

Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan

Basic Conditions Statement

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Summary

The Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are considered to be met by the Mortimer Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein and therefore complies with Paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.

The Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998. The impact assessment is set out in section 4. The conclusion is that the Plan as a whole, the objectives and policies are either positive or neutral with regard to equality; none are considered to have a negative impact.

Introduction

The Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) has been prepared in accordance with the statutory regulations required by Paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as applied by Section 38A of the Town and Country Planning Act 2004, as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and as embodied in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012).

It has been prepared and submitted by Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council (SMPC) as the Qualifying Body as defined by the Localism Act 2012 (West Berkshire Council approved SMPC as the qualifying body in December 2013 see Appendix 4.)

Preparation of the NDP

A Steering Group, as an advisory body to the Parish Council, carried out and organised most of the day to day tasks associated with the NDP including holding exhibitions, community consultations and drafting the policies and the text for the Plan.

The NDP Steering Group was composed of Parish Councillors and other members of the community. Its membership fluctuated due to the personal circumstances of its members. On average it has had 6 regular members.

The Steering Group reported progress to most meetings of the Parish Council. The Parish Council was then normally asked to ratify a proposal from the Steering Group. Such proposals included draft policies, the expenditure of money to hire halls and prepare literature and in particular the Plan itself.

The Steering Group met as required but in the peak period of work it met every two weeks in the Parish Office. Notice of each meeting was posted on the notice board outside the offices at least three days in advance of the meeting, making it clear that members of the public were welcome to attend. The minutes of the meetings were reported to the Parish Council and were posted on the Mortimer NDP web site. The terms of reference and photos and home locations of the members of the Steering Group were also posted on the NDP web site.

Plan Period

The plan period of the NDP runs to 2026. This period aligns the Plan with the West Berkshire Core Strategy and Strategic Housing Allocation DPD.

Excluded Development

The NDP proposal does not deal with mineral extraction, and waste development and nationally significant infrastructure or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Neighbourhood Area

The NDP does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. It relates to the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Area as designated by West Berkshire Council, which covers the parish of Stratfield Mortimer (See map Appendix 1). There is no

other Neighbourhood Development Plan proposed or in place within this neighbourhood area.

Repeat Submission

This submission is not a repeat submission.

Listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest

This plan does not affect any listed building or any feature of special architectural interest.

Conservation Area

Mortimer does not contain any designated conservation areas.

The Basic Conditions

Part 5, paragraph 15 of the Regulations sets out the requirements for the qualifying body submitting a neighbourhood plan to the local planning authority as follows:

Where a qualifying body submits a plan proposal to the local planning authority, it must include:

- (a) A map or statement which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood development plan relates;
- (b) A consultation statement;
- (c) The proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- (d) A statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act.

This statement addresses part (d) above and is known as the 'Basic Conditions'.

The Basic Conditions are:

- (a) The Plan must pay regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
- (b) The Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- (c) The Plan must be in general conformity with strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (in this case West Berkshire Council (WBC)).
- (d) The Plan must not breach and must be otherwise compatible with EU obligations
- (e) Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood development plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the plan (EIA and Habitat Regulations)

The Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are considered to be met by the Mortimer Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein and therefore complies with Paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Act. The evidence is set out in sections 1 - 4.

SECTION 1: NPPF OBLIGATIONS

NATIONAL POLICY

The Plan was assessed by SMPC against the NPPF twelve core principles. The evidence used for the assessment was the Vision for Mortimer, the core objectives and the policies.

The Plan maintains a **presumption in favour of sustainable development** in that it supports the strategic development needs in the Local Development Plan as well as local priorities.

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council consider the NDP is compliant with the NPPF policies and guidelines.

The table below identifies how the Plan satisfies the NPPF policies and guidance.

NPPF CORE PRINCIPLE	COMMENTARY	MORTIMER NDP VISION, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES
1 Genuinely planned, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area	<p>The Parish Council agreed that a Neighbourhood Plan should be developed and set up a Steering Group to work with the community and local authority to produce a Plan for Stratfield Mortimer that would form a positive part of development management for the parish. The Steering Group Terms of reference can be found in the Evidence Base .</p> <p>The Plan contains a vision for the parish and objectives to deliver the aspirations of the community based on parish appraisals, surveys and consultations.</p>	All apply
2 A creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives	The Steering Group has provided opportunities for the whole community to express views as to how development should progress over the period. This included consultation with parishioners, councillors, businesses, service providers and the youth of the parish. Their views have been used to	<p>The plan has policies for new housing which integrates them into the existing settlement (Policies HD2, HD3, HD4, GD1- 6 & SDB1- 4</p> <p>Policies B1 – B3 are there to ensure that the environment is protected and enhanced.</p> <p>Policies C1 and C2 aim to</p>

	<p>formulate the Plan. Those views can be summarised as harnessing development as a positive force, indicating how the community wants to grow, be improved and enhanced.</p>	<p>maintain and improve local shops and businesses.</p>
<p>3 Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs</p>	<p>As a rural service centre the Plan seeks to retain and enhance that role so that all the basic needs of the population can be met within the parish.</p> <p>The Plan allocates land to provide for 110 new homes in accordance with West Berkshire's Housing Sites Allocation (DPD)</p> <p>The objective is to provide the mix of types of homes and tenure that make it possible for people to live the whole of their lives in the parish if they so wish with a focus on the provision of smaller homes for those wishing to buy their first home, or downsize in accordance with the responses to the consultations.</p> <p>The plan seeks to maintain and enhance a thriving parish economy and village centre of local retail outlets, small businesses, services and social amenities providing local employment opportunities. The emphasis is promoting an attractive village centre to increase footfall to support the success of local shops, on new business and employment opportunities close to the centre of the village and the reuse of redundant rural buildings.</p> <p>The Plan aims to provide the infrastructure services and</p>	<p>Policies C1, C2, C4, C6 and C7 aim to maintain and increase local employment opportunities and local shops.</p> <p>Policy IS1, IS3, IS5, and IS6 set out infrastructure policies</p> <p>Policy RS5 allocates a site for up 110 new homes.</p> <p>Policies HD1 and HD2</p> <p>All commercial policies C1 – C8</p>

	amenities required in a modern rural parish and to ensure that the new development has good and sustainable water and waste water service.	Policies IS1 – IS6
4 Seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings	<p>To develop homes which meet the requirements of 21st century lifestyles and improve the overall quality of the housing stock in the parish while remaining sympathetic to the older building styles at the heart of the village.</p> <p>The Plan seeks to have the site and new homes built in accordance with Lifetime Homes standards and Building for Life 12 principles.</p>	Policies GD1, GD5, GD6, SDB1 - 4 and IS1 specify the design standard and required amenities.
5 Promote the vitality and character of communities recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities	<p>A principal aim is to maintain the rural character and setting of the parish with the minimum of intrusion on the existing surrounding green and agricultural space. Emphasis is placed on minimising extension to the existing Settlement Boundary and disallowing further ribbon-style developments, thereby maintaining a compact village.</p> <p>Particular emphasis is placed on avoiding 'creeping urbanisation'.</p> <p>The Plan seeks design solutions that reflect and enhance the essential nature of the village, the immediate surrounding area and the rural character of Mortimer in their scale, siting, features, layout, materials, landscaping and design details as expressed by the community in the Plan.</p>	<p>Policy RS4</p> <p>HD2 and HD3 show the mix of dwellings to promote the vitality of the community.</p> <p>The Biodiversity, Heritage & Green Spaces sections all deal with supporting and enhancing the intrinsic character and the beauty of the parish.</p> <p>Policy GD4, C3</p> <p>Policies GD5, GD6, C4, C5, C7</p>

<p>6 Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk ..., and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings</p>	<p>New development is close to the centre of the village enabling residents to easily walk or cycle to the infant school, shops, bank, post office and recreation area to encourage walking and cycling</p> <p>The Plan seeks energy management technology in new homes</p> <p>To ensure that flooding risk is not increased, and ideally is reduced, taking into account climate change. Emphasis is place on seeking design solutions for worst case storms.</p>	<p>Policy RS5 allocates land adjacent to the centre of the village.</p> <p>SDB2 provides an additional pedestrian/cycle access close to the centre of the village, the present St John's Infant School and the recreation and play areas.</p> <p>Policy GD5 seeks the adoption of energy management technology in all new home developments.</p> <p>Policy GD3 establishes the minimum requirements and seeks enhanced flood prevention designs to protect developments and downstream from storms falling on saturated ground including a short period of high intensity rainfall.</p> <p>Policy IS5 seeks to improve traffic management in the the village.</p>
<p>7 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment</p>	<p>The Site is grade 3 agricultural land. Attention was paid to the Landscape Character assessment which for this site is designated 'Low' sensitivity</p> <p>The rural character and setting of the parish will remain with the minimum of intrusion on the existing surrounding green and agricultural space.</p> <p>The Plan maintains the rural approaches to the parish and retain the gaps between Mortimer and adjacent settlements</p> <p>The Plan seeks to retain the</p>	<p>Policy RS4 and HD4 seek to ensure that the transition from development to the countryside is progressive and blends into the landscape to avoid a hard edge transition.</p> <p>Policy SDB1 includes requirements of the development site's design to include substantial green space.</p> <p>Policy C8 seeks to ensure the impact of developments on the countryside is fully and properly taken into account</p> <p>Policy GD 4 maintains a dark</p>

	<p>village as a dark village with minimal light pollution and intrusion</p> <p>To maintain and where possible enhance the quality and diversity of the natural environment of the parish.</p>	<p>village and minimise light pollution.</p> <p>The Biodiversity and Designated Green Spaces policies help protect and enhance the natural environment.</p>
8 Using brownfield Land.	<p>The plan does not have specific objectives with regard to brownfield sites as there are limited opportunities for brownfield development in the village. However, the presumption in favour of development within the revised settlement boundary is stressed throughout the Plan.</p>	<p>Policies RS3 and RS6 seeks to ensure that all the design policies in their totality are adhered to if and when any such sites come forward.</p>
9 Multiple uses of sites	<p>The allocated site provides for 110 new homes and reserved space for a new relocated St John’s Infant School and Doctors’ surgery together with appropriate parking facilities.</p> <p>The development of a new school and/or surgery is dependent on the availability of funding.</p>	<p>Policies RS5 and SDB1</p>
10 Conserving heritage assets	<p>The Plan seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain the best landscape and architectural features of the parish • Develop the heritage of the parish and provide an added amenity for the community. • Maintain and, where possible, improve green spaces and green routes. <p>Neither the allocated site or policies have a detrimental impact on features with special architectural or historical interest</p> <p>Mortimer Parish does not have any conservation areas.</p>	<p>The heritage section does not have a policy additional to the West Berkshire Core Strategy policy CS19 “Historic Environment and Landscape Character” which addresses the objectives regarding the heritage assets of the parish. Projects are included which on their realisation will provide additional parish amenity</p> <p>The Designated Green Spaces section seeks to protect several heritage areas such as the Fairground and the village ponds.</p>

<p>11 Encourage sustainable transport</p>	<p>The Plan seeks to encourage/enable walking and cycling within the village and reduce the need for car usage</p> <p>The Plan includes a project to expand the station car park which currently is too small</p>	<p>Policy IS5 encourages and will support developments that contribute to traffic calming.</p> <p>The location of The Site has been chosen specifically because it is the most sustainable location. (RS5)</p> <p>A project is included to facilitate railway use by expanding the village railway station which is unable to accommodate current demand.</p>
<p>12 Health, social and Cultural wellbeing</p>	<p>The Site is close to the recreational area of the village.</p> <p>The Plan promotes the infrastructure services of a modern and attractive parish – superfast broadband, schools, health and welfare services.</p> <p>Land is reserved for a new expanded St John’s Infant school and doctors surgery. An urgent project is included to see if the option of co-locating St Mary’s Junior School with St John’s is practical and funding can be established.</p>	<p>Two key principles are that</p> <p>“The NDP will ensure that new residential developments will be within or adjacent to the existing Settlement Policy Boundary and, ideally, close to the centre of the village (the centre is taken to be St John’s Church)” This is supportive of young families/mothers and the elderly</p> <p>“The NDP will allocate and reserve land to make provision for the future needs of the parish with respect to schools and health/welfare infrastructure”</p> <p>Policy GD5 seeks to have all the new homes built to Lifetime Home standards.</p> <p>Policies GD1, C4, C5 and C7 seek to ensure that the amenities of local residents are taken fully and appropriately into account</p> <p>Policy SDB4 for the site requires that c3ha of land are maintained as public green space and that the public footpath is maintained</p>

SECTION 2: HOW THE PLAN CONTRIBUTES TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Preamble

National Planning Policy Guidance states that *'This basic condition is consistent with the planning principle that all plan-making and decision-taking should help to achieve sustainable development. A qualifying body must demonstrate how its plan or Order will contribute to improvements in environmental, economic and social conditions or that consideration has been given to how any potential adverse effects arising from the proposals may be prevented, reduced or offset (referred to as mitigation measures).'*

There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and Environmental, the contribution of the NDP to each of these is set out below.

References in brackets (...) are to the relevant policies or objectives in the NDP.

Achievement of Sustainability

A part of the Vision is to retain and enhance Mortimer's role as a rural service centre so that all the basic needs of the population can be met within the parish.

Economic role

One of the NDP objectives is

"To have a thriving parish economy and village centre of local retail outlets, small businesses, services (e.g. pubs, cafes) and social amenities providing local employment opportunities."

In pursuit of this objective the Plans seeks to

- Encourage local employment opportunities and successful businesses
- Promote an attractive village centre to increase footfall to support the success of local shops

The delivery of the first of these is through the policies supporting innovation and high value employment (C2), new or expanded independent local retail outlets (C4), the creation of additional business accommodation through small scale expansion of existing employment premises, the conversion of existing buildings (C5) and new, renovated or extended buildings for employment and commercial activity (C7). In addition policy strongly supports the reuse of farm buildings (C6).

The location of the provision of the new homes is adjacent to the centre of the village. This provides for a short walk or cycle ride to the centre of the village which will encourage increase footfall for the local shops and services.

Social role

One of the key principles that underpins this Plan is it seeks to make it possible for people to live the whole of their lives in the parish if they so wish

This Plan allocates land for 110 new homes in accordance with the West Berkshire Housing Allocation (DPD) (RS5). The site was selected in part because it is adjacent to the village centre and the shops, services, St John's Infant school and the recreation area (see Site Location Map Appendix 2). The site will include a substantial area of green space of 3ha.

Affordable homes will be supplied in accordance with West Berkshire policy CS6 with a mix of tenures (rent and equity).

The mix of types of homes favours smaller homes for those wishing to set up home for the first time and those wishing to downsize in accordance with the feedback from the community consultations. The indicative mix is set out in policy HD2.

Three objectives concerned with the quality of design are

1. All new developments will have design solutions that reflect and enhance the rural character of Mortimer in their scale, siting, features, layout, materials, landscaping and design details as expressed by the community in this plan (9.1).
2. While achieving the overall design policy objective, new sites will incorporate the essential features that in the expressed view of the community will maintain and enhance the rural character set out in the vision of Mortimer.
3. Innovative designs that enhance the distinctive identity of Mortimer and avoid urban or semi-urban characteristics will be encouraged. (GD1 9.2.5)

The site design policies and guidelines seek to provide a high quality environment that encourages social interaction. The Building for Life 12 principles and Lifetime Home standards have been adopted to achieve the high quality design that will meet the needs of all residents (GD1).

Environmental role

An essential element of the Vision is that the rural character and setting of the parish will remain with the minimum of intrusion on the existing surrounding green and agricultural space. In particular the Plan has the objectives of

- (a) To maintain and where possible enhance the quality and diversity of the natural environment of the parish (13.1).
- (b) To develop the heritage of the parish and provide an added amenity for the community (15.1).

The delivery of the first objective is through the two Biodiversity policies (B1 – B3) which seeks to

1. take opportunities to create links between natural habitats
2. actively pursue biodiversity improvements
3. restore, expand, link and buffer existing priority habitats within the BOA including Ancient Woodland, Habitats of Principal Importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity and Local Wildlife Sites.
4. provide an enhanced wildlife friendly environment on all new developments and on developments with boundaries to green space shall augment and enrich wildlife corridors and seek to incorporate habitat-rich wildlife areas which deliver net gains biodiversity.

In regard to the allocated site, currently farmed land,

- Policy SDB 4 requires an extended phase 1 habitat survey to be conducted together with further detailed surveys arising that are necessary and appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures implemented to ensure any protected species are not adversely affected.
- The Site Design Brief seeks to enhance biodiversity by including:
 - C3ha of land on the southern edge
 - An area of retained trees and enhanced natural habitat on the Eastern boundary.

The West Berkshire policy CS19 establishes the policy with regard to Heritage. This Plan includes a number of projects that aimed at meeting the objective above.

With regard to adapting to climate change this Plan

- (a) locates the new homes close to the centre of the village with walking and cycling access close to the centre to reduce the need to use a car/van etc.
- (b) Policy GD5 aims at encouraging energy management technology in all new homes
- (c) the flooding policy seeks to have enhanced surface water flooding design to address the severe storm conditions on saturated ground that are becoming increasingly common .(GD3)

SECTION 3: HOW THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN IS IN GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC POLICIES CONTAINED IN THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Requirements

The Plan must demonstrate that it is in general conformity with the West Berkshire Authority's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD).

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council considers the NDP is compliant with the WBC Core Strategy and Housing Site Allocation DPD (November 2015) policies and guidelines.

West Berkshire Policy	Commentary	NDP Policies
<p>Area Delivery Plan Policy 1</p> <p>Most development will be within or adjacent to the settlements ..., and related to the transport accessibility of the settlements (especially by public transport, cycling and walking) their level of services The majority of development will take place on previously developed land.</p>	<p>Stratfield Mortimer is identified as a rural Service Centre</p> <p>The allocated land is adjacent to the existing settlement boundary and close to the centre of the village within easy walking distance.(see Site Location Map Appendix 2)</p> <p>There are regular bus services from the centre of the village to Reading and Tadley, centres of employment.</p> <p>The railway station is located a substantial distance from the centre of the village – c2.0km from the centre of the village and c1.8km from the Site entrance.</p> <p>There is no previously developed land within or adjacent to the settlement boundary that can accommodate 110 homes.</p>	<p>Policy RS5</p>
<p>ADPP6 (The East Kennet Valley)</p>	<p>HOUSING -The provision for 110 homes is in accordance with the East Kennet Valley as set out in the Housing Site</p>	<p>Policy RS5</p>

	<p>Allocations DPD (November 2015). The site is outside the inner zone regarding the AWE; in response to the pre-submission consultation the ONR stated they would not advise against the development.</p> <p>ENVIRONMENT - The NDP pays due regard to the environmental requirements and has specifically taken note of the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) representation to the pre-submission consultation.</p> <p>ECONOMY - The plan encourages appropriate commercial development identifying the locations for the further development of commercial activity near or in the commercial centre of the village and reusing rural buildings.</p> <p>ACCESSIBILITY – The Plan includes projects to expand the railway station car park and the provision of footpaths and cycle ways.</p>	<p>Biodiversity policies B1 and B2</p> <p>Commercial policies C1 – 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy IS3 and infrastructure project “Investigate options for increasing car parking provision at the station and identification and allocation of land for this.”
<p>Policy CS 1 Delivering New Homes and Retaining the Housing Stock</p>	<p>The Plan has allocated land to accommodate 110 new homes in accordance with the requirements of this policy and the Housing Site Allocations DPD</p>	<p>Policy RS5</p>

<p>Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (5th November 2015)</p>	<p>This Plan has allocated land to accommodate 110 new homes in accordance with the DPD.</p> <p>The Plan also includes a revised settlement boundary to accommodate this development.</p>	<p>Policy RS5</p> <p>Policy RS1</p>
<p>Policy CS 2 Newbury Racecourse Strategic Site Allocation</p>	<p>Not relevant</p>	
<p>Policy CS 3 Sandleford Strategic Site Allocation</p>	<p>Not relevant</p>	
<p>Policy CS 4 Housing Type and Mix</p>	<p>The Plan establishes the mix of home types required with an emphasis on smaller homes for those setting up home for the first time and those wishing to downsize</p> <p>The Site has a density of just over 30 per ha</p>	<p>Policy HD2 and HD3</p>
<p>Policy CS 5 Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery</p>	<p>The Plan includes the reservation of land on the new development for new extended St John's Infant school, and doctors surgery.</p> <p>The capacity of water and waste water services is to be investigated prior to development; existing water services maybe at capacity, waste water service has serous bottleneck.</p> <p>Opportunities for improved traffic management in the village will be encouraged and supported</p> <p>The NDP is keen to ensure the highest quality telecommunication services to support a modern rural economy and residential digital services</p>	<p>Policy SDB1 set out the requirements for reserved land.</p> <p>Policy IS6 establishes this requirement.</p> <p>Policy IS5 addresses traffic management</p> <p>Policy IS1 addresses the telecommunication needs.</p>

Policy CS 6 Provision of Affordable Housing	<p>Affordable housing will be provided in accordance with the policy requirements set out in West Berkshire's District Development Plan.</p> <p>Affordable homes will be integrated into developments in design, layout and location so as not to be distinguishable from other homes on the development.</p>	Policy HD1
Policy CS 7 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People	Not relevant Mortimer is not required to provide pitches	
Policy CS 8 Nuclear Installations - AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield	The site selected is in the outer zone. Pre-submission consultation raised no objection to the selected site.	
Policy CS 9 Location and Type of Business Development	<p>The Plan supports and encourages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of innovative small businesses which create a range of job types and high added value employment, • new or expanded local retail outlets, • creation of additional business accommodation through small scale expansion of existing buildings and new premises • Conversion of redundant farm and rural buildings to commercial use • New, renovated or extended buildings for employment and commercial activity <p>The Plan will seek to direct industrial, warehousing and large office development to West</p>	Policies C2, C4, C5, C6 and C7.

	Berkshire's Protected Employment Areas and suitable existing suitably located employment sites and premises in accordance with S9	
Policy CS 10 Rural Economy	The Plan supports and encourages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the development of innovative small businesses which create a range of job types and high added value employment Conversion of redundant farm and rural buildings to commercial use	Policies C2 and C6
Policy CS 11 Hierarchy of Centres	Mortimer is identified as a rural service centre. An objective of the strategy is to "Retain and enhance Mortimer's role as a rural service centre so that all the basic needs of the population can be met within the parish.	Commercial policies C1-C7 Reservation of land for new John 's Infant school and doctors surgery
Policy CS 12 Equestrian/Racehorse Industry	Not relevant	
Policy CS 13 Transport	There are no specific transport policies within the NDP. But policies IS 3 and IS5 deal with the station car parking and traffic management respectively. A project is included to seek to expand the railway station car park to facilitate greater use of the railway to Reading and Basingstoke The allocated development site is adjacent to the village shops, services and buses.	

<p>Policy CS 14 Design Principles</p>	<p>The Plan seeks to achieve high quality of site and building design.</p> <p>The Plan seeks to have the new homes built in accordance with Lifetime Homes standards and Building for Life 12 principles</p> <p>The building design objective is “To develop homes which meet the requirements of 21st century lifestyles and improve the overall quality of the housing stock in the parish while remaining sympathetic to the older building styles at the heart of the village.” Innovative design that are in keeping with that character and the rural nature will be encouraged</p>	<p>Policies GD1 – GD6</p>
<p>Policy CS 15 Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency Residential Development</p>	<p>The adoption of energy management technology is encouraged in all new home developments</p>	<p>Policy GD5</p>
<p>Policy CS 16 Flooding</p>	<p>The Plan is in accord with the west Berkshire policy but in addition it seeks to have a higher level of design which takes into account the increasing severity of storms falling on saturated ground with short periods of high intensity rainfall.</p>	<p>Policy GD3</p>
<p>Policy CS 17 Biodiversity and Geodiversity</p>	<p>The Plan seeks opportunities to create links between natural habitats and biodiversity improvements and to restore, expand, link and buffer existing priority habitats within the BOA including Ancient Woodland, Habitats of Principal Importance for the purpose of conserving</p>	<p>Policies B1 – B3</p>

	biodiversity and Local Wildlife Sites	
Policy CS 18 Green Infrastructure	<p>The Plan requires that 3ha of green space be made available on the development site</p> <p>The Plan seeks to create several Local Green Spaces</p>	<p>Policy SDB4</p> <p>Policy GS1</p>
Policy CS 19 Historic Environment and Landscape Character	<p>The Plan is in accordance with CS19.</p> <p>The Plan draws attention to the need to take into account landscape of 'high' and 'medium-high' sensitivity in any development</p>	<p>Policy C7 and Heritage 'Context and justification'</p>

SECTION 4: EUROPEAN UNION OBLIGATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Environmental impact and habitats regulations

Screening of a draft of the Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan by WBC confirmed that neither a Strategic Environmental Assessment nor a Habitats Regulation Assessment will be required. The Decision Notice is provided in Appendix 3.

Human Rights

The Plan provides a strategy for the development of the village, and a range of policies and proposals, which will result in positive benefits for many parts of the local community with protected characteristics: older people, young people, mothers to be and with young children, disabled people and those with limited mobility. The Plan does not have any knowingly negative impact on these groups. It does not explicitly address the needs of racial or religious groups, or transgender, gay or lesbian groups, or women. The Neighbourhood Plan does make equal provision for affordable housing and for a range of housing. It seeks to provide a public environment and spaces which encourage all members of the community to interact socially and where people with protected characteristics will be less liable to be subject to discrimination. The Plan locates the new homes close to the centre of the village – shops, businesses, infant school and recreation area – enabling those with protected characteristics to access these services and amenities within a short walking distance.

Baseline Data

Data for Stratfield Mortimer is available for the following protected characteristics: age, disability, race, religious belief, and sex.

The Data in the tables below comes from the 2011 Census.

In 2011 there were 3807 people living in Mortimer. Of these, 49.7% were male and 50.3% were female. Comparable figures for West Berkshire were 49.6% male and 50.4% female.

	Stratfield Mortimer		West Berkshire
	Number	%	%
Age			
0 -15	900	21.7	20.2
Age 16 64	2168	58.9	64.4
Age 65 –	39	19.4	15.4
Total	3807		
Ethnicity			
British White	3553	93.3	90.4
Other White	134	3.5	4.4
Non White	120	3.2	5.2
Religious Beliefs			
Christian	2422	63.9	63.6
Muslim	20	0.5	0.8
Jewish	1	0.0	0.1
Sikh	3	0.1	0.2
No Religion	1071	28.2	26.7
Other	12	0.3	0.7
Not stated	261	6.9	7.2
Limited Day-to-Day Activity			
Not limited	3282	86.2	86.8
Limited a Little	294	7.7	7.8
Limited a Lot	231	6.1	5.4

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) places a duty on all public authorities in the exercise of their functions to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between persons who have a “protected characteristic” and those who do not.

“Protected characteristics” are defined in the Act as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Impact of Policies on Groups with Protected Characteristics

The Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan aims to create benefits for everyone who lives, works, shops, or spends leisure time in the parish. A key principle of the strategy is that

The Plan will make it possible for people to live the whole of their lives in the parish if they so wish.

This will be achieved by developing new and better housing, particularly affordable housing, smaller housing suitable as starter and downsizing homes, encouraging the provision of local employment, and preserving and enhancing the quality of the environment.

Groups with the various protected characteristics will be affected in different ways by the Neighbourhood Plan and the purpose of the analysis is to identify how various groups will be affected and whether the proposals and policies will adversely affect disproportionately those in the groups with protected characteristics.

Without exception where policies in the Neighbourhood Plan do have an impact on groups with protected characteristics, the judgement is that it is a positive or neutral impact and not a negative one.

Age

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the need to provide and protect play facilities for children when new development is being considered. The allocated land for the new homes is located adjacent to the recreation area of the village. The plan seeks to have at least 3ha of green public space on the new development.

The Neighbourhood Plan also recognises the need to provide local affordable housing for young people. The dwellings mix places an emphasis on smaller homes suitable for those setting up home for the first time (Policy HD2).

With regard to older people the plan seeks to include in the mix of new homes smaller dwellings and bungalows suitable for those wishing to downsize and stay in the village (Policy HD2)

By allowing young families to move into the village and older residents to downsize, the plan should free up some of the larger family size houses meeting the needs of the working population/ families.

The design of the new homes includes the requirement for them to meet the Lifetime Home standards (Policies HD4, GD1 9.2.5)

The Site Design Brief includes the reservation of land for new expanded St John's Infant School and new doctors' surgery if funding is forthcoming.

The new homes are adjacent to the centre of the village facilitating access to the shops, services and amenities (Policy RS5).

Disability

The needs of persons who are disabled or who have limited mobility are recognised in the design requirement that the new dwellings are built to the Lifetime Home standards. The new homes are adjacent to the centre of the village facilitating access to the shops, services and amenities (Policy RS5).

Maternity and pregnancy

Key issues for women who are pregnant or who have young children are access to appropriate housing, flexible employment, and access to facilities including health, developmental play, and recreational facilities.

The Neighbourhood Plan has policies which help meet all of these needs or at worst do not adversely impact on the issues:

1. The new homes are adjacent to the centre of the village facilitating access to St John's Infant school, the recreation area, shops, services and amenities (Policy RS5).
2. Commercial policy C2 seeks local economic innovation that creates a range of job types and higher added value employment.

Race

Non-white ethnic groups are a small proportion of the population in Stratfield Mortimer, in 2011 3.2% of the population was non-white and within this there are several groups with different ethnic origins.

Non-white ethnic groups can experience difficulties around discrimination, language, health and well-being, deprivation and culture.

A public environment designed with safety in mind will minimise opportunities for crime, including crime related to discrimination.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that new development follows good design principles and provides safe and inclusive public environments to encourage social interaction and integration, specifically to.

- Provide direct, safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links to the village community facilities and the wider countryside;
- Incorporate 3ha areas of usable, publically accessible open green space, utilising the natural topography;
- Shared space roads will be used wherever practicable, including safe 'play streets'

Sex

The Neighbourhood Plan contains no specific policies or proposals for any particular gender. The Neighbourhood Plan has been written to provide equal opportunity to both sexes in respect of the provision of development and access to facilities.

Neither sex is disadvantaged by any of the policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan; on the contrary both sexes will benefit equally from the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Religion, Gender re-assignment, Sexual orientation

Key issues for religious groups are discrimination relating to employment, housing and the provision of services, and their portrayal in the media.

Key issues for gender re-assigned people, gays and lesbians are personal relationships, transphobia and/or discrimination.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not and cannot directly address the social attitudes that are involved in these problems. However, it does seek to provide a built environment which is open to all, with a safe public realm which all social groups can access and use equally, and encourage social interaction.

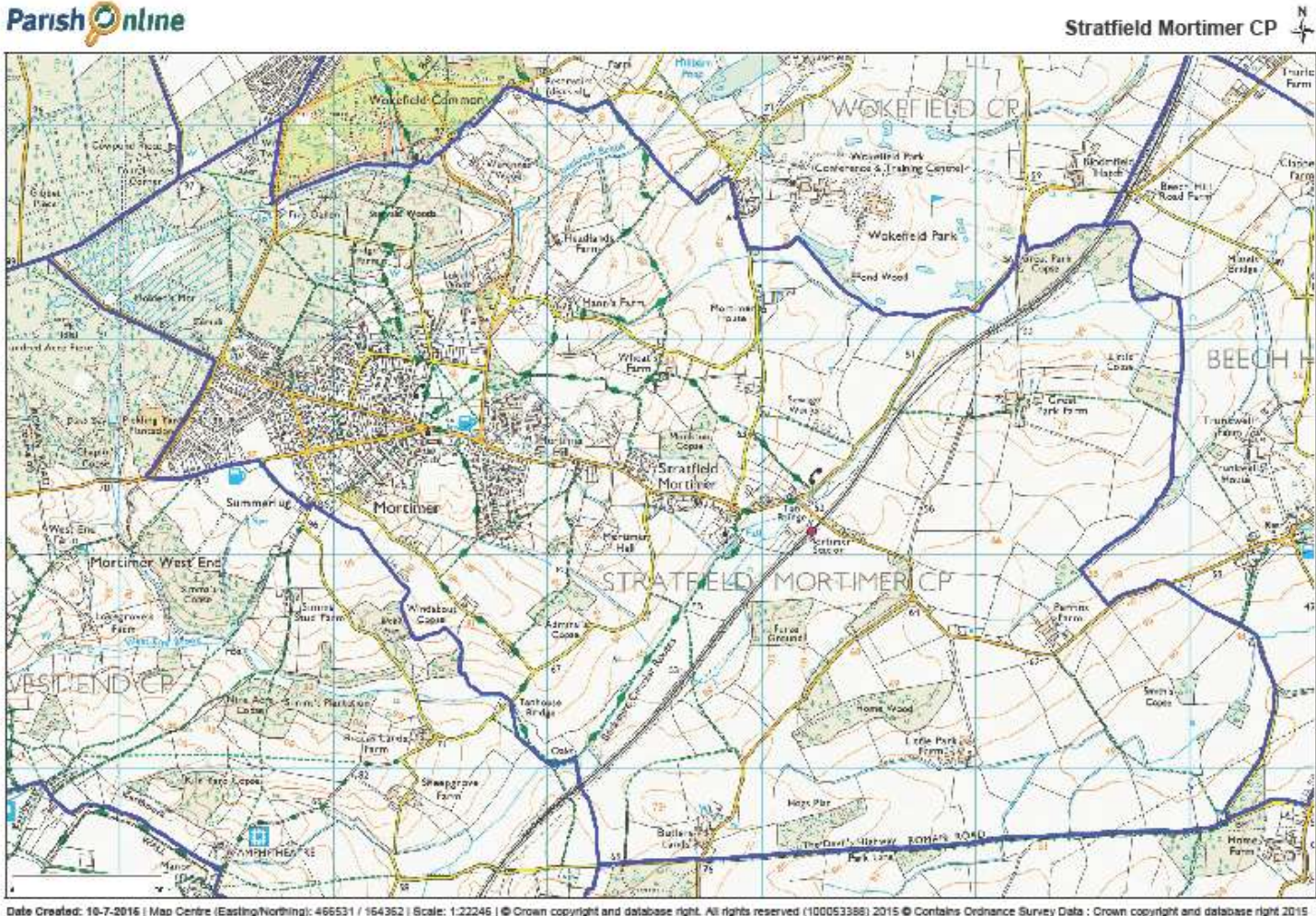
Conclusion

The Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan provides a strategy for the development of the village and the parish, and a range of policies and proposals, which will result in positive benefits for many parts of the local community with protected characteristics: older people, young people, mothers to be and with young children, disabled people and those with limited mobility.

The Plan does not explicitly address the needs of racial or religious groups, or transgender, gay or lesbian groups, or women. The Neighbourhood Plan does make equal provision for affordable housing and for a range of housing, and seeks to provide additional social, community and leisure facilities which will benefit these groups equally. It also seeks to provide a safer environment, particularly a safer public environment, where people with protected characteristics will be less liable to be subject to discrimination.

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Map

Appendix 1

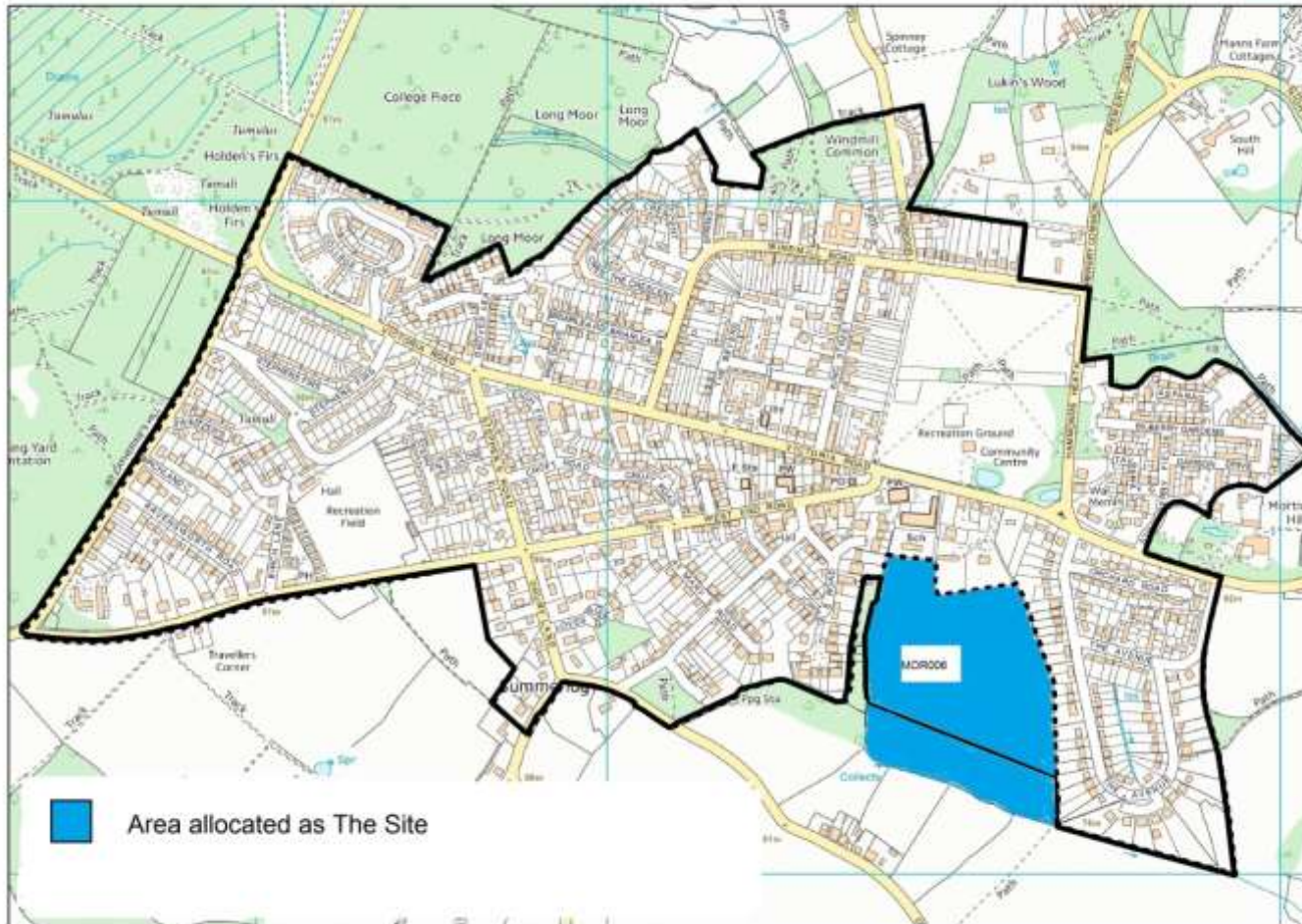


Site Location Map

Appendix 2

Map 2:
Site Allocated

15/09/2015
1:6971



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (c) Crown Copyright 2015, West Berkshire District Council 2100024101

Environmental Assessment

7th October 2015

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

cc. Stratfield Mortimer NDP Chairman

Appendix 3

Planning and Countryside

Council Offices

Market Street Newbury

Berkshire RG14 5LD

Our Ref: CPL/SM NDP

Your Ref:

Please ask for: Planning Policy

Direct Line: 01635 519111

Fax: 01635 519408

e-mail:

planningpolicy@westberks.gov.uk

Dear Mike,

Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion

This letter sets out the screening opinion by West Berkshire Council concerning the need for SEA and HRA in relation to the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan. This screening opinion has been underpinned by a detailed report and the opinions of the three statutory consultation bodies who are Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency.

The screening process undertaken concluded that an Environmental Assessment is not considered to be required to accompany the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan and it would not need to be subject to HRA. The consultation bodies have all agreed with the conclusion reached. The reasons for the decision are set out below:

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Stratfield Mortimer has been designated as a rural service centre in the adopted West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) Development Plan Document (July 2012). An SA/SEA was produced throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy meaning that the overall spatial strategy and the housing distribution strategy of the Core Strategy have been tested.

In July 2014 the Council published the Preferred Options version of the West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations DPD for consultation. Site selection work has been carried out on sites in Mortimer and the site being considered for development

in the Neighbourhood Development Plan has therefore already been subject to SA/SEA through that process.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan has been assessed as to the likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria set out within Annex II of the European Directive 2001/42/EC and Schedule 1 of the Regulations. Based on the findings, the Council's conclusion is that a SEA of the Stratfield Mortimer NDP is not necessary under the SEA Directive and Regulations because it has been demonstrated that there will be no significant environmental effects as a result of the NDP.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment of all Core Strategy policies and the emerging Housing Site Allocations DPD have been undertaken to ensure that either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, the policies do not adversely affect any of the SACs or the buffer area for the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

The neighbourhood area is not in close proximity to any of the three SACs in the District. A very small area falls within the 5km buffer area of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, and part of the area is within the 7km buffer area. The 5km boundary has been determined by Natural England as a buffer to regulate development near the SPA.

The Core Strategy sets out the thresholds for when residential development would require screening to assess whether they will have a likely significant effect on the SPA. The NDP does not propose to allocate development of this scale within either the 5km or 7km buffer areas and it is therefore considered unnecessary to carry out an Appropriate Assessment of the NDP.

The Council has concluded that the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan in itself will have no significant adverse impact on the integrity of nature conservation sites of international importance. Furthermore, individual planning applications if necessary can undergo HRA.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryan Lyttle', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bryan Lyttle

Planning and Transportation Policy Manager

16th December 2013



Cllr Mike Dennett
Chairman
Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council
Parish Council Office
27 Victoria Road
Mortimer
Reading
RG7 3SH

Planning and Countryside
Council Offices
Market Street Newbury
Berkshire RG14 5LD
Our Ref: NDP
Your Ref:
Please ask for: Bryan Lyttle
Direct Line: 01635 519638
e-mail: bryan.lyttle@westberks.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Dennett

RE: Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Area Designation

I am please to confirm that West Berkshire Council have approved the application to designate the Parish of Stratfield Mortimer as a Neighbourhood Area.

We look forward to working with you to support the development of your Neighbourhood Plan.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Bryan Lyttle'.

Bryan Lyttle
Planning and Transport Policy Manager