencing the location of new housing to be within safe walking or cycling distance of local amenities	10, 17
1.(c)	Ensuring new housing and business sites minimise the impact on restricted roads, eg. Mill Street and West Street	17, 19, 20

2. To maintain the **local character and historic environment** of the parish, by:

	Objective	Policy
2.(a)	Ensuring new development respects the quality of the historic built environment, and does not have a damaging effect on any assets of historic or architectural importance.	7, 8, 9, 18
2.(b)	Ensuring development contributes to the quality and interest of the local character of the different areas within the parish.	3, 6, 8, 9, 17
2.(c)	Preserving the character of the narrow local byways with their high banks, tall hedges and wildflowers.	2, 5
2.(d)	Encouraging the growth of the village in a way which maintains its pattern of open spaces between developments and protects the amenity of current and future residents in terms of density and height of new housing, and proximity to existing developments.	5, 8, 9, 16, 18

3. To conserve the **natural environment** of the parish, by:

	Objective	Policy
3.(a)	Ensuring that West Wiltshire Downs and Cranborne Chase AONB is protected from inappropriate development.	4, 6
3.(b)	Ensuring that nature conservation sites and rare and protected species are safeguarded.	1, 2
3.(c)	Enhancing the status of Collyer's Brook/Fontmell Brook watercourse and other important sites as wildlife corridors and habitats.	1, 2
3.(d)	Promoting 'soft edges' to the built environment, planting trees near boundaries in particular, and maintaining and encouraging green corridors.	2, 8, 9

4. To maintain and enhance a **thriving local community**, by:

	Objective	Policy
4.(a)	Promoting a range of mixed housing development appropriate to local needs over the period to 2031 in relation to affordability, size and location.	16
4.(b)	Supporting the development of the facilities and amenities offered by the Village School to ensure its long-term viability.	13
4.(c)	Prioritising affordable housing for households with a 'local connection' to the Parish.	16
4.(d)	Enabling the growth of business and employment opportunities to meet local needs	13, 14, 15, 20
4.(e)	Continuing to offer a wide and diverse range of social, sport and leisure activities.	13, 14
4.(f)	Encouraging the provision of transport links to local towns.	13*
4.(g)	Encouraging the adequate provision of health, education and retail facilities.	13, 14

* Not an explicit link

Appendix 5 – NPPF Paragraph 58

Existing Housing Densities

The densities of the housing in the village where the properties contribute to the character of the conservation area are as follows:

West Street	12.4dph
Church Street	10.8dph
North Street	15.6dph
South Street	11.4dph

NPPF Paragraph 58

Para 58 of NPPF does not seek to optimise the potential of a site as a primary aim - this is just one of six aims. It is the function of a neighbourhood plan to **'develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics'**. It is therefore for a developer to work within these constraints.

Through the use of the research already undertaken to establish local needs and the preparation of a Conservation Area Appraisal, it can be argued that the six aims set out in Paragraph 58 (below) have been integrated into the draft Neighbourhood Plan:

NPPF Paragraph 58: Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development
- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit

- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks
- respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation
- create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping

List of Maps (All Maps are courtesy of Parish Online)

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