



SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL
Municipal Year 2020/21

Thursday, 9 July 2020

**COUNCIL CHAMBER
CIVIC OFFICES
SWINDON**

2 July 2020

Dear Councillor,

Summons to attend Council Meeting

A MEETING of the **Council**, which you are requested to attend, is to be held virtually on **Thursday, 9 July 2020 at 7.00 p.m.**

The business to be transacted will be as follows:-

AGENDA

NOTE

You may view the meeting here:

<https://tinyurl.com/SBCCouncil>

Or here:

https://teams.microsoft.com/join/19%3ameeting_Njl1OWI1ZDUtOTc2OC00OTAxLTlIMDAtMGUzZGU2MzliM2Rm%40thread.1d56-4698-b344-1b99964f6878%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22d985136a-0d28-40f4-99e5-3af0395a5da1%22%2c%22IsBroadcastMeeting%22%3atru%7d

This link will only work on the evening.

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Communications

To receive any communications or letters which the Mayor or Chief Executive may have to bring before the Council.

3. Minutes (Pages 9 - 12)

To receive the minutes of the previous meeting.

4. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

5. Public Question Time

See explanatory note below.

6. Minutes for Confirmation (Pages 13 - 70)

(1) It is anticipated that a Minute for Confirmation regarding Councillors' Allowances 2021/22 - Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel will arise from the meeting of the Cabinet to be held on 1st July 2020.

The report relating to this item is attached and is available on the Council's website. A copy of the Minute of the Cabinet will be circulated under separate cover following the Cabinet meeting.

(2) To consider a Minute for Confirmation from the Health and Wellbeing Board:

- Minute 6 (A Local Outbreak Management Plan for Swindon)

The report relating to this item is attached and is available on the Council's website. A copy of the Minute of the Health and Wellbeing Board will be circulated under separate cover.

7. Numbers to Serve on Committees (Pages 71 - 74)

8. Allocations of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees, Other Council Bodies and Outside Bodies (Pages 75 - 88)

9. Motions

**(a) Motion - Members Allowances
Councillor Stan Pajak will move:**

"That this Council reduces the amount of total councillor allowances (£767,000) by 10% which would give £76,700 which would pay for two additional parking enforcement officers (£57,000) and additional new parking regulations implementation."

**(b) Motion - Equalities and Inclusion
Councillor Basil Solomon will move and Councillor Robert Jandy will second:**

“This Council Re-affirms that:

- “Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is simply about the way we work. It supports our thinking and our actions; it is embedded in everything we do”.
- Swindon has a rich tradition of attracting and welcoming people from all backgrounds regardless of their place of origin, race, religion, beliefs, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability. We are proud of our Town’s diversity with its strong community relations reflected in events such as Pride, the Mela, Polish Day, the Goan Festival, Nepalese festival & Bangladeshi festival, and also the Indian and Caribbean festivals.

This Council sets an example in our Borough by:

- Representation: The Elected Members of the Council welcomes and includes people from a variety of backgrounds, is diverse and provides opportunities for members of all our communities to ensure everyone has a voice.
- Developing and encouraging opportunities: A refreshed foster carer recruitment campaign, focusing on myth- busting to encourage more individuals from diverse backgrounds to consider fostering – generated more than 400 new enquiries since May 2019.
- Working directly with communities: The Revised customer complaints procedure, incorporated feedback from community representatives, with specific customer service training on equality, diversity and inclusion.

This Council believes that:

- It is important that people continue to have the right to peaceful protest but, equally, the traditions of our Country should be respected and the rule of Law upheld. Criminal damage and violence do not help any cause.
- It is deeply concerning to witness injustices around the world or closer to home. Nevertheless, we continue to ensure that diversity is celebrated, everyone has equal opportunities and that all are treated equally.

This Council resolves to:

- Welcome peaceful protest especially on matters of injustice and inequality.
- Support the Police in their role of upholding the Law of the Land.
- Welcome the Government’s announcement to set up a Commission looking into inequalities.
- Ensure that we set a benchmark in implementing the Equality Act 2010 and exhort other organisations to do the same.

- Ensure all views are heard and everyone is treated equally.”

(c) **Motion - Provision of Mental Health Services for Young People**
Councillor Barbara Parry will move and Councillor Russell Holland will second:

“This Council:

- Believes that Children’s mental health is everyone’s business.
- Note with concern that mental health problems amongst young people have for some time, been on the increase nationally, with a rising demand on services and increasing complexity of need and that COVID19 and the resultant uncertainty for young people including the uncertainty, the anxiety, the fear of becoming ill or seeing a loved one become ill, the loss of our normal routines, the difficulties of social connection, and in many cases the disruption to education will have exacerbated the issue.
- Welcomes the fact that Government has made mental health a priority and the NHS is urged to give mental health parity with physical health in the COVID Recovery Plan.

This Council further:

- Recognises that, despite increased investment in, and policy focus on, mental health services for children and young people, the numbers of children and young people requiring support are going up. Direct access and universal services at the point of need are available, however thresholds for accessing some services mean that waiting times can be long.
- Notes that the Trailblazer is providing good support from those schools who are part of the scheme but that we still have a number of young people, desperately unhappy and in need of support, some of them urgent support.

This Council requests that:

- The Leader of the Council in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services Council write to Central Government to lobby for the much needed additional funding to support mental health services to young people and the earliest possible intervention to remove waiting lists and ensure that young people, and those caring for them, are able to get EARLY help quickly and easily.
- The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services conduct a review and brings a report to the September Children’s OS committee setting out the current position, scope and progress to date by the council and its partners with recommendations to the January 2021 Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to ensure that there is a robust mental health strategy covering prevention, self-help, treatment and support. This should include:

- Improved partnership working between TAMHS and CAMHS to continue to reduce waiting times and that any young person has their needs met by one of the organisations.
- Innovative ways to promote the benefits of young people engaging with sport and the performing arts.
- Working with schools to improve the current training given to staff working directly with young people so that they can spot the signs of poor mental health in children and know who and where to get help and extending specialist training to all support staff to equip them to deal with low level issues and provide support at the earliest stage.”

(d) **Motion - COVID 19 Frontline Workers**
Councillor Steve Allsopp will move:

“The Covid 19 emergency has led to many front line workers previously taken for granted to be seen by the community at large as essential in maintaining a civilized society during lockdown. Among those workers have been those in the food retail sector. Alex Norris MP has been using the 10 minute bill process to enhance protection for these workers against assault in the course of their duties. We request that the Chief Executive write to our MPs to ask that they recognise the special contribution provided by this group of people by supporting the measures set out in the Assaults on Retail Workers (Offences) Bill 2019-21.”

(e) **Motion - COVID 19 Finance**
Councillor Kevin Small will move:

“This Council commends the Local Resilience Forum and its Partners in the local management of the emergency created by the Covid Pandemic. It commends the whole hearted support shown by our staff in particular for their flexibility and adaptability in ensuring vital services were kept operating at the height of the emergency and the most vulnerable protected.

It notes that on the onset of the emergency the Prime Minister stated that Local Authorities would be given whatever support was required to manage its impact at the local level .This message has now weakened from the Secretary of State to” a need to share the pain”.

This Council further notes that the current emergency is not over and it is highly probable that further action may be required later in the year. Unless a firm guarantee can be given that full Treasury funding will be provided to cover additional costs and reduction of income to date the need for continued reduction in our base line budget cannot be avoided. Such an outcome would be a betrayal of our local community and the staff who serve them.

We call on the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State to press the case for full reimbursement of all costs and lost income incurred to date and ensure Local Government is fully protected now and for future costs of the emergency.”

- (f) **Motion - Council's Economic Recovery Plan**
Councillor Jim Grant will move and Councillor Stan Pajak will second:

“We note the economic recovery plan recently passed at cabinet. We further note the recovery plan recently produced by the Labour group. In light of both of these plans we call upon this council to implement a cross party working group, using both these plans as starting point, to seek to come to a consensus as to the best way forward for both Swindon council and the town itself to recover from Covid-19 pandemic. There are many merits in both plans and we feel that the people of Swindon would want all their local representatives to work together during this time of crisis to produce a way forward which sustains both the economic, social and environmental future of the town as well as the financial future of the council.”

- 10. Use of Special Urgency and Covid-19 decision-making powers**
(Pages 89 - 92)
- 11. Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan** (Pages 93 - 186)
- 12. Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan** (Pages 187 - 294)
- 13. Minutes of Cabinet and Decisions Delegated to Cabinet Members** (Pages 295 - 354)
Members have the opportunity to raise questions with the relevant Cabinet Member in respect of Cabinet minutes (which are not reserved for Council for decision) and in respect of individual Cabinet Member delegated decisions.
- 14. Minutes of other Council Bodies**
Members have the opportunity to raise questions with the relevant Chair in respect of all other Committee minutes (not reserved to Council for decision), as set out in the Minute Book circulated separately.
- 15. Councillors Question Time**
Questions (if any) of which notice has been given by Councillors in accordance with Standing Order 15.

Yours faithfully

Lisa Hall

Chief Legal Officer

Questions by Members of the Public in accordance with Standing Order 11

Swindon Borough Council remains committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters, and matters relating to planning and licensing applications). We will give priority to those who submit questions in writing at least two days before the meeting. Questions must be relevant, clear, and

concise. You may not use Public Question Time as an opportunity to make speeches or statements.

During Covid-19, you must submit your question to

CommitteeServices@swindon.gov.uk with your contact details 48 hours before the meeting so the committee officer can send you details about how to participate. The deadline is 16:00 on Tuesday 7th July 2020 Questions must be relevant, clear, and concise. You may not use Public Question Time as an opportunity to make speeches or statements. Questions in writing should be sent to the Committee Officer whose contact details appear on theThe process associated with asking a public question is set out in the “Public Question Time at Council Meetings Protocol and Guidance” available on the Council’s Website

(<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13338&path=0>) or from the Committee Officer named above.

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COUNCIL

FRIDAY, 22 MAY 2020

PRESENT:- The Worshipful The Mayor in the Chair; Councillors Junab Ali, Steve Allsopp, Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Ray Ballman, Alan Bishop, Nick Burns-Howell, Emma Bushell, Matthew Courtliff, Malcolm Davies, Mark Dempsey, Paul Dixon, Steph Exell, Brian Ford, Jim Grant, Dale Heenan, Steve Heyes, Russell Holland, Fay Howard, Janine Howarth, Oladapo Ibitoye, Robert Jandy, Jenny Jefferies, Vinay Manro, Mary Martin, Nick Martin, Cathy Martyn, Brian Mattock, Jane Milner-Barry, Stan Pajak, Barbara Parry, Kevin Parry, Maureen Penny, Garry Perkins, David Renard, James Robbins, Imtiyaz Shaikh, Carol Shelley, Kevin Small, Roger Smith, Bazil Solomon, Andy Spry, Gary Sumner, Timothy Swinyard, Caryl Sydney-Smith, Rahul Tarar, Nadine Watts, Steve Weisinger, Keith Williams and Robert Wright.

1. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor welcomed the Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire, High Sheriff of Wiltshire, other distinguished guests and members of the public to the first virtual meeting of full Council.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Claire Crilly, Oliver Donachie, Emma Famarzi, Adorable Shaikh, Imtiyaz Shaikh, Vera Tomlinson and Peter Watts.

3. To elect a qualified person to be Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2020/21

The Worshipful The Mayor (Councillor Kevin Parry) called upon the Councillors to elect a qualified person to be Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year, 2020/21.

Councillor David Renard moved, Councillor Kevin Parry seconded and the Council agreed, with none opposing, that Councillor Garry Perkins be Mayor of the Borough for the ensuing Municipal Year. Councillors David Renard, Jim Grant and Stan Pajak offered their support and congratulations to the Mayor, on behalf of their political groups.

Councillor Garry Perkins made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

(The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Garry Perkins) in the Chair.)

The Mayor thanked the Council for his election to the post of Mayor of the Borough.

Councillor Dale Heenan moved and Councillor David Renard seconded and it was unanimously agreed that Councillor Kevin Parry be thanked for his year of service as Mayor of the Borough.

4. To elect a qualified person to be Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2020/21

The Mayor called upon the Council to elect a qualified person to be Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year, 2020/21.

Councillor Jennny Jefferies moved, Councillor Gary Sumner seconded and the Council agreed, with none opposing, that Councillor Brian Mattock be Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the ensuing Municipal Year.

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Brian Mattock) thanked the Council for his election to the post of Deputy Mayor of the Borough.

5. Communications

The Chief Executive reported that no communications had been received.

6. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th February 2020, be confirmed and signed.

7. Declarations of Interest

The Worshipful The Mayor reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

8. Numbers to Serve on Committees, Allocations of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees, Other Council Bodies and Outside Bodies

Councillor David Renard moved and Councillor Russell Holland seconded:

“(1) That, having carried out a review under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council continues to apply the political balance provisions under the Act.

(2) That Committees, and other relevant Council bodies be reminded, where appropriate, of their duty to carry out a review and recommend that having carried out that review they continue to apply the political balance provisions.

(3) That the waiving of Political Balance arrangements on the Standards Committee and the Special Committee be approved.

(4) That, subject to a full review in July 2020, the appointment of Councillors to serve on the Council’s Committees, other Council Bodies and Outside Bodies for the Municipal Year 2020/21, as listed in Appendices 1 to 3 to the report and tabled at the meeting, be approved.

(5) That the proposals set out in paragraph 3.9 of the report, in relation to the

Council's Standards Committee, be approved.

(6) That with the exception of the SACRE, Councillor Kevin Parry be appointed to temporarily replace Councillors Garry Perkins or Brian Mattock on any committees they cannot sit on whilst in their civic/ mayoral capacities as set out within the body of the report.

(7) That appointments to Member Project Boards and Cabinet Member Advisory Groups (not decision making) as listed in Appendix 4 of the report be noted.

(8) That the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs for the Council's Committees and other Council bodies for the Municipal Year, 2020/21 as listed in Appendix 5 be approved."

The resolution was put to the vote and declared carried.

9. Calendar of Meetings 2020 - 2021

Councillor David Renard moved and Councillor Russell Holland seconded:

"(1) That the Timetable of Meetings for the Municipal Year 2020/21, as tabled at the meeting, be approved.

(2) That the Chief Legal Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to vary the dates for meetings of the Council, the Cabinet, Committees and Other Swindon Borough Council bodies should this prove necessary for the efficient discharge of Council business."

The resolution was put to the vote and declared carried.

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Councillors' Allowances 2021/22 –

Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Cabinet

Date: 1st July 2020

Author: Leader of the Council and the Chief Legal Officer

Wards: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To consider recommendations arising from meetings of the Independent Remuneration Panel on the level of Councillors' Allowances in Swindon for 2021/2022.
- 1.2 The Council is required by the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to consider the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel when making decisions relating to its Scheme of Councillors' Allowances. It is not required to adopt all or any of the Panel's recommendations. Decisions on the Scheme of Councillors' Allowances require the approval of full Council.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to (Minute for Confirmation):

- 2.1 Consider the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances for 2021/2022 and recommend to Council that:
 - 2.1.1 The levels of Councillors' Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances, and Travel, Subsistence and Dependent Care Allowances remain unchanged for the 2021/2022 Municipal Year.
 - 2.1.2 The level of Basic Allowance be index linked to the percentage increase in pay awarded to officers in the national round for a period of four years (commencing in May 2021 and ending in May 2025).
 - 2.1.3 The Council be asked to take a view on the Panel investigating the introduction of a Parental Leave Policy for Councillors.
 - 2.1.4 The Chief Legal Officer be authorised to introduce a revised Councillors' Allowances Scheme for 2021/2022, as attached at Appendix One, based on the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, as approved and adopted by the Council.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Vicki Yull, 07980 752043, vyull@swindon.gov.uk.

Councillors' Allowances 2021/22 –

Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Cabinet

Date: 1st July 2020

3. Detail

Background

- 3.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for Swindon Borough Council was established in late 2001. It is currently made up of six members independent of the Council. One each is recruited from the Education, Business and Voluntary / Community Sectors, while three Lay Members are appointed following public advertisement.
- 3.2 Following its annual review, the Panel put forward its recommendations for the current 2020/2021 Municipal Year, which were adopted in full by Council at its meeting on 11th July 2019 (Minute 21(1) 2019/20 of the Council refers). The Scheme of Allowances for 2020/2021 is attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 3.3 The Councillors' Scheme of Allowances for 2020/2021 can be found in the Council's Constitution, available on the Swindon Borough Council website.

Review of Councillors' Allowances for 2021/2022

- 3.4 At its meeting on 17th February 2020, the Panel noted that there were no significant changes proposed to the structure and role of councillors serving on the Cabinet and Council Committees, and that there had been no change in respect of the structure and responsibilities of the Standards or other regulatory Committees.
- 3.5 The Panel also sought the views of the Council's Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and the respective political groups on the levels of Councillors' Allowances for 2021/2022, and where representations were made these are set out in the report.

Basic Allowance

- 3.6 The Panel considered the appropriateness of the Basic Allowance in Swindon. The Panel noted that the Council had previously adopted an index link for the Basic Allowance, attached to the percentage increase in the Local Government Pay Settlement, which is ending in the 2020/2021 Municipal Year.
- 3.7 The Panel noted that the views of the Council's Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, and the respective political groups had been sought on the level of Basic Allowance and that no representations had been made.
- 3.8 Given the work already undertaken by the Panel on the 'reasonableness' of the Allowances for 2020/2021, it was minded to recommend that the level of Basic Allowance remain unchanged for the 2021/2022 Municipal Year.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Vicki Yull, 07980 752043, vyull@swindon.gov.uk.

Councillors' Allowances 2021/22 –

Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Cabinet

Date: 1st July 2020

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- 3.9 Given that the current index link is due to expire in May 2021, the Panel was also minded to recommend that the level of Basic Allowance be index linked again to the percentage increase in pay awarded to officers in the national round for a period of four years (commencing in May 2021 and ending in May 2025).

Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA)

- 3.10 The Panel considered the appropriateness of the Special Responsibility Allowances in Swindon. The Panel noted that there are currently no proposals in place to amend the description or responsibilities of any of the posts that currently attract SRAs.
- 3.11 The Panel noted that the views of the Council's Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, and the respective political groups had also been sought on the levels of the SRAs in Swindon. The representations are set out in detail in the report to the Independent Remuneration Panel on 17th February 2020.
- 3.12 The Panel thanked the respondents for their submissions and determined that it is minded to recommend that the SRAs for Overview and Scrutiny Committee's and Standards Committee remain unchanged from the 2020/2021 levels. The Panel reiterated its position that SRAs are paid for additional responsibility over and above the Basic Allowance and are set for the role and duties of the post.
- 3.13 Given the work already undertaken by the Panel on the 'reasonableness' of the Allowances for 2020/2021, it was minded to recommend that the level of Special Responsibility Allowances remain unchanged for the 2021/2022 Municipal Year. (This is not including any changes resulting from the index link of the Basic Allowance to the Local Government Pay Settlement if agreed.)

Travel, Subsistence and Dependent Care Allowances

- 3.14 The Panel considered the appropriateness of the Travel, Subsistence and Dependent Care Allowance in Swindon. It was noted that the views of the Council's Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, and the respective political groups had also been sought on these and that no representations had been made.
- 3.15 As agreed at its meeting on 22 January 2020, a copy of the Parental Leave Policy adopted by Exeter City Council had been circulated to the Panel prior to its meeting. The Panel noted that Swindon Borough Council does not currently have a Parental Leave Policy in place for members, and that a number of local authorities within the South West are in the process of adopting one.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Vicki Yull, 07980 752043, vyull@swindon.gov.uk.

Councillors' Allowances 2021/22 –

Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Cabinet

Date: 1st July 2020

- 3.16 Given the work already undertaken by the Panel on the 'reasonableness' of the levels of Travel, Subsistence and Dependent Care Allowances for 2020/2021, the Panel was minded to recommend that the level of Travel, Subsistence and Dependent Care Allowances remain unchanged for the 2021/2022 Municipal Year.

Recommendations

- 3.17 The Panel resolved that the Cabinet and Council be recommended:

3.17.1 That the levels of Councillors' Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances, and Travel, Subsistence and Dependent Care Allowances remain unchanged for the 2021/2022 Municipal Year.

3.17.2 That, given the current index link is expiring in May 2021, the level of Basic Allowance be index linked to the percentage increase in pay awarded to officers in the national round for a period of four years (commencing in May 2021 and ending in May 2025).

3.17.3 That the Council be asked to take a view on the Panel investigating the introduction of a Parental Leave Policy for Councillors.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options proposed. The Cabinet can decide to support all the Panel's recommendations to the Council, or it can decide not to support the Panel's recommendations and to make its own recommendations to the Council.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The budget allocation for Councillors' Allowances for 2020/2021 covers the payment of Councillors' Basic Allowances, Special Responsibility and other Allowances, as specified in the Scheme of Allowances. The impact of the changes proposed by these recommendations is minimal.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and Human Rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel are compatible with convention rights.

Climate Change Impact

- 5.3 There are no specific climate change implications arising from this report.
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Vicki Yull, 07980 752043, vyull@swindon.gov.uk.

Councillors' Allowances 2021/22 –

Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Cabinet

Date: 1st July 2020

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.4 There are no specific other implications arising from this report.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been undertaken as the report concerns implementation of national regulations and does not make any recommendations that affects services or employment. The Independent Remuneration Panel considered potential impacts on equality groups as part of their deliberations, and their proposals on the level of allowances reflects their considerations.

Risk Management

- 5.6 There are no specific risk implications. Decisions on Councillors' Allowances are often controversial in media terms and thus decisions may have a reputational risk for the Council.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (S151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 Review of Councillors Allowances 2021-2022 report and appendices. Independent Remuneration Panel, 17th February 2020

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Councillors' Allowances Scheme 2020/2021.

9. Key Decision/Decision in Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan

- 9.1 This is not a Key Decision and is on the Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan for June 2020.

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COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME

Swindon Borough Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, has made a scheme for the payment of Councillors' Allowances for 2020/2021.

The Council, on the recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances, agreed at its meeting on 11th July 2019 that the levels of Councillors' Basic Allowance for 2020/2021 remain unchanged from the 2019/2020 levels. The Council has previously agreed to index link increases in the Basic Allowance to any percentage increase in pay awarded to local authority staff nationally, for a period of four years commencing in 2017/2018. The Council also agreed an amendment to the Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the role of Deputy Leader of the Council, and to the level for Dependent Care Allowance, with the other Special Responsibility Allowances and Travel and Subsistence Allowances remaining the same as the levels for 2019/2020.

Rates and Allowances

These are determined from time to time by the Council having regard to the recommendation of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors Allowances.

Total Annual Allocation

Swindon Borough Council has set aside £497,211 for 2020/2021 for the payment of Councillors' Basic Allowances (£8,723 x 57) with funding available for Mayoral Allowances, Special Responsibility Allowances, and other Allowances (e.g. Travelling and Subsistence) as specified in the Scheme.

An additional allocation of £13,500 is made for Mayoral Allowances that do not form part of this Scheme.

ALLOWANCES APPLYING TO ALL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Basic Allowance

- (a) Basic Allowance is intended to recognise the time devoted by Councillors to their work, including approved duties, Council meetings and such inevitable calls on their time as meetings with Constituents, and incidental costs for which no other provision is available.
- (b) The Basic Allowance for each member will be £8,723 for 2020/2021.

Travelling and Subsistence Allowances

Members and Non-Elected (co-opted) Members are entitled to receive payment of travelling and subsistence allowance, where expenditure has been necessarily incurred on travelling inside or outside the U.K. or on subsistence, for the purposes of performing approved duties as set out in the Appendix to the Scheme.

Travel

The rate for the use of a private car shall not exceed 45p per mile (Inland Revenue Tax Threshold).

The rate for motorcycles shall not exceed 16.5p per mile.

The rate for pedal cycles shall not exceed 30p per mile.

The rate for travel by taxi shall not exceed:

- (a) in cases where no public transport is reasonably available, the amount of the actual fare and any reasonable gratuity (tip) paid (providing that all appropriate receipts are attached); and
- (b) in any other case, the amount of the fare for travel by appropriate public transport.

Passengers

The rate for the use of a private car above may be increased for the "carriage of each passenger (not exceeding 4) to whom a travelling allowance would otherwise be payable". A rate of not more than 3 pence a mile for the first passenger and 2 pence per mile for the second and subsequent passengers may be claimed.

Bus fares, train fares, ferry fares, tolls, and parking fees will be reimbursed at actual cost providing that all appropriate receipts are attached.

The rate of travel by a "hired vehicle" other than a taxi shall not exceed the rate that would apply had the vehicle belonged to the Councillor / Co-opted Member who hired it.

Rail and Air Travel

Standard Class rail fare or ordinary fare for other public conveyance, or the appropriate cheap or economy rate where applicable shall apply in all cases.

Standard Class rail travel should always be used unless the train's Standard Class accommodation is full, in which case it is in order to travel First Class and pay the surcharge.

Travel Concession Cards

Councillors and non-elected Members who are eligible to hold a senior citizens rail card or similar concession card for rail or bus travel can purchase them and be reimbursed by the Borough Council through the normal expenses' claim mechanism, providing that by doing so there is a reduction in the cost of allowances claimed from the Council. Cards and similar forms of Concession must be purchased in conjunction with travel associated with an "Approved Duty" and this clearly indicated on the Councillors' Allowances Claim form.

Rail Travel

The Council can arrange for Councillors travelling by rail on Approved Duties to be issued with a "rail travel warrant / tickets" in advance of their departure. For details please contact the Committee and Member Services Section on 07980 752043.

Air Travel

The rate for travel by Air -

- shall not exceed the rate applicable to travel by an appropriate alternative means of transport, together with an allowance equivalent to the amount of any saving in subsistence allowance resulting from travel by air;
- is dependant on approval being given "in advance" by the Chief Legal Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council / Chair of the Cabinet, and
- that in the UK the saving in time is so significant as to justify payment of the fare for travel by air;
- the amount paid is based on the ordinary (economy) fare or any available cheap fare for travel by regular air service.

Travel General

Members and Non-Elected members are entitled to make travelling claims from their home to the venue of an approved duty.

For journeys from work to an approved duty and then home, they should deduct their normal work to home mileage.

If a Member or Non-Elected member is required to leave work to attend an approved duty, and subsequently returns to work, they are entitled to claim the number of miles travelled.

Subsistence Allowances

Subsistence allowance claims must only be made where actual expenditure has been incurred. All appropriate receipts in support of subsistence claims must be provided and reimbursement will only be made up to the maximum levels set out below:-

- | | | |
|-------|---|--------|
| (i) | Breakfast allowance (more than 4 hours away from normal place of residence) start before 7 a.m. | £5.85 |
| (ii) | Lunch allowance (more than 4 hours away from normal place of residence, including the lunchtime between 12 noon and 2 p.m.) | £8.05 |
| (iii) | Evening meal allowance (more than 4 hours away from | £15.20 |

the normal place of residence ending after 7 p.m.)

In the case of absence that covers more than one Subsistence period then Councillors are permitted to combine these to form one Subsistence claim.

Meals on Trains

When main meals (that is breakfast, lunch or dinner) are taken on trains during a period for which there is an entitlement to subsistence allowance, the reasonable cost of the meals (including VAT), may be reimbursed in full. Where the cost of meals taken on trains is reimbursed, absence from the normal place of residence must be consistent with the absences listed.

This provision will also apply to any air travel where meals are taken during a period for which there is an entitlement to subsistence allowance and where a charge is made by the airline concerned,

Please note that claims must not be made where any meal is provided free of charge by an authority or outside body.

In the case of an absence overnight from your usual place of residence you are entitled to claim:

- (i) In London or at the Annual Conference of the Local Government Association / Conference of Local Education Authorities - £110.00
- (ii) Elsewhere in the U.K. - £93.50

These amounts relate to accommodation only and are not intended to include any meals for which separate allowances are available as above.

If an approved duty starts at such a time that it is not possible to be at the venue at the start of the event, then claims will be accepted for overnight stays subject to approval being gained in advance from the Chief Legal Officer and the Leader of the Council.

All appropriate receipts should be submitted with each claim made.

Dependant Care Allowances

Councillors, Co-opted (Non-Elected) Members and other persons serving on the Council and / or its Committees, who are responsible for providing care to children and / or dependant relatives qualify for a Child Care / Dependant Relatives Allowance to assist with spending incurred in paying for care of the child or dependant relative whilst attending approved duties.

The allowance will cover paid care for the following that live with the claimant:

- children aged 15 years and under
- elderly relative requiring constant care
- disabled relative requiring constant care

- relative with learning disabilities requiring constant care

The paid carer cannot be a member of the immediate family or household.

The allowance will be the actual fee per hour, per child/dependant relative, but not exceeding £20.00 per hour.

Claims for Child Care / Dependant Relatives Care should be made on the appropriate Councillors' Allowances form.

Child Care / Dependant Relatives Care Allowance is assessed as income for benefits and income tax purposes and will therefore be paid through the Council's payroll.

All appropriate receipts for dependent care allowances should be submitted with each claim made, and should be signed by the carer.

* Reference to "the Council and its committees" should be understood as referring to the Council, the Cabinet and such other Committees and bodies as shall be established from time to time.

ALLOWANCES APPLYING TO CERTAIN COUNCIL MEMBERS AND CO-OPTED NON-ELECTED MEMBERS

Special Responsibility Allowances

For each year a Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid to those Councillors who hold special responsibilities in relation to the work of the Council. Only one Special Responsibility Allowance is payable. If a Councillor is appointed to more than one position where a Special Responsibility Allowance is payable, then the larger of the allowances will be paid. The Council has agreed that the following Special Responsibility Allowances will be payable in the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

Type of Allowance	BA Multiplier	Allowance
Leader of the Council	3	£26,169
Deputy Leader of the Council	1.85	£16,138
Cabinet Member	1.5	£13,085
Chair of Audit	0.75	£6,542
Chair of Overview	0.75	£6,542
Chair of Scrutiny and Leader of the Opposition	1.5	£13,085
Chair of Scrutiny if not Leader of the Opposition	0.75	£6,542
Chair of Planning	0.75	£6,542
Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board	0.75	£6,542
Leader of the Opposition if not Chair of Scrutiny	0.75	£6,542
Leader of Minority Group	0.25	£2,181
Chair of Licensing	0.75	£6,542
Chair of Standards	0.75	£6,542
Co-opted Standards Members	0.15	£1,308
Co-opted Health and Wellbeing Board Members	0.15	£1,308
Independent Persons	0.15	£1,308
Chair of Joint Swindon and Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel if a Swindon Councillor	0.75	£6,542
Vice-Chair of Joint Swindon and Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel if a Swindon Councillor	0.25	£2,181

Mayoral Allowances

Mayor	£10,000
Deputy Mayor	£3,500

Co-optees (Non-Elected Members) Allowances

All co-opted members serving on Council bodies are entitled to claim travelling, subsistence and dependent care allowances for Approved Duties carried out both within and outside of the Borough boundary based on the level of Travel and Subsistence Allowance agreed for Councillors.

WITHDRAWAL OF ALLOWANCES

Where a Councillor has been wholly or partially suspended from his responsibilities and / or duties as a member of the Council there will be provision for the withdrawal

of all allowances payable (or part, if applicable, in relation to suspension only of Special Responsibilities held).

There will be also be provision for the repayment of any allowance that has been paid in respect of a period when a Councillor was suspended or had ceased to be a member of the Council. If the suspension is rescinded then any amount of unpaid allowance will be reimbursed.

FORGOING ALLOWANCES

Individual Councillors may give notice in writing that they wish to forgo their entitlement to all or any part of their entitlement to allowances. Notice should be sent to the Chief Legal Officer.

CLAIMS AND PAYMENTS

Claims

Claim forms are available from the Committee and Member Services Section. A continuation sheet is also available for when more than one claim form is required for each month.

Properly completed forms must be submitted to Committee and Member Services before the 1st day of each month (or nearest possible date when the 1st falls on a weekend). This is necessary as the Council's Payroll team require that completed and authorised forms must be with them by the 2nd working day of each month in order for payments to be processed and made in that month's pay round.

The time limit within which any claim for travelling, subsistence and dependant care allowance must be made by the person to whom they are payable is **two months**.

Certification

All claims have to be certified by Committee and Member Services officers to ensure that they relate to an Approved Duty as defined in this Scheme.

All appropriate receipts must be submitted with each claim made for those specific travel and subsistence allowances specified in the relevant sections of this Scheme.

To help the Council certify that you are attending an "Approved Duty" if you attend a meeting of an outside body or attend meetings at the request of a Council officer you should provide supporting information with your claim. Failure to do so may delay payment of your claim.

For example you may:-

- (i) attach the agenda front sheet or minutes of that meeting to your claim form if they indicate your attendance;
- (ii) attach letters or correspondence from the Council officer concerned requesting your attendance at the meeting referred to on your claim form.

It is a Councillor's responsibility to ensure the accuracy of any claim submitted.

The Council's Internal Audit Service may undertake visible sampling of claims made by Councillors to ensure that accurate claims are being made.

Payments

The payment of allowances and related matters are handled within the Payroll Section. If you have enquiries regarding your allowance payments please contact the Council's Payroll Team by telephoning 01793 464343.

Any more general queries concerning Councillors' Allowances, Approved Duties and the provisions of this Scheme of Allowances should be directed to Committee and Member Services on 07980 752043.

The following points should assist you to understand how the allowances are paid and answer some of the general points that could arise from time to time:

- Records of Councillors allowances showing the amount and nature of the payment are open to inspection by Local Government electors resident in the area and are subject to both internal and external audit. They are required by law to be publicised in the local press each year.
- Claims will not be required for Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance as these will be paid on a monthly basis.
- New Councillors and retiring Councillors will be paid allowances pro rata to their period of office.
- Claims may be made by Co-opted Members (Non-Elected Members) on the standard form for Non-Elected Members available from the Committee and Member Services Section (or from the Payroll Section), and the Council's Intranet.
- Claims may be made for Travel, Subsistence and Dependant Care Allowances in accordance with the Approved Duties defined in the Appendix to the Scheme.
- It is important that the claim form is completed fully, including, date, start and finish times, journey details and place of duty. For claims relating to meetings of outside bodies and meetings attended at the request of Council officers, invitations to attend and / or agenda front sheets must be attached. If they are not this may lead to payments being delayed or claims being referred back to the Councillor concerned for clarification. The mode of travel should be indicated and whether travelling by car, motorcycle or pedal cycle the mileage must be entered.
- The separate financial columns on the claim form should be correctly totalled. Councillors must sign and date the claim and cross through any unused lines and columns.

Please note that claims, which have not been completed fully, which do not have adequate supporting documentation or which are more than 2 months old, will not be authorised and will be returned.

Taxation of Members' Allowances and Expenses

Basic, Special Responsibility and Dependant Care Allowances, count as earnings for BENEFITS (SOCIAL SECURITY) purposes and INCOME TAX. Councillors can be affected, therefore, both as contributors and beneficiaries of the Social Security Scheme and accordingly National Insurance contributions will be deducted unless the payments fall below the threshold limit.

Councillors can find out more details about Benefits and Income Tax that may affect them by accessing the following website - www.gov.uk and follow the links to benefits or Income Tax Councillors can also contact the National Income Tax Enquiry Line on 0300 200 3300.

The Local Government Information Unit has published a booklet on the interaction of Councillors' Allowances with the tax and social security benefits system.

Please note that Council officers must not give advice on Tax and Social Security issues.

Deductions - Political Affiliations

The Council is able to arrange to deduct from Councillors' Basic Allowance on a monthly basis affiliation fees to certain political organisations relating to a Councillor's Work (e.g. Association of Labour Councillors). Members wishing to make use of this service should request the organisation concerned to write to the Council to provide the necessary authorisation, with details of the deduction to be made, amount, and address for payment. Queries concerning this service should be made to the Payroll Team (Tel: 464343) or Committee and Member Services (Tel: 07980 752043).

Chief Legal Officer
May 2020

APPENDIX**Approved Duties**

(Reference to "the Council and its committees" should in all cases be understood as referring to the Council, the Cabinet and such other Committees, Boards, Panels, Working Parties, Groups and Sub-Groups as shall be established from time to time).

Allowances are payable for the following Approved Duties:-

- (1) **Meetings of the Council and its committees** (Including "in house" Training and Development events and cases where a Member is invited by the Chair of the meeting or officially notified to attend a meeting of a committee of which he/she is not a Member.)
- (2) **Formal briefing meetings** provided Members of at least two political groups have been invited to attend.
- (3) **Ad hoc briefings, training sessions, presentations, seminars and on-site inspections (site visits) or other visits** authorised in advance to which members of at least two political groups have been invited to attend.
(In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegations the appropriate Officer in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Lead Member or Chair of the Cabinet and the Chief Legal Officer may authorise / approve the duty.)
- (4) **Attendance as a representative of the Local Education Authority at a shortlisting meeting or at an interviewing panel** for a senior post in an education establishment provided Members of at least two political groups have been invited to attend.
- (5) **Attendance at the following "Annual Tours" by Members of the Council:-**
New Member Induction, Borough Farms, Housing Areas and Planning and Transport Sites.
- (6) **Attendance of meetings of the Schools Governors, Education and Community Forums**, providing that Members from at least two political groups have been invited to attend.
- (7) **Attendance at outside conferences, courses and seminars** - The attendance of Members at conferences, external courses and seminars shall normally be limited to one Member of a political group per event. Exception to this may be granted with the approval of the Chief Executive after consultation with the Chief Legal Officer, the Cabinet Member with portfolio responsibility, and / or the Leader of the Council / Chair of the Cabinet.

The only automatic exceptions shall be the Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Conference, which may be attended by the Council's representatives on the Association, including Members appointed to serve on LGA committees, and those other Conferences listed in the Schedule to the Scheme.

Attendance at conferences, courses, seminars etc. must be authorised in advance by (i) the appropriate committee; and (ii) the appropriate Officer in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer, the Cabinet Member with portfolio responsibility, and / or the Leader of the Council by way of the Cabinet Member Briefing Note process.

- (8) **Attendance at joint meetings with other local authorities and other statutory bodies** authorised by the Council and /or its committees.
- (9) **Any other meeting, the holding of which has been authorised by the Council or its committees**, provided members of at least two political groups have been invited to attend.
- (10) **Attendance as a representative of the Council at meetings of the Local Government Association (LGA) and at South West Councils (including at the South West Strategic Leaders Board)**, their committees, sub-committees, working parties and for any appointments to represent those organisations on associated bodies.
- (11) **Meetings of the bodies referred to in the Schedule attached to the Scheme** to which the Member has been appointed or nominated to attend by the Council and / or its committees for the period of appointment (and to such other meetings / organisations as may be approved from time to time by the Council and / or its committees.)
- (12) **Visits by Members to private and voluntary homes** in accordance with a programme organised by officers.
- (13) **Visits by Members to Schools** in accordance with a programme organised by officers.
- (14) **Attendance at official opening ceremonies** as may be approved in advance of the event by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer and the Leader of the Council.
- (15) **Meetings, including public meetings, by prior arrangement with or at the request of Council Officers on Council business** and where an advance invitation has been received from the organisation/officer concerned.
- (16) **Meetings with Community Councils, Parish Councils, Residents Associations and other such Associations** relevant to their Ward, where an advance invitation has been received from the organisation concerned.
- (17) **Meetings with Government Ministers, MPs and Civil Servants and Official "Goodwill" visits, including Parliamentary Receptions and Briefings** subject to a Member being authorised to attend by the Council and / or its committees or when it is not practicable, in advance, by the Chief Executive or the Chief Legal Officer and the Leader of the Council.

- (18) **Any other duty or class of duty** as may be approved **in advance** by the Cabinet or in the case of an individual duty by the Chief Executive after consultation with the Chief Legal Officer and the Leader of the Council.

An advanced invitation may take the form of a dated Letter or E-Mail, Agenda Front Sheet, Memorandum or Signed Hand Written Note from the organisation/officer concerned. A copy of the "invitation" should be attached to the relevant claim form when submitted for payment.

Schedule

21st Century Swindon Forum
 Archaeological Advisory Body of the Swindon Development Trust
 Arts Council England – South West
 Association of Public Service Excellence
 Centre for Local Economic Strategies Board
 Cotswold Water Park Joint Committee
 CRE8 Studios
 Cricklade Country Way
 Dorcan Site Management Committee
 Forward Swindon Ltd.
 Great Western Enterprise
 Great Western Community Forest Committee
 Health Hydro (Best Value Team) Management Committee
 Highworth Recreation Centre Management Committee
 Highworth Youth and Community Centre Support Committee
 Joint Committee of the National Parking Adjudication Service
 Local Government Association
 Local Government Association Annual Conference
 Local Government Association Urban Commission
 Local Government Association Annual Children's Conference
 Local Government Association Annual Adult /Social Services Conference
 Local Government Information Unit
 Lydiard House Conference Centre
 National Children and Adult Services Conferences (including Conference of Local Education Authorities (CLEA) / Conference of Social Services Directors)
 National Councillor Network for Adult Social Care and Health Conferences
 Neighbourhood Safety Teams (NeSTS)
 North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Board
 Plas Pencelli Management Committee
 Rural Services Network
 Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
 South West Chairs and Chief Education Officers Group
 South West Councils
 South West Strategic Leaders Board
 South West Provincial Employers National Joint Council for Local Government Services
 South West Regional Board for Asylum Seekers and Refugees
 Stratton Pupil Referral Unit Management Committee
 Swindon Adoption Panel
 Swindon Business Improvement District Board
 Swindon Commercial Services Ltd (SCS).
 Swindon Dance Board
 Swindon Fostering Panel
 Swindon Foyer
 Swindon/Ocotal Link
 Swindon Lifelong Learning Partnership
 Swindon Portage
 Swindon Railway Heritage Centre Trust (Board of Trustees)

Swindon Strategic Partnership Board and Conferences
Thames Regional Flood Defence Committee
Town Twinning Network
Unitary Authority Education Network
Wessex Reserve Forces and Cadets Association
Wiltshire Historic Buildings Trust
Wiltshire Pension Fund Committee
Wiltshire and Swindon Police and Crime Commissioner Meetings
Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre Project Board
Wiltshire and Swindon Rural Regeneration Partnership
Wilts and Berks Canal Trust
Wiltshire Valuation Tribunal
Wiltshire Waste Partnership

* It is noted that external organisations, bodies, conferences and events occasionally change their names or titles. Where this occurs during the course of a Municipal Year but the relationship to the Council and the Council representation remains the same the organisation / event will be seen as being represented on this schedule.

A Local Outbreak Management Plan for Swindon

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 30th June 2020

Author: Director of Public Health

Wards: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This report seeks the Health and Wellbeing Board's endorsement of the draft the Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) for Swindon in response to the Covid-19 response, which is attached at Appendix One,
- 1.2 The LOMP is required to be published by all Local Authority Directors of Public Health (DPH) on or before 1st July 2020; however, if the Board approves the draft Plan, it will be forwarded to Council for Members' consideration.

2. Recommendations

The Board is recommended to recommend to Council to (Minute for Confirmation):

- 2.1 Approve the Local Outbreak Management Plan attached at Appendix One and recommend to Council that it be adopted.
- 2.2 Authorise the Director of Health in consultation with the Covid-19 Swindon Health Protection Board and the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, to amend and update the Plan to reflect the change of science and evidence-based working on the prevention and management of Covid-19 related outbreaks.

The Board is recommended to

- 2.3 Note the re-purposing of the existing officer and partner engagement body' known as the 'Health Protection Board', as the Covid-19 Swindon Health Protection Board.

3. Detail

Covid-19 Swindon Health Protection Board

- 3.1 Along with other similar local authorities, the Director of Public Health has maintained an engagement and advisory body consisting of relevant government bodies, local NHS providers, and relevant Swindon Borough Council officers. This is known as the Health Protection Board.
- 3.2 In order to assist the Director of Health in responding to central government's request that there be a Local Outbreak Management Plan, it is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board note that this Board will act as the Covid-19

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Steve Maddern, 07971093148, smaddern@swindon.gov.uk.

A Local Outbreak Management Plan for Swindon

Health and Wellbeing Board

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Swindon Health Protection Board. It would continue to function as an advisory rather than a decision-making entity.

Outline Swindon's Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP)

- 3.3 An outbreak in this context of Covid-19 mean two or more cases connected in time to a specific place (not a household) and / or an area or cohort of people with a significantly higher than expected rate of infection.
- 3.4 The outlining principles to developing the Local Outbreak Management Plan for Swindon are as follows:
 - 3.4.1 Our aim is to prevent community spread of Covid-19 and also to quickly identify and manage outbreaks early whilst maintain community engagement
 - 3.4.2 Our LOMP will build on existing health protection processes, not duplicate working with PHE and NHS colleagues
 - 3.4.3 Our LOMP will ensure testing takes place quickly and tracing contacts of those who have tested positive occurs at pace, advising them to self-isolate
 - 3.4.4 The governance and local system arrangements associated with our LOMP will provide the structure and responsibility to enable a place-based approach and impact
 - 3.4.5 We will ensure we act on local knowledge and real time data flow between local and national systems as appropriate
 - 3.4.6 We will ensure a robust evidence base and local knowledge steer a consistent approach to our decision making
 - 3.4.7 We will work with key partners, as required to ensure consistency of decision-making, local action to prevent and manage outbreaks and to ensure clear and consistent public messaging.
- 3.5 The Director of Public Health is responsible for the LOMP as part of the statutory role for the improvement and protection of health across the Borough. The LOMP will comprise of the following priority work streams coordinated in conjunction with the Covid-19 Swindon Health Protection Board:
 - 3.5.1 **Care homes and schools.** We will ensure a co-ordinated approach is taken to prevent, plan for and manage local outbreaks in schools and care homes. We will do so by building on existing standard operating procedures and activity driven by the local authority and key partners/providers. We will further develop this work to increase coherence and improve communications with the public.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Steve Maddern, 07971093148, smaddern@swindon.gov.uk.

A Local Outbreak Management Plan for Swindon

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 30th June 2020

- 3.5.2 **Identify high risk settings, communities, places.** We will identify high risk settings, communities and places. We will define preventative measures and outbreak management strategies in-line with the current evidence. We will ensure national and regional data flow to inform local surveillance alongside our local level intelligence to clearly define high risk settings, communities and places to enable targeted decision making, community support and action.
- 3.5.3 **Local testing capacity.** We will ensure access to testing is provided at pace, with clear processes in place to enable prioritisation and use of a range of provision such as mobile facilities. We will build on existing work within the LRF and Swindon and Wiltshire Testing Cell, aligning our action to existing process and data flows.
- 3.5.4 **Contact tracing.** We will build on existing close working arrangements with PHE in order to provide contact tracing capability to respond to outbreaks and complex community issues. We will deploy mutual aid processes working closely with the PHE health protection service.
- 3.5.5 **Data integration.** We will ensure that we assess local, regional and nationally available data to understand our local situation against the national COVID-19 alert system.
- 3.5.6 **Vulnerable people.** We will ensure any decisions taken prioritise support for vulnerable local people, including those currently shielding. We will enable those who are required to self-isolate to have access to NHS and local community support. We will build on the successful processes in place to support those on the Shielding lists.
- 3.5.7 **Governance.** We will build on existing health protection governance arrangements whilst enhancing the COVID-19 element in relation to assurance and partnership working as well as Member and community engagement. We will use the role of the DPH and a new Covid-19 Health Protection Board (C19HPB) to inform the Swindon Health and Wellbeing Board and local authority Chief Officer as chair of Gold Command as well as wider reporting into the Local Resilience Forum (LRF). The C19HPB will develop a COVID-19 function and business as usual function. The COVID-19 function will ensure membership from Local Authority, Public Health England, NHS CCG and PHE and wider partners.
- 3.6 The draft LOMP is attached at Appendix 1. There has been consultation with the Health Protection Board and the Council's Gold Command, which is functioning as Gold command, prior to consideration by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Director of Public Health may table minor changes to the draft LOMP at the meeting reflecting feedback from this consultation.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Steve Maddern, 07971093148, smaddern@swindon.gov.uk.

A Local Outbreak Management Plan for Swindon

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 30th June 2020

- 3.7 Given that the scientific knowledge of this infection is increasing as well as evidence of new risk or best practice emerging, both at a rapid pace, the Board is invited to seek authority from Council to delegate authority the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Covid-19 Swindon Health Protection Board to amend and update the LOMP.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There is no alternative option. The LOMP and the proposed governance are based on the requirements as set out by the government in their letter to Council Leaders (23 May 2020).

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 Swindon Borough Council has been allocated £930,773 from Government to support the implementation of the LOMP. The LOMP will be delivered in line with current health protection arrangements in place between the national test and trace service, the regional PHE health protection team and local authority health protection response.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and Human rights have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations within this report are compatible with Convention Rights.
- 5.3 The LOMP is aimed to prevent the transmission of Covid-19 throughout the Borough and quickly identify and manage outbreaks. The DPH has a statutory responsibility to improve and protect the health of the population they service under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Resource Implications

- 5.4 Local Authority public health / health protection teams working in conjunction with PHE health protection teams would have the capacity needed typically to manage outbreak scenarios. For example within care homes and school. However, in an escalated scenario (for example, multiple outbreaks across the Borough) we would rapidly become overwhelmed (within 3-7 days) unless we deployed additional local resources which would require approximately 50% more capacity.

A Local Outbreak Management Plan for Swindon

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 30th June 2020

Table 1. Current and project LA PH capacity requirements

Current Local Authority capacity (as of June 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2.0 WTE PHC• 1 WTE DPH• 0.6 WTE PH Specialist capacity• 1.2WTE EHOs• 0.2 WTE Comms officers• 1 WTE Intelligence Officer• 1 WTE Adult Social Care Officer
Projected additional capacity require from end of June 2020 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 0.6 WTE PH Consultant• 0.6 PH Specialist• 0.8 WTE EHO• 0.5 WTE intelligence officer• 0.5 WTE ASC Officer <p>There is additional temporary capacity that could be unitised from the PH and wider LA but would not provide the capacity/capabilities requires to respond to complex PH outbreak situations.</p>

5.5 In the event of a major outbreak or series of outbreaks the Swindon Borough Council Gold Command, if not already active, would be brought back into operation. For outbreaks that are not manageable with local system resources we would look for mutual aid support from our wider local authority workforce, Local Resilience Forum and partners in the wider BSW STP system, neighbouring authorities and PHE partners.

5.6 Swindon Borough Council has been allocated £930,773 from Government to support the implementation of the LOMP, which would include the funding of extra capacity to support the plan (see section 5.1).

Diversity Impact Assessment

5.7 Due to the rapid timescale in which the first edition of the LOMP has been created a Diversity Impact Assessment has not be completed. However the LOMP will highlight individuals, groups and communities that are at a higher risk of Covid-19 and attention will be given to target preventative messages for these

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Steve Maddern, 07971093148, smaddern@swindon.gov.uk.

A Local Outbreak Management Plan for Swindon

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 30th June 2020

groups but also tailor outbreak response according to the needs of these communities. A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) will be completed as soon as possible.

5.8 Key communities include:

- 5.8.1 Our BAME communities account for 15.4% of our population (approximately 32,000 residents)
- 5.8.2 The most deprived wards in Swindon are Penhill, Upper Stratton, Walcot, Park North, Gorsehill and Pinehurt.
- 5.8.3 Swindon is relatively small in its urban centre and so travel is mainly a hub and spoke model although many people do commute in and out of the town for work.
- 5.8.4 In Swindon there are 64 primary schools, 16 secondary schools, 7 special schools (3 primary, 4 are secondary) and two further education colleges
- 5.8.5 Swindon has approximately 25 commissioned older people care homes, 25 homes for those with physical disability, mental health services. There are also approximately 50 private care homes.
- 5.8.6 Large employers
- 5.8.7 Activity settings – e.g. STFC, greyhound stadium, cinemas, events such as marches, festivals etc.

Risk Management

- 5.9 No specific risks have been identified at this stage for this report.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The LOMP has been developed in conjunction with the Health Protection Board, Swindon Borough Council's Gold Command and wider system partners.
 - 6.1.1 Councillor Consultation including Leader of Swindon Borough Council and elected member for Adult Social Care and Public Health.
 - 6.1.2 Covid-19 Health Protection Board Membership: Swindon Borough Council (public health, adults and children's social care, housing, education, emergency planning, environmental health, comms); Public Health England; NHS England; BSW NHS CCG; community and voluntary organisations; Local Resilience Forum; Local Pharmaceutical Committee; Local Medical Committee and Great Western Hospital
 - 6.1.3 Swindon Borough Council Health and Wellbeing Recovery Cell membership: Swindon Borough Council (public health, voluntary

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Steve Maddern, 07971093148, smaddern@swindon.gov.uk.

A Local Outbreak Management Plan for Swindon

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commissioning, housing; Military, Community and Voluntary sector representation and BSW NHS CCG

6.1.4 Swindon Borough Council Gold Command Membership: Chief Executive; Chief Operating Officer; Director of Finance, Corporate directors of social care, health and housing and children's services; director of public health; head of economy; military representation; Wiltshire Police; MHCLG, BSW NHS CCG.

6.1.5 **Other consultees have included:** Emergency planners, BSW NHS CCG, Wiltshire and Dorset Fire; Rescue Service and Swindon & Wiltshire LRF SCG Chair and Wiltshire Council.

6.2 The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (Section 151 Officer) and the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

7.1 None

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Local Outbreak Management Plan

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1 Introduction

1.1 Global Context

On 31 December 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) was informed of a cluster of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. This virus is referred to as SARS-CoV-2, and the associated disease as COVID-19. WHO declared Covid-19 Pandemic on 11 March 2020. As of 18 June 2020 over 8.2 million cases have been diagnosed globally, with more than 454,000 fatalities. The [WHO coronavirus dashboard](#) has country by country information. WHO also publishes a [daily international situation report](#).

1.2 National Context

Initial cases were first suspected cases in the UK in late 2019 with the first confirmed cases in January 2020. In March community restrictions began and full lockdown was in place from end of March. From May and into June 2020 lockdown restrictions have begun to ease in-line with Government plans. The [total number of confirmed cases in the UK](#) is published by the Department of Health and Social Care, and is available in a [visual dashboard](#). As of 18 June 2020 there have been 300,469 lab-confirmed UK cases and 42,288 Covid-19 associated UK deaths.

1.3 Local Context

Across the South West, as of 18 June 2020 there have been 7901 confirmed Covid-19 cases and 1599 deaths. Across the Bath and North East Somerset (BANES), Swindon and Wiltshire Sustainable Transformation Plan (STP) foot print there have been 1247 confirmed cases, of which 466 account for Swindon (37%) and there have 122 death.

As of June 2020, each Local Authority must have a Local Outbreak Management Plans (LOMP) must be in place to allow improved speed of response to Covid-19 outbreaks, thorough planning and deployment of resources, building on local expertise, led by the Director of Public Health working with the regional PHE health protection team and local system partners.

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1.4 Health Protection: Legal and Policy Context

The legal context for managing outbreaks of communicable disease which present a risk to the health of the public requiring urgent investigation and management sits

- With Public Health England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012
- With Directors of Public Health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012
- With Chief Environmental Health Officers under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984
- With NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups¹ to collaborate with Directors of Public Health and Public Health England to take local action (eg testing and treating) to assist the management of outbreaks under the Health and Social Care Act 2012
- With other responders specific responsibilities to respond to major incidents as part of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- In the context of COVID-19 there is also the Coronavirus Act 2020.

This underpinning context gives Local Authorities (Public Health and Environmental Health) and Public Health England the primary responsibility for the delivery and management of public health actions to be taken in relation to outbreaks of communicable disease through local Health Protection Boards and Partnerships (e.g. Local Health Resilience Forums) and local health protection arrangements with Public Health England. These arrangements are clarified in the 2013 guidance *Health Protection in Local Government*².

PHE is mandated to fulfil the Secretary of State's duty to protect the public's health from infectious diseases, working with the NHS, local government and other partners. This includes providing surveillance; specialist services, such as diagnostic and reference microbiology; investigation and management of outbreaks of infectious diseases; ensuring effective emergency preparedness, resilience and response for health emergencies. At a local level PHE's health protection teams and field services work in partnership with the Director of Public Health, playing strategic and operational leadership roles both in the development and implementation of outbreak control plans and in the identification and management of outbreaks.

The Director of Public Health (DPH) is a statutory role embedded in the local authority with a duty to protect and improve the health of the population. The DPH has and retains primary responsibility for the health of their communities. This includes being assured that the arrangements to protect the health of the communities that they serve are robust and are implemented. The primary foundation of developing and deploying this local outbreak management plan is through the public health expertise of the local Director of Public Health and their teams.

¹ And NHS England in the case of Prisons and custodial institutions

² Protecting the health of the local population: the new health protection duty of local authorities under the Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and Entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013

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1.5 Outbreak recognition and declaration

The definition of an outbreak can be interpreted in this context to mean two or more cases connected in time to a specific place (not a household) and/or an area or cohort of people with a significantly higher than expected rate of infection.

There is both a proactive and reactive elements to the prevention and control of Covid-19 outbreaks. We will use local level knowledge to anticipate possible outbreak situations (e.g. known mass gatherings) but will also use the surveillance data available to us to manage outbreaks by containment.

The definition of an outbreak is the focus for this LOMP, however an important factor would be the analysis and interpretation of patterns of community transmission across Swindon. Patterns amongst people, layered with information about their movements, enables us to identify places where people might not consider themselves to have spent significant time but would be regarded as important in the transmission chain. The initial notification of an outbreak would reach the Director of Public Health via PHE Health Protection Team or other means, who would initiate a health protection response cell who would carry out the following:

- An initial investigation of the incident to understand the nature of the outbreak.
- A risk assessment including:
 - Likely size of exposed cohort
 - Vulnerability of the people impacted (medical)
 - Current infection control measures in place
 - Barriers to self-isolation / control measures (social, circumstantial)
- Information assessed by the lead PH Consultant (which could be within the LA or PHE)
- Should an outbreak be declared an Outbreak Control Team would be set up or timeline for review set.

If the risk assessment suggests more intensive intervention is required, then further outbreak investigation and containment action would be undertaken at local level, led by the DPH.

1.6 Outbreak investigation and containment

Protocols will be developed for responding to different types of outbreaks (these will use current guidance and frameworks from PHE). A typical response is likely to involve:

- additional case finding and contact finding
- infection control information and advice for the setting/context
 - this **may** involve closure, cleaning and reopening
 - this **may** involve advice for future operations, if any improvements are identified
- identification of any barriers to compliance to the setting or individuals concerned, with a view to reducing them

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- follow up to ensure measures put in place have been successful
- dissemination of any lessons learnt to wider relevant settings/contexts (with due attention to patient confidentiality issues)
- communication will be important throughout to a range of stakeholders including communities

1.7 A note on Enforcement

Enforcement may be required under certain circumstances. This may be through the existing Covid-19 regulations, the Police or possibly PHE who are proper officer for Part 2a type orders regarding Covid-19, which allow for people to be detained to prevent virus transmission. Discussion of new powers for local authorities in response to outbreaks are underway at national level and if brought about could be used once available if required.

1.8 Aims, Purpose and Principles

1.8.1 Aim

To ensure systems are in place to prevent, early identify and manage Covid-19 related outbreaks through a variety of different settings and vulnerable communities across Swindon.

1.8.2 Overarching Purpose

Local Authorities have a significant role to play in the identification and management of COVID-19 outbreaks. The Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) will give clarity on how local government works with the NHS Test and Trace Service to ensure a whole system approach to managing local outbreaks. Directors of Public Health have a crucial system leadership role to play ensuring that through the LOMP they have the necessary capacity and capability to quickly deploy resources to the most critical areas. Response to local outbreaks, while led by Directors of Public Health in conjunction with PHE local health protection teams, local and national government, NHS, private and community/voluntary sector and the general public.

1.8.3 Core working principles

The prevention and management of the transmission of COVID-19 will:

- Be rooted in public health systems and leadership
- Adopt a whole system approach which is crucial to preventing and managing outbreaks
- Be delivered through an efficient and locally effective and responsive system including being informed by timely access to data and intelligence
- Be sufficiently resourced – Swindon Borough Council has received £933,000 from the national allocation of £300m to support the implementation of the LOMP
- This plan should be used in conjunction with the most current evidence-based Covid-19 management guidance produced by the UK Government and Public Health England. This

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plan is also be used in conjunction with the Local Health Resilience Partnership (LHPR) outbreak plan and associated Covid-19 action cards/plans (awaiting publication). This plan supplements existing organisational outbreak plans (e.g. NHS Outbreak Framework).

1.9 Working in Partnership

1.9.1 National approach

Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC)

This new initiative has been set up to perform two key tasks. The first is as an independent analytical function to provide real-time analysis in regard to outbreaks. It will look in detail to identify and respond to outbreaks of Covid-19 as they arise. The centre will collect data about the prevalence of the disease and analyse that data to understand infection rates across the country. Its second role is to provide advice on how the government should respond to spikes in infections. Should UK government ministers decide to impose different restrictions in different areas and regions across England, it will be on the advice of the JBC.

National test and Contact Tracing Programme

The contact tracing and testing effort is led by the Department of Health and Social Care. PHE are responsible for providing professional leadership and monitoring quality of service delivery, working alongside delivery partners and Directors of Public Health. This incorporates a significant scaling up of the tried and tested contact tracing approach (see section 6).

NHS England/Improvement

NHS England/Improvement has responsibility for managing/overseeing the NHS response to infectious disease cases and their contacts and health protection incidents, ensuring that relevant NHS resources are mobilised and commanding/directing NHS resources as necessary.

Additionally, NHS England/Improvement is responsible for ensuring that their contracted providers will deliver an appropriate clinical response to any incident that threatens the public's health. These include, for example, pharmacies, dentistry, ophthalmology, prison healthcare and young offender institutions and Immigration Removal Centres.

Public Health England (PHE)

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has the overarching legal duty to protect the health of the population, a duty which is generally discharged by Public Health England (PHE) and specifically by the Health Protection Team within the PHE South West Centre. The Deputy Director for Health Protection will ensure that the Health Protection Team will lead the epidemiological investigation and provide the specialist health protection response to public health outbreaks / incidents.

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The Health Protection Team functions include:

- supporting local disease surveillance (maintaining and developing surveillance systems for communicable diseases in accordance with the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010);
- investigation, risk assessment and provision of advice with regards to cases of infectious disease;
- leading the management/coordination of community incidents and outbreaks;
- developing, implementing, delivering and monitoring national action plans for infectious diseases at local level;
- 24/7 advice and support Local Authorities and other organisations with responsibilities for protecting the public's health
- providing a gateway to the PHE specialist expertise such as the Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards (CRCE), Field Service epidemiologists and public health laboratory network.

1.9.2 Regional system

Partners across the region work collaboratively together to produce plans for managing this stage of the COVID19 response (for governance see later section).

PHE South West Health Protection Team (SW HPT)

Currently they manage all health protection incidents, receiving data from clinical teams on probable cases, and laboratory reports for all confirmed cases. They speak to cases, identify contacts, and put measures in place for outbreaks as part of their normal role. It is expected that they will focus on supporting the more complex incidents by bringing communicable disease control (through a Consultant in Communicable Disease Control; a specialised form of a Consultant in Public Health) and field epidemiology expertise.

Local Resilience Forum and Regional SCG

Local resilience fora are partnerships to support the planning, preparedness and response to any major incident. They are primarily comprised of responders as detailed by the Civil Contingencies Act. There is a Swindon and Wiltshire Local Resilience Forum.

There is also a Regional Strategic Command Group. South West Directors of Public Health are represented by the Director of Public Health for Devon County Council.

1.9.3 Local system

Swindon Borough Council

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Through the Director of Public Health, the Local Authority has overall responsibility for the strategic oversight of health protection incidents/outbreaks impacting on their population's health. They should ensure that an appropriate response is put in place by local responding organisations, that this is proportionate and effective in meeting local needs.

In addition, the newly established Covid-19 Health Protection Board (see section 2) must be assured that the local health protection system is robust enough to respond appropriately to cases of infectious disease and outbreaks to protect the local population's health and that risks have been identified, are mitigated against and adequately controlled. The Council will make use of locally developed evidence and intelligence to inform this assurance including routine surveillance data (see section 3).

Swindon Borough Council also commission mandated public health services and social care providers across the borough and this may extend to coordinating responses which require the mobilisation of these services.

Directors of Public Health and their teams provide a clear line of reporting through local democratic structures, including the Health and Wellbeing Board.

BSW NHS Clinical Commissioning Group

The primary role of the CCG is to ensure, through contractual arrangements with provider organisations including primary care (GPs), that healthcare resources are made available to respond to, manage and control the risks associated with Covid-19 related health protection incidents within their registered population. The CCG also commission hospital care, rehabilitative care, community health and mental health and learning disability services.

This may include the commissioning of local services which are specific to identified health risks (e.g. prescribing pathways for post-exposure prophylaxis and treatment through Local Enhanced Service contracts with primary care); ensuring existing services are sufficiently flexible and resilient to respond to unplanned incidents and emergencies (e.g. surge capacity, business continuity and emergency planning); or rapid spot-commissioning services to respond to incidents where there is no existing capacity in place.

The CCG is responsible for ensuring there are robust escalation procedures in place for providers to respond to any incident and will support NHS England/Improvement in coordinating the local health response.

The wider local system is key in the prevention and management of Covid-19 related outbreaks and would include many other partners including:

- Great Western Hospital
- Primary care providers (including GPs, pharmacies, opticians, dentists)
- Community / Voluntary sector providers
- Emergency services (inc. Fire service)
- Commissioned services

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- Local Resilience Forum
- BSW STP
- Parish councils
- Wiltshire Police

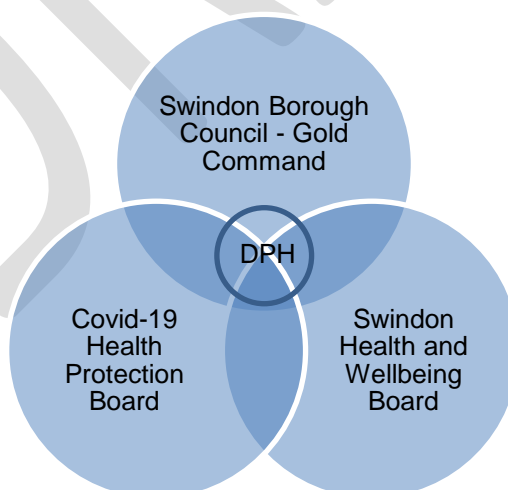
The Decision making interface between local and national

Level	Decision maker(s)	Co-ordination, advice and engagement	Support and Assurance
Individual setting	Individuals or bodies responsible for that setting (e.g., Head Teacher, restaurant owner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health England (local Health Protection Teams) • Director of Public Health teams 	NHS Test and Trace Local Teams will liaise at all levels as needed and with relevant government departments, ministers and COBR
Local Authority level	Decisions may be taken by the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA Chief Executive • Director of Public Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid-19 Health Protection Board • Local Strategic Co-ordination Group (Gold Command) • Health and Wellbeing Boards (Local Outbreak Control Board) 	
Cross-boundary	N/A – agreed cross-boundary decisions will be implemented at UTLA level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) 	

2. Governance

This LOMP has been developed in conjunction with the newly established Swindon Covid-19 Health Protection Board which has a Covid-19 and wider health protection oversight function. The LOMP will have sign-off by Swindon Borough Council's Gold Command and by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Fig.1 Swindon LOMP Governance Structure



a. Swindon Covid-19 Health Protection Board (C19HPB)

The C19HPB will develop a COVID-19 function and business as usual function. The COVID-19 function will ensure membership from Swindon Borough Council officers CCG, and PHE and other

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key partners. C19HPB will report to Swindon's Health and Wellbeing Board (H&WBB) and Local Authority Gold Command as well as wider reporting to the LRF and Gold command.

We will develop the Health & Wellbeing Board (HWBB) remit to enable it to drive the required Member-led stakeholder board required for oversight of the Swindon LOMP. This will ensure a place-based approach is taken via engagement with key stakeholders already present on the HWBB.

b. Swindon Health and Wellbeing Board (Local Outbreak Engagement Board)

The Health and Wellbeing Board was introduced by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The statutory functions of the Board include:

- To prepare a [Joint Strategic Assessment](#) (JSNA); a [Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment](#) (PNA) and [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) (JHWS).
- A duty to encourage integrated working between health and social care commissioners in connection with the provision of health and social care services;
- A power to encourage close working between commissioners and health-related services and the board itself; and a power to encourage close working between commissioners of health-related services and commissioners of health and social care services.

The Swindon health and Wellbeing Board will perform the role of the 'Local Outbreak Engagement Board' and will have a leadership role in ongoing communications with the public.

3. Data Integration

We will seek to pull together all the information relevant to individual cases and outbreaks with the Swindon Borough Council, NHS partners and Public Health England while complying with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). This involves proactive data sharing and flows for contact tracing, outbreak management and ongoing surveillance will be key. We will expect relevant and appropriate data sharing from national and regional components of the system and highlight where any gaps are limiting our ability to act in an integrated fashion. Our approach to data sharing will be consistent across the Southwest region. This will also link with the central government through the Joint Biosecurity Centre (insert link when available).

The key principles to guide our approach to data integration are:

Whole systems approach – Swindon Borough Council will take a whole systems approach, working with national, regional and local partners, recognising that no player has the resources, skills or expertise to make this happen on their own.

Integration – Swindon Borough Council will work with partners to ensure that the local pathways, systems and data sharing are proactively integrated.

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Data sharing – proactive data sharing and flows for contact tracing, outbreak management and ongoing surveillance will be key. We will expect relevant and appropriate data sharing from national and regional components of the system and highlight where any gaps are limiting our ability to act in an integrated fashion

Responsiveness – Swindon Borough Council will be responsive to the differences and diversity in local communities, taking a people-centred approach to understanding how we can support people, communities, business and organisations to prevent and manage outbreaks.

Capacity and resources – these must be provided across the system to ensure the LOMP is implemented effectively and sustainably. Partners across the Borough will be asked to support the outbreak response wherever possible, however it must be recognised that if there are increasing cases the capacity to respond may be overwhelmed. Capacity gaps will be reported through the governance system.

Ownership – Swindon's Covid-19 LOMP is jointly owned by Swindon Borough Council's Health Protection Board under the leadership of the DPH, in line with government guidance on health protection and the role of the DPH

We will review local, regional and nationally available data to understand our local situation against the national COVID-19 alert system.

Current key data sources available to Swindon Borough Council Public Health Team:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PHE Daily Exceedance reports• Covid-19 capacity threshold and triggers report• PHE SW early warning for confirmed Covid-19 cases• PHE Deaths Line List (MSOA)• PHE Deaths Line List summary• PHE Deaths Line List (postcode)• Covid-19 excess deaths reporting (LA)• ONS Death data• NHS test and trace statistics• Swindon Borough Council Common Operating Picture (COP)• Swindon & Wiltshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Covid-19 Dashboard and COPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary Care Mortality Data• Weekly death registrations• NHSE Covid-19 daily deaths• BSW CCG situation report• Local care home sitreps• Whole care home testing report• PHE situation reports• PHE Centre daily COvid-19 report• PHE Centre weekly Covid-19 Report• PHE Case Line List (MSOA)• PHE Case Line List summary• PHE Case Line List (postcode)• PHE Dashboard• PHE Contact tracing reports• NHS Digital Shielding dashboard• NHS Digital Pillar 2 testing dashboard
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Data sources will be analysed frequently to direct preventative efforts and to prompt early intervention which Covid-19 clusters/outbreaks are identified. Regular updates on the local Covid-19 situation will be provided in-line with the governance structures to both the Covid-19 Health Protection Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. We will also ensure we regularly communicate appropriate information with communities. The data can also be used to highlight vulnerable groups and target action within those communities.

4. Prevention and Response Plans for Places and Communities

Prevention and response plans for Swindon Borough Council is based on the Local Health Resilience Partnership' Communicable diseases plan available to health protection professionals via Resilience Direct portal.

Triggers

Interpreting all available data sources to quickly identify and respond to outbreaks of Covid-19 as defined in section 1.5. This will be led by the Public Health Team at Swindon Borough Council and the PHE Health Protection Team in conjunction with evidence from partners.

Prevention

Through this plan we will continue to proactively promote prevention messages as a means of limiting the community transmission of Covid-19. Primary these messages are:

- To maintain a safe social distancing where possible
- To wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- To make use of testing services and to self-isolate if symptomatic or identified as a contact of someone who is a confirmed Covid-19 case
- To make use of appropriate use of personal protective equipment in-line with government guidelines.
- To wear face coverings as recommended by Government guidelines.

Risk and Response

This plan will identify and plan for at risk groups / individuals (see subsequent chapters). Should the data / local intelligence inform us of Covid-19 concerns then we shall response accordingly by identifying and managing of the outbreak, rapidly deploy testing and tracing services in a bid to contain the outbreak in conjunction with our key partners and effectively use communication methods to brief partners and reassure the communities affected.

Key health protection principles are to be applied to all outbreak settings.

4.1 Swindon Health Protection Response

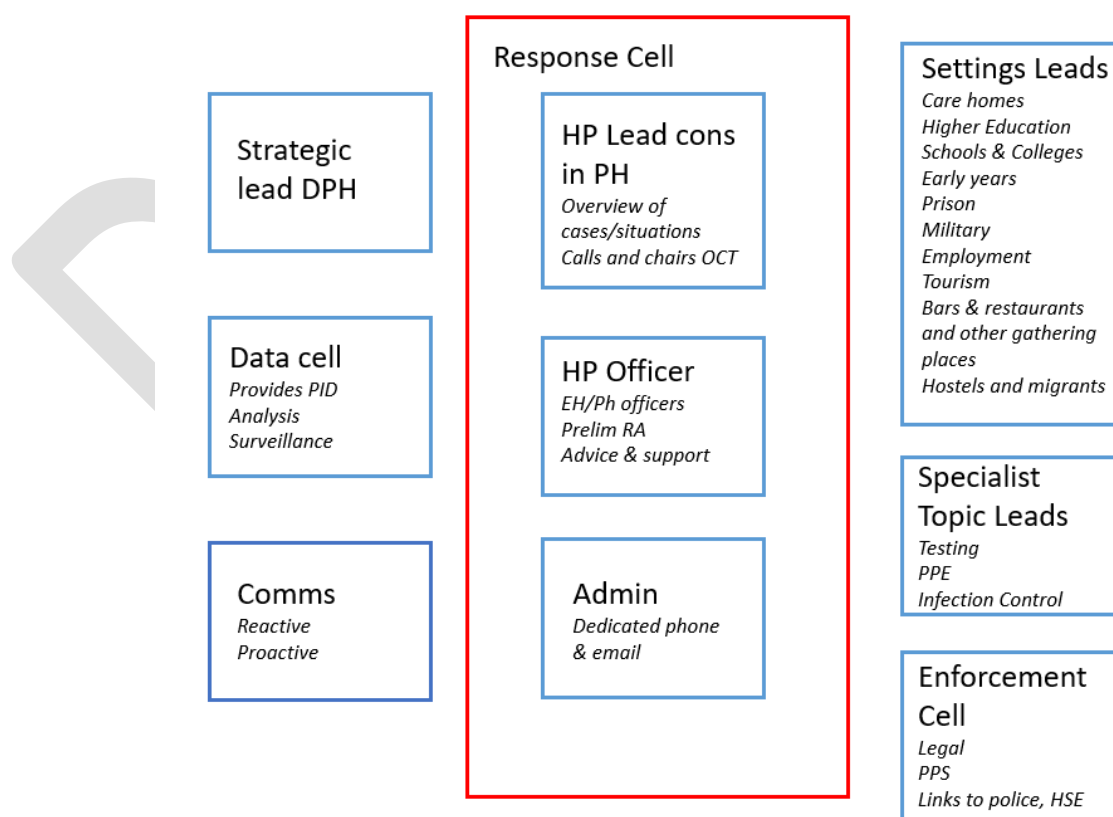
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Swindon Borough Council's Public Health Team will process the information provided to it from either the wider system and/or direct contacts from individuals or organisations locally and will work in conjunction with PHE health protection team. Clinical issues around Public Health will be resolved via PHE Consultants in Communication Disease Control, other clinical issues through a patients GP and/or CCG clinical leads as appropriate.

The cell will operate in full for 5 days per week initially, with on-call support over the weekends and evenings, with a rolling assessment of the need to operate longer hours. It is recognised that a 24/7 service across the year may be required.

The core membership of the response cell will comprise of admin support, intelligence, environmental health and/or public health officers (as appropriate), a communications officer and the oversight of a public health consultant / director of public health. Their role is to carry out initial and dynamic risk assessment, link in to topic and settings expertise (agreeing the best person to take the lead role for the named incident), review progress, and set up and chair Outbreak Control Team meetings as and when required. They will include additional support as and when required, set up monitoring arrangements and close the incident when appropriate to do so. The size of the officer and admin support will vary based on the number of incidents being managed.

Fig. 2 Swindon COVID Containment Response Cell



4.2 Care Homes

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Swindon has approximately 100 care homes of which 25 are Swindon Borough Council commissioned older people care homes, 25 homes for those with physical disability, mental health services. The remaining are private care homes.

Since early in the pandemic a Swindon multi-agency 'care home support cell' was established to support care homes experiencing outbreaks and proactively support care homes in regard to preventative messages, priority access to testing services, access and training on personal protective equipment and providing information, guidance and advice on infection control.

This support cell will continue for the foreseeable future to ensure that care homes are supported with prevention guidance, information and advice but also supported during outbreak scenarios.

Awaiting publication of official Care Home Action Card

Educational Settings

In Swindon there are 64 primary schools, 16 secondary schools, 7 special schools (3 primary, 4 are secondary) and two further education colleges.

We will replicate the well-established care home support cell for educational settings going forward to create a single support cell for Children, Young People and Schools. The cell will include a mix of public health and educational leads that can be assembled fast in response to educational setting outbreaks.

Awaiting publication of official Educational Settings Action Card

Table 1. Settings Leads for Care Home and Educational Settings

Sector	Task Group/ Focus	Theme leads	Partners
Care Homes/ health and care staff	Swindon Care Home cell	Director of Adult Social Care (LA) Director of Public Health (LA) Director of Nursing (CCG)	Care Home Cell CCG GWH community services
Child, Young People and Educational Settings	SBC Children and Young People and education settings cell.	Director of Children's Services / Education Director of Public Health	Education Leaders DfE & Ofsted Parents School nursing and school aged immunisation providers Foster parents and IFA, CCG, SCC Schools, colleges, training providers DWP SCC, Schools, colleges, training providers DWP

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5. Protecting and supporting vulnerable people

Vulnerable people are those who are at higher risk of catching Covid-19 or having a worse outcome if they do get it. This may be due to: an internal vulnerability (e.g. pre-existing mental or physical health condition); the environment in which people live or work (e.g. rough sleeping); an addiction or health behaviour (e.g. drug or alcohol use) and / or ability to understand advice or act on it (e.g. people with a learning disability, dementia or language barriers).

There is also a cohort of people who are vulnerable to worse outcomes for Covid-19 due to demographic or occupational reasons³ although this research did not take into account co-morbidities:

- **age** - among people already diagnosed with Covid-19, people who were 80 or older were seventy times more likely to die than those under 40
- **gender** - men were more likely to die from Covid-19 than women
- deprivation - living in a more deprived areas
- ethnicity - higher risk of dying in those in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups than in White ethnic groups
- occupation - those in caring occupations, those who drive passengers in road vehicles for a living, those in security related roles

At a local level we will focus on protecting and supporting vulnerable people in a number of ways:

- Through identification and understanding of who is most vulnerable and where they are in the Borough. This will build on local knowledge through our JSNA work as well as with partners such as the voluntary and community sector and through existing groups and partnership working to ensure that people can be accessed quickly and any response is appropriate to need
- Through partnership working to build on prevention and understanding people's concerns. We will work with key organisations and existing mechanisms such as our support calls to those who are shielding to ensure that the key prevention messages of social distancing, hand hygiene and test and trace are reaching everyone. We are planning a resident's survey at regular time points which can be used to identify influences on behaviour and variation between groups.
- Through ongoing support for those people who need to self-isolate via linking to processes with food and prescription delivery, and access to NHS and community support. This will build on the successful processes in place for supporting people on the shielding lists to date and our collaborative working with the voluntary and community sector.

3

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/890258/disparities_review.pdf

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- Through proactive raising awareness of the potential for outbreaks within different groups and ensuring a clear understanding of the need for and purpose of testing and contact tracing including:
 - Access to translation services
 - Recognition of the impact of hearing loss, sight loss and cognitive impairment and ensuring resources and communication are appropriate
 - Identification of key leads who have up to date information for liaising with different communities

5.1 Swindon Specific Risk Groups

Although Swindon does not have a port, prison or university, the town does have some characteristics that must be considered in the context of this plan, including:

- Our BAME communities account for 15.4% of our population (approximately 32,000 residents) and this needs to be recognised when publishing and communicating preventative guidance and advice and communicating risk.
- The most deprived wards in Swindon are Penhill, Upper Stratton, Walcot, Park North, Gorsehill and Pinehurt.
- Swindon is relatively small in its urban centre and so travel is mainly a hub and spoke model although many people do commute in and out of the town for work.
- In Swindon there are 64 primary schools, 16 secondary schools, 7 special schools (3 primary, 4 are secondary) and two further education colleges
- Swindon has approximately 25 commissioned older people care homes, 25 homes for those with physical disability, mental health services. There are also approximately 50 private care homes.
- Employment hubs – large employers (Nationwide, Honda etc) and those who are more vulnerable
- Activity settings – e.g. STFC, greyhound stadium, cinemas, events such as marches, festivals etc.
- Hospitality industry

Setting Leads

Setting leads have strong links into particular settings and so can manage aspects of the incident. This might vary from acting in a health protection officer role, to providing support to communications

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cell and the response on the stakeholder communication. This includes people who have specialist knowledge around specific topics, for example, PPE or testing, often these will be the same people who are in the response cell. Currently these leads are as follows:

Table 2. Settings Leads for Swindon Specific Groups

Sector	Task Group/ Focus	Theme leads	Partners
High risk settings	Probation service	Community Safety Manager (LA)	Health and Justice PHE/ NHSEI NPS
	Public Transport	Passenger transport Manager	Swindon Bus Company Stagecoach GWR
Vulnerable Individuals and groups	Homelessness Task Group / Sheltered housing	Director of Public Health Director of Housing	Homelessness Partners
	Houses of Multiple Occupancy	Director of Housing / Head of Public Protection	
	Refugees and Asylum seekers	Director of Public Health	
	Gypsy, Traveller and Roma	Community Safety Manager (LA)	
	Disabled people and carers	Director of Adult Social Care	Service providers
	People with LD and autism	Head of Transitions and Learning Disability	Voluntary sector SCC
	Mental Health Service users	Director of Public Health Director of Adult Social Care CCG Commissioners	Service providers, Voluntary sector
	Sex workers and those that participate in risk-taking sexual acts	Director of Public Health	Service providers
	Substance misuse clients	Director of Public Health	Service providers, Voluntary sector
	Early years settings (non-school) e.g. child minders etc	Director for Children's services	
	Children and young people	Director of Public Health Director of Children Services	Children and YP Cell – combine with education cell
High risk communities and neighbourhoods	BAME Covid-19 task Group	Director of Public Health	BAME networks Communities CCG
	Health and Care Staff	Director for Adult Social Care	
	Older People	Head of Social Work (ASC) Director of Public Health	
	Churches / religious centres / Faith groups	TBC	

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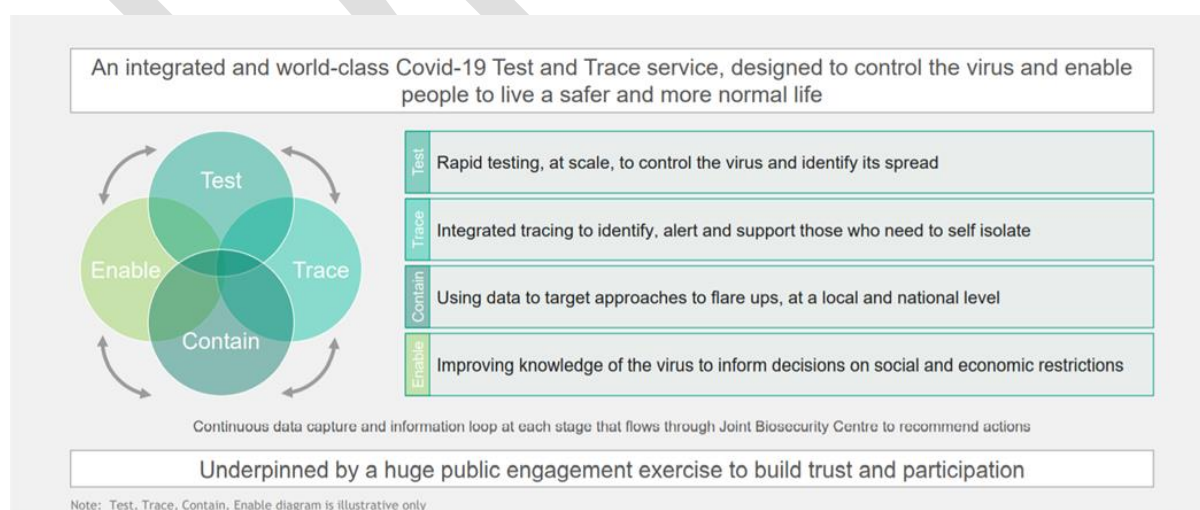
	Emergency service staff including Fire, Police, rapid response services	Director of Public Health	Service Leads
Economy / Businesses and Large Employers	Large employers including Honda, BMW, Zurich and Nationwide, B&Q distribution and Iceland distribution sites	Head of Economy (LA)	Large employers including Honda, BMW, Zurich and Nationwide, B&Q distribution and Iceland distribution sites
Parish Councils	Local communities x22	TBC	
Police / Probation services	Community safety	Community Safety Manager	Police, probation services
Transport systems	Taxi Business Forum		Transport providers

There is a commitment to work directly with Swindon Borough Council commissioned (and non-commissioned) services who work with these vulnerable individuals e.g. Swindon Carers (disabled people, carers and unpaid carers,) MIND, SAM, Citizens Advice and Harbour. These community and voluntary sector organisations can bring valuable insight, data and expertise that would help with a strategic response.

6. Testing and contact tracing: responding to outbreak in complex settings

An integrated Covid-19 Test and Trace programme designed to control the virus and enable people to live a safer and more normal life was introduced across England on 28 May. Local Authorities work with the Government to support test and trace services in their local communities, taking a place-based approach to containing the spread of the infection.

Fig. 3 – overview of NHS test and trace service



The service comprises of three tiers:

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- Tier 1 - Regional level enhanced PHE health protection team capacity, supported by local authorities as needed. This function will include roles such as convening local outbreak control team meetings and will focus on complex settings and outbreaks.
- Tier 2 is comprised of 3000+ health care professionals employed nationally to assess risk and provide support in more complex situations such as outbreaks in community settings;
- Tier 3 provides initial contact and advice to those testing positive and their contacts. This element is comprised of 15,000 call handlers.

Testing

In Swindon we have a locally based Regional Testing Unit with the capacity to test up to 2000 people a day based at Wroughton Park and Ride. This is part of the national online portal offer with people can attend for testing receiving results within 72 hours. Health and social care staff, front line workers and residents are able to access symptomatic testing via the digital portal. For all care homes (staff and residents), managers can order testing kits via the care home digital portal. Priority homes can request testing via the DPH. Test results will be emailed to the registered manager, or directly to staff, within 72 hours of the test arriving at the laboratory. In the case of positive test results, this triggers contact tracing as explained below. A postal test kit offer is also available via the national portal.

As well as the regional testing centre described above there are mobile units across the south west. These have the potential to be rapidly deployed in the case of an outbreak. The main point of contact for testing is the Director of Public health. Care home testing is overseen by a multi-agency Care Home Support Cell chaired by the BSW CCG.

Contact Tracing

For confirmed cases, following a positive test result, the National Contact Tracers at Tier 3 will speak to the case (case will have provided details to receive a test, via online portal or NHS 119 phone number for individuals. They will be advised to self-isolate for 7-14 days as appropriate. Tier 3 will identify their contacts and record them. They will follow up on individual named contacts. If this flags any key issues, for example vulnerability or complexity these will be referred through to Tier 2 for further investigation.

Tier 3 (and Tier 2 if the case has been passed to Tier 2) will identify any contexts such as workplaces, schools or other contexts that they have spent enough time to have potentially been in contact with others (this might include social or leisure, shopping, healthcare visits). These contexts will be passed through to Tier 1.

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We would expect that the databases from the service would be searching for contexts (PHE software, HP Zone, automatically detects possible outbreaks by searching for the same place in different case histories). Local authority public health teams can add local insight and knowledge as appropriate and work closely with Public Health England and the tier 1 team.

7. Communication and Engagement

The key with communication is tailoring the key prevention and control messages to provide reassurance to Swindon residents and our high risk communities. Communications, will be effective and timely, proactive and reactive:

- Proactive: considering the importance of behaviour change around COVID19, with a particular focus around the key prevention messages as detailed in section 4
- Reactive: handling messages relating to outbreaks and incidents, ensuring that the need for open and honest communication is balanced with sensitivity around patient and business identifiable information

The DPH will work with the appropriate communication leads regarding the progress of contact tracing and issues (e.g. non-compliance / public comms) to ensure greater impact. They will also have a responsibility to our general population to provide a local communication route that people trust and use that will allow them to:

- understand the need to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and the importance of self-isolation, testing and contact tracing and how data will be used to stop the community transmission of the virus;
- respond to notifications that they have been a contact, that will allay fears, provide appropriate responses regarding isolation and testing and ensure that people will seek medical support at the right time.

There is also a need to ensure that the local voice is heard through active engagement with local communities. Swindon will establish a Local Stakeholder Board (Health & Wellbeing Board) which will provide this voice both directly and via liaison with other community groups, Parish council and interested stakeholders.

The PHE regional team will work with the DPH and local system leaders to brief regarding the national and regional progress of contact tracing and support with ensuring consistent public messaging through agreed 'shared' proactive and reactive lines with common issues (e.g. reports of non-compliance with isolation / use of Covid-19 Act).

8. Resources

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Typically a busy but manageable health protection scenario would be to have capacity to support outbreaks in a modest number of settings, with the Local Authority Public Health / Environmental health teams working with PHE, for example 3 care homes, 1 school (i.e. a low percentage of outbreaks in settings). In this scenario, the resources deployed would typically be, in addition to PHE (responsible for identification, initial testing, contact tracing, convening outbreak control team, initial infection prevention and control advice). In an escalated scenario (for example, double this) we would rapidly become overwhelmed (within 3-7 days) unless we deployed additional local resources which would require 50% more capacity.

Table 3. Current and project LA PH capacity requirements

Current Local Authority capacity (as of June 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2.0 WTE PHC• 1 WTE DPH• 0.6 WTE PH Specialist capacity• 1.2WTE EHOs• 0.2 WTE Comms officers• 1 WTE Intelligence Officer• 1 WTE Adult Social Care Officer
Projected additional capacity required from end of June 2020 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 0.6 WTE PH Consultant• 0.6 PH Specialist• 0.8 WTE EHO• 0.5 WTE intelligence officer• 0.5 WTE ASC Officer <p>There is additional temporary capacity that could be unitised from the PH and wider LA but would not provide the capacity/capabilities requires to respond to complex PH outbreak situations.</p>

In the event of a major outbreak or series of outbreaks the Swindon Borough Council Gold Command would be enacted. For outbreaks that are not manageable with local system resources we would look for mutual aid support from our wider local authority workforce, Local Resilience Forum and partners in the wider BSW STP system, neighbouring authorities and PHE partners.

We do not have specialist cleaning teams and would therefore need to access and rapidly deploy this support. We also do not currently have access to HP Zone (PHE clinical record system to manage results, cases and contact tracing) and would therefore need to call on PHE to support this aspect of outbreak management and control.

Appendix 1 - Swindon Covid-19 Health Protection Board: Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

Local authorities are required through their Director of Public Health (DPH) to assure themselves that relevant organisations have appropriate plans in place to protect the population against Coronavirus (Covid-19) and to ensure that necessary action is being taken. The Local Authorities Regulations (2013) with section 6C of the NHS Act (2006) and section 12 of Health and Social Care Act (2012) define the health protection duty of local authorities. In order to meet these requirements it is necessary to have a single Health Protection Board with the responsibility for coordinating the health protection responsibilities of multiple commissioning bodies locally. The Board will take a system-wide overview of organisations and other stakeholders contributing to health protection in Swindon.

The purpose of the Covid-19 Health Protection Board is to provide assurance to Swindon Borough Council and the Health and Wellbeing Board, in regard to the adequacy of prevention, surveillance, planning and response with regard to the health protection issues relating to Covid-19 that affect Swindon residents which includes:

- a) Ensuring co-ordinated action across all sectors to protect the health of the people of Swindon from health threats, including major emergencies.
- b) Supporting the Director of Public Health (DPH) to carry out statutory responsibility to protect the health of the community through effective leadership and coordination, ensuring appropriate capacity and capability to detect, prevent and respond to threats to public health and safety.
- c) Providing strategic direction and assurance on matters relating to health protection policy, risks and incidents.
- d) Working collaboratively across the wider system with partners to exchange information and share knowledge to protecting the public's health.

2. Functions

The functions of the Covid-19 Health Protection Board are to:

- a) Produce a Local Outbreak Management Control plan which covers: schools and care homes, high risk settings, communities and places, support vulnerable people, integrate data, and drives forward local test and trace services and has the appropriate governance structures in place of which the C19HPB is part of that structure.
- b) Regularly update the Health & Wellbeing Board to provide a forum for professional discussion of Covid-19 health protection plans, risks and opportunities for joint and co-ordinated action.
- c) Ensure that effective arrangements are in place and are implemented to protect the population of Swindon from Covid-19.
- d) Ensure effective health protection surveillance information is obtained, assessed and used appropriately so that appropriate action can be taken where necessary.

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- e) Ensure that Covid-19 threats requiring local intervention are identified, analysed and prioritised for action to protect public health.
- f) Ensure that systems are in place for managing major health protection concerns and complex covid-19 situations outside of this meeting.
- g) Ensure that appropriate plans and policies exist to coordinate responses to public health activities, emergencies and threats in relation to the scope.
- h) Ensure appropriate response to Covid-19 outbreaks incidences.
- i) Agree relevant risks and performance measures that will be overseen by the Board.
- j) Ensure appropriate governance for all health protection activities and programmes.

3. Scope

The scope of the Covid-19 Health Protection Board is to minimise the threat of Covid-19 to human health, and to ensure that any threats are promptly dealt with. Geographically, the scope covers the population of Swindon and the following health protection areas:

- a) Communicable disease control of Covid-19 and any associated infections (e.g. seasonal and pandemic influenza).
- b) Infection prevention and control (IPC) related to healthcare associated infections, care homes, educational settings and other community settings.
- c) Vaccination programmes
- d) NHS Test and Trace programmes, including national screening programmes.
- e) Emergency preparedness, resilience and response.

4. Membership

The membership of the Covid-19 Health Protection Board is based on representatives of partner organisations who are able to make strategic decisions on behalf of their organisations. The membership cohort may change over time to fit emerging priorities and expertise required.

List of Core Members	
Director of Public Health (Chair)	Swindon Borough Council
Consultants in Public Health	Swindon Borough Council
Consultant in Communicable Disease	Public Health England
Screening and Immunisation Team Consultant	PHE
Commissioning Lead	NHSE
Director for Nursing & Quality	NHS BSW CCG
Emergency Planning Lead	Swindon Borough Council
Environmental Health Lead	Swindon Borough Council
Infection Prevention and Control Leads	Great Western Hospital

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Public Health Commissioner	Swindon Borough Council
Director for Adult Social Care	Swindon Borough Council
Director for Children's Services	Swindon Borough Council
Director of Housing	Swindon Borough Council
Education Representative	Swindon Borough Council
Voluntary Sector Representation	Voluntary Sector Representation
Local Pharmaceutical Committee	
Local Medical Committee	
LRF Testing Coordinator	Dorset and Wiltshire Fire Service

In the event that any of the core members are unable to attend scheduled meetings, they will be expected to nominate representatives who can take decision on their behalf.

5. Frequency of Meetings and Quorum

The Health Protection Board will initially on a weekly basis for first 4 sessions and then frequency to be reduced to monthly for 6 months then reviewed.

Quorum will be 50% of core membership.

6. Accountability

The Covid-19 Health Protection Board will report to the Swindon Health and Wellbeing Board.

7. Review of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 2 - Health and Wellbeing Board: Terms of Reference

1 Introduction

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 establishes Health and Wellbeing Boards as a forum where key leaders from the health and care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities.

The One Swindon Health and Wellbeing Board is made up of a collection of people from different organisations (including the NHS, the local authority officers and elected members, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the voluntary sector), who will work together on issues to do with being healthy and feeling well. The Board aims to find out what people in Swindon need to be healthy and feel well and work together to agree a strategy (plan) that will promote positive change towards making things happen. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy will help the Health and Wellbeing Board plan services to do with being healthy and feeling well and that make it easier for everyone to get the care they need. The Board also aims to reduce the health differences between poorer and better off groups across Swindon (health inequalities).

It is the responsibility of commissioners (who hold the budget) that their commissioning plans are supportive of the priorities identified in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the local needs of our population, and it is the responsibility of the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure that they do.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy will provide the priorities and objectives against which the success of the Health and Wellbeing Board can be measured.

The Health and Wellbeing Boards primary role is to provide strategic leadership to improve the health and wellbeing of Swindon's population (both adults and children) and to reduce the inequalities in health experienced by some communities. It aims to:

- Ensure delivery of improved outcomes for the people of Swindon bringing together national health and social care policy in conjunction with local priorities.
- Achieve democratic legitimacy and accountability, and empower local people to take part in decision-making about local health and wellbeing.
- Ensure the development of integrated working across the health and care system.

2 Purpose

The purpose of the Board is to improve the health and wellbeing of people of all ages resident in the borough of Swindon, and to reduce health inequalities in Swindon.

3 Underlying Principles

- shared leadership of a strategic approach to the health and wellbeing of our local communities
- a commitment to driving real action and change to improve services and outcomes
- parity between Board members in terms of their opportunity to contribute to the Board's deliberations, strategies and activities
- shared ownership of the Board by all the members (with commitment from their nominating organisations) and accountability to the communities it serves

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- openness and transparency in the way that the Board carries out its work
- inclusiveness in the way it engages with patients, service users and the public
- recognition of safeguarding (adults and children) as everyone's business and a cross-cutting theme ensuring that all people in Swindon are safe and their wellbeing protected
- promotion of integrated commissioning and working across health and social care

4 Key responsibilities

The key responsibilities of the Board are:

- To provide collective leadership, set strategic direction, prioritise local activity, and present comprehensible plans of what will be done locally, where possible and deemed appropriate by the Board, to address needs and improve health and wellbeing.
- To prepare the Swindon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which identifies the local health and wellbeing needs of our population ensuring:
 - effective and meaningful engagement and dialogue with local communities and service users
 - joined up intelligence from local partners and stakeholders
 - Inclusion of comprehensive safeguarding data analysis
- To prepare the Swindon Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- To promote partnership and integration of commissioning and service delivery across health, social care, public health and other service areas including but not limited to housing, leisure and transport in conjunction with the Swindon Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- To ensure that the plans of local and regional commissioners, including the NHS Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group commissioning plan, promote the delivery of the Swindon Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy wherever appropriate.
- To monitor, evaluate and annually report on the NHS Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group performance as part of the Clinical Commissioning Groups annual assessment by NHS England.
- To measure progress against local plans including NHS Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group Plan, the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and other supporting plans and request action is taken to improve outcomes when monitoring indicators show plans or initiatives are not working.
- The Board will advise the NHS Clinical Commissioning group and the Swindon Borough Council Cabinet on strategic matters of health and wellbeing.
- The Board will refer the Commissioning Plans back to the Clinical Commissioning Group or to NHS England if they do not take sufficient account of the Swindon Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Board members are accountable to each other for mobilising and co-ordinating partners and identifying available resources to deliver agreed priorities.
- To ensure the development and implementation of the National Health Services Act 2006

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Section 75 Agreements including the Better Care Fund. Manage these partnership arrangements and in particular:

- a. Make recommendations to Cabinet and the Clinical Commissioning Group Board as to commissioning of services.
- b. Monitor and ensure delivery of and evaluate health, social care, education and other related services for adults, children and young people in Swindon on behalf of Clinical Commissioning Group and Swindon Borough Council and such other relevant services as Clinical Commissioning Group and Swindon Borough Council may from time to time agree.

The work programmes of the One Swindon Health and Wellbeing Board, the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Healthwatch Swindon will be shared and loosely aligned to create pathways for influence, whilst maintaining independence and the role of scrutiny.

5 Role of the board

In order to deliver its responsibilities, the Board may decide to establish a sub- committee and delegate functions to them.

The Board will do the following:

Coordinate partnership working

- Bring together NHS, public health and social care leaders with members of the local population and democratically elected representatives.
- Promote integration of business action plans of partner organisations where appropriate.
- Co-ordinate information sharing across partners.
- Co-ordinate commissioning decisions to reflect the priorities identified by the Board including the use of joint commissioning and pooled budgets where appropriate.
- Consult with service users and carers about service developments which will affect them.
- Work with the Local Safeguarding Children and Adult Boards to ensure all partners promote the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and receive an annual report from the Safeguarding Boards.
- Monitor the performance of the National Health services Act 2006 Section 75 Agreements including:
 - a. overseeing the work of the Joint Commissioning Group by reviewing and monitoring the six monthly performance reports which will be provided to them by the Group.
 - b. carrying out an Annual Review which will describe how commissioned services have performed, and include commentary on performance of providers, financial pressures and changes in need or service delivery. It will also set out commissioning intentions for the coming year and agreements for developing joint working.
- Optimise effective and efficient working to avoid partner organisations duplicating each other's work.
- Link with the voluntary and community sector.

Identify local needs

- Lead the development of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which identifies local health and wellbeing needs and priorities.

Set strategic direction and prioritise and communicate actions

- Prioritise actions, based on the agreed strategic direction, joint commissioning strategies and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, to meet the needs of the current population and avoid

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- compromising the wellbeing of future generations.
- Communicate actions in publically available action plans.

Performance monitor

- Evaluate performance against locally agreed priorities.
- Evaluate performance against nationally set outcomes frameworks for the NHS, public health and social care.
- Scrutinise any local major service redesign of the NHS.
- Produce annual reports of progress in relation to above action plans, in order that the Board is publically accountable for delivery of these actions.

6 Membership

The membership will consist of:

Voting Members

The Leader of the Council
Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care
Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Leaders of the Opposition Groups X 2
Shadow Member for Health and Social Care or Children
Healthwatch Swindon representative
NHS Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group Accountable Officer
NHS Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group Clinical Chair (Vice-Chair) NHS
Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group Executive Nurse
NHS Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group Representative
NHS England Executive representative
Voluntary Sector representative
Police and Crime Commissioner (Wiltshire)
Lay Member

Non-Voting

Chief Executive of Swindon Borough Council
Director of Adult Social Care
Director of Children's Services
Director of Public Health
Great Western Hospital Chief Executive
Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Swindon Locality Managing Director
Wiltshire Police Chief Constable
Business West
Dorset and Wiltshire Fire Service
Probation – Community Rehabilitation Company
Department of Work and Pensions

Such Lay Members as the Board may appoint (co-opted and voting)

Elected Members and officers of Swindon Borough Council are governed by Swindon Borough Councils Code of Conduct.

All members or co-opted members must notify the Council's Monitoring Officer of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and are prohibited from participating in discussion or voting on any matter relating to their interest.

7 Procedures

Meetings of the Board will be chaired by the Leader of the Council (or by the Vice- Chair in their absence) or by a lay member.

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A quorum shall be four members (at least one from NHS Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group and one from Swindon Borough Council). Each member is required to attend at least four of the five scheduled Health and Wellbeing Board meetings per year. Members of the Board will nominate a deputy who will attend in their absence and have delegated authority, wherever possible and appropriate, to make decisions. Nominated deputies will form part of the quorum.

The Board will operate in accordance with the Council's existing decision-making framework and normal council budget setting processes. A decision to exercise any further local authority functions by the Health and Wellbeing Board would therefore need to be taken by the appropriate decision-making body (e.g. Cabinet or Council), and a further report would be required for this.

8 Review Arrangements

The Swindon Health and Wellbeing Board Chair will lead an annual effectiveness review.

DRAFT

Numbers to Serve on Committees

Council

Date 9th July 2020

Author: Chief Legal Officer

Wards: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To determine the number of Members to serve on Swindon Borough Council Committees for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21.

2. Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the number of Members to serve on Swindon Borough Council Committees for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

3. Detail

- 3.1 It is a function of Swindon Council's Constitution that the Council determine the number of members to serve on Committees.
- 3.2 At the meeting of Annual Council it was resolved "That, subject to a full review in July 2020, the appointment of Councillors to serve on the Council's Committees, other Council Bodies and Outside Bodies for the Municipal Year 2020/21, as listed in Appendices 1 to 3 to the report and tabled at the meeting, be approved." (Minute 8(4) refers, 22nd May 2020).
- 3.3 Details of the Committees to be appointed by the Council and proposed size of Membership are set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 The Council is asked to determine the number of members to serve on Committees for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 No alternative options are propose.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial or procurement implications all cost will be met from existing budgets.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Shaun Banks, (07980752047), sbanks@swindon.gov.uk.

Numbers to Serve on Committees

Council

Date 9th July 2020

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and Human Rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. The Council is required to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 and associated Regulations and Statutory Instruments.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 There are no specific implications that relate to staff, sustainability, health, rural, crime and disorder within this report.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 A diversity impact assessment has not been completed as this report refers specifically to the appointment to the number of members to serve on Council Committees.

Risk Management

- 5.5 A risk assessment has not been completed as this report refers specifically to the appointment to the number of members to serve on Council Committees.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 Swindon Council Constitution

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 - List of Proposed Numbers of Members to serve on Committees

Numbers to Serve on Swindon Borough Council Committees

Committee	Number of Members
Appeals	25
Appointments	21
Audit	7
Licensing	15
Planning	15
Special	9
Scrutiny	13
Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny	9
Adults' Health, Adults' Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny	9
Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny	9
Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny	9
Resources and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny	9
Health and Wellbeing Board	6 (1 seat is determined by Statute. 5 additional Councillor seats have been allocated.
Standards	9 (+2 Independent Persons, 2 co-opted Lay Members and 2 Co-opted Parish Councillor Members, all without voting rights)

The Health and Well-Being Board is not subject to the 1989 Act requirements to allocate seats to political parties on political balance.

In addition to the nine Members of the Council, the Standards Committee also comprises two Independent Persons under the Localism Act 2011, two co-opted Lay Members and two co-opted Parish Councillor Members, all without voting rights. The terms of office of the Lay Members and Independent Persons have not yet expired. Parish Council members are appointed annually by the Council on the nomination of the parish councils within the Borough.

Membership of the Appointments Committee shall be drawn from Political Group Leaders, Cabinet Members and Shadow Group Spokespersons.

The Special Committee usually comprises of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition Group on the Council (Largest Minority Group) and the Leader of the second largest Minority Group on the Council. Deputies to the Special Committee are drawn from the remaining Members of the Cabinet and Shadow Cabinets of the Political Groups on the Council.

Members appointed to serve on any Overview and Scrutiny Committee can serve as a deputy for their political group on, and / or can be appointed, to any sub-committee or task group established by any other Overview and Scrutiny body

In addition to the Members of the Council, Overview and Scrutiny Committees dealing with education matters will include up to two Diocesan Board Representatives and two Parent Governor representatives. These additional Members will be entitled to speak and vote only in relation to matters concerning education.

Membership of Overview and Scrutiny Committees may also include non-voting representatives from appropriate partner organisations, to be determined by the Committees.

Allocations of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees, Other Council Bodies and Outside Bodies

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

Author: Chief Legal Officer

Wards: All Wards

Parishes Affected: All Parish Areas

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 Under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the Council must review the representation of the different political groups on Committees and other relevant Council bodies at the Annual Council meeting or as soon as practicable after that meeting. The Statutory provisions have been added to by the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, as amended by the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) (Amendment) Regulations 1991.
- 1.2 To establish the allocation of seats to political groups based on proportionality and to agree arrangements for making the necessary adjustments to proportionality based on appointments to individual Committees in order that it can be applied across Council bodies as a whole for the Municipal Year 2020/21.
- 1.3 To make appointments to Committees, other Council bodies and Outside Bodies for the Municipal Year 2020/21.
- 1.4 To note the appointments to Member Project Boards and Cabinet Member Advisory Groups (not decision making).
- 1.5 The Delivery of effective, accountable, and transparent decision making by the Council directly links to the delivery of the current Corporate Strategy and to its related Change Programme.

2. Recommendations

The Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 Determine that, having carried out a review under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council shall continue to apply the political balance provisions under the Act.
- 2.2 Remind Committees, and other relevant Council bodies, where appropriate, of their duty to carry out a review and recommend that having carried out that review they continue to apply the political balance provisions.
- 2.3 Confirm the waiving of Political Balance arrangements on the Standards Committee and the Special Committee.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Shaun Banks, (07980752047), sbanks@swindon.gov.uk.

Allocations of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees, Other Council Bodies and Outside Bodies

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

- 2.4 Appoint Councillors to serve on the Council's Committees, other Council bodies and outside bodies for the Municipal Year 2019/20 as listed in Appendices 1 to 3 to the report.
- 2.5 To approve the proposals set out in paragraph 3.9 of the report.
- 2.6 To note appointments to Member Project Boards and Cabinet Member Advisory Groups (not decision making) as listed in Appendix 4 of the report.
- 2.7 Appoint Chairs and Vice-Chairs for the Council's Committees and other Council bodies for the Municipal Year, 2020/21 as listed in Appendix 5.

3. Detail

- 3.1 It is a function of the Council under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act to review the allocation of seats to political groups based on proportionality and to agree arrangements for making the necessary adjustments to proportionality based on appointments to individual committees. The requirement is for representation to be proportional on each committee and across relevant committees as a whole.
- 3.2 The political balance on the Council is currently: Conservatives 30, Labour 22, Liberal Democrats 2, Independent Councillors 2 and 1 vacancy.
- 3.3 The allocation of seats would normally be considered at Annual Council. However, due the work being undertaken in response to the COVID 19 pandemic, the Council resolved: "That, subject to a full review in July 2020, the appointment of Councillors to serve on the Council's Committees, other Council Bodies and Outside Bodies for the Municipal Year 2020/21, as listed in Appendices 1 to 3 to the report and tabled at the meeting, be approved." (Minute 8(4) refers, 22nd May 2020.)
- 3.4 It is open to the Council or a Committee or other relevant Council body when carrying out a review to adopt some arrangement other than that prescribed by the Act and the Regulations. Notice of such a proposal would have to be given in the Council Summons, and a decision would have to be without any Member voting against the arrangements.
- 3.5 It is recommended that the Council, having carried out a review under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, should continue to apply the political balance provisions under the Act. In turn the Committees and other relevant Council bodies must carry out a review and the Council is asked to recommend that, having carried out a review, Committees continue to apply the political balance provisions in making appointments to Sub-Committees and other relevant task groups and working parties.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Shaun Banks, (07980752047), sbanks@swindon.gov.uk.

Allocations of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees, Other Council Bodies and Outside Bodies

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

- 3.6 The remainder of this report assumes that the Council will not want an alternative arrangement to the political balance provisions set out in the Act and Regulations, with the exception of Special Committee and the Standards Committee.
- 3.7 The Act sets out four principles that must be followed. They are:
- 3.7.1 Not all the seats on the Committee may be allocated to the same political group;
 - 3.7.2 The majority of the seats on the Committee must be allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
 - 3.7.3 Subject to paragraphs (3.7.1) and (3.7.2) above, the number of seats on the ordinary committees (relevant bodies) of the Borough Council, which are allocated to each political group, must bear the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of the Borough Council as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Borough Council; and
 - 3.7.4 Subject to paragraphs (3.7.1) to (3.7.4) above, the number of the seats on the committee which are allocated to each political group should bear the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that committee as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Borough Council.
- 3.8 The procedure adopted by the Council in appointing committees will apply equally to committees appointing sub-committees.

Appointments to Committees and other relevant Bodies –

- 3.9 Council is recommended to make appointments to the Committees (Appendix 1), and other Council bodies (Appendix 2), Outside Bodies for the Municipal Year 2019/20 (Appendix 3) and note the appointments made to Member Project Groups and Cabinet Advisory Bodies by the relevant Cabinet Member (Appendix 4).
- 3.10 So far as the Standards Committee is concerned, it be noted that the Council has appointed Trevor Davies and David Dawson (Co-opted Lay Members for a term ending in 2021) and Independent Persons Paul Morris and Keith Strickland have been nominated for a 4 year term (term ending 2022) following an public advertisement and interview process. The Parish Councils within the Borough will nominate 2 Co-opted Parish Councillor Members (currently Richard Hailstone and Mike Compton).

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Shaun Banks, (07980752047), sbanks@swindon.gov.uk.

Allocations of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees, Other Council Bodies and Outside Bodies

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

- 3.11 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee structure currently in place are reflected in this report.

Appointments of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees –

- 3.12 The Council is recommended to appoint the Chairs and Vice-Chairs for the Committees set out in Appendix 5.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 No alternative options are proposed.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial or procurement implications.
- 5.2 Certain Committee Chairs receive Special Responsibility Allowances. These Allowances are for the Chair of Scrutiny Committee £13,085 (if Leader of the Opposition), Chair of Scrutiny (if not Leader of the Opposition) £6,542, Leader of the Opposition (if not Chair of Scrutiny) £6,542, Chairs of Overview Committees £6,542, Chair of Planning Committee £6,542, Chair of Licensing Committee £6,542, Chair of Standards Committee £6,542 and Chair of Audit Committee £6,542, Leader of the Minority Group £2,181. The Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board receives an allowance of £6,542. The “Basic” Allowance for all Councillors in 2020/21 is £8,723. Co-opted Members of the Standards Committee receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of £1,308, Independent Persons receive an allowance of £1,308, and co-opted Health and Wellbeing Board Members Allowance is £1,308. The Chair of the Joint Swindon and Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel, if a Swindon Councillor, receives an allowance of £6,542 and the Vice-Chair of this Panel, if a Swindon Councillor, receives an allowance of £2,181.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.3 Legal and Human Rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. The Council is required to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 and associated Regulations and Statutory Instruments.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.4 There are no specific implications that relate to staff, sustainability, health, rural, crime and disorder within this report.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Shaun Banks, (07980752047), sbanks@swindon.gov.uk.

Allocations of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees, Other Council Bodies and Outside Bodies

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report. This is because it relates to the allocation of seats to political groups and appointments to committees, with no changes to staffing, budget or service eligibility criteria.

Risk Management

- 5.6 A risk assessment has not been completed as this report refers specifically to the appointment to committees and the allocation of seats to political group.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Corporate Director Finance and Assets (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 - List of Committees
- 8.2 Appendix 2 - List of Other Council Bodies
- 8.3 Appendix 3 - List of Outside Bodies
- 8.4 Appendix 4 - List of Cabinet Members and Member Project Boards and Cabinet Member Advisory Groups
- 8.5 Appendix 5 - Appointments of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committee 2019/20.

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Committees

Committee	Number of Members	Political Balance Ratio*
Appeals	25	13:11:0:1
Appointments	21	11:8:1:1
Audit	7	4:3:0:0
Licensing	15	8:6:1:0
Planning	15	8:6:1:0
Special	9	N/A 5:3:1:0
Health and Well Being Board	6 (1 seat is determined by Statute. 5 additional Councillor seats have been allocated.	N/A
Standards	9 (+2 Independent Persons, 2 co-opted Lay Members and 2 Co-opted Parish Councillor Members, all without voting rights)	N/A (5:3:1:0)
Scrutiny	13	7:5:1:0
Adult's Health, Adults Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	9	5:3:0:0 (1 vacancy)
Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee	9	5:3:0:1
Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee	9	5:3:0:0 (1 vacancy)
Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee	9	5:3:0:1
Resources and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	9	5:3:0:1

* The order is: Majority Group; Opposition Group; Minority Group; ungrouped

Other Council Bodies 2020/2021

BOROUGH PARISH CONSULTATION MEETING (Cabinet Member)

DORSET AND WILTSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY (3 Members)

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD (3 MEMBERS)

JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING PARTY (7 members)

LOCAL SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD (preferably Cabinet Members with portfolio responsibility for Adult Social Care and Community Safety)

LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD (preferably the Cabinet Member for Children's Services)

WILTCHELSTOWE JOINT VENTURE BOARD (current Membership - The Chief Executive, the Corporate Director, Resources and Growth, and the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (S151 Officer))

WILTSHIRE & SWINDON POLICE AND CRIME PANEL (4 members)

Education Related Bodies:

LEARNING DISABILITY PARTNERSHIP BOARD (1 Member)

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
(5 members)**

SWINDON ADMISSIONS FORUM (2 members + deputies)

Staff Related Bodies:

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member with Portfolio Responsibility, Opposition Group Leader, Opposition Group Spokesperson, Minority Group Spokesperson)

JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE (4 Members)

Appointments to Outside Bodies 2020/2021

Archaeological Advisory Body Of the Swindon Development Trust (6 Members)
Arts Council England – South West (1 Member)
Association of Public Service Excellence (1 Member & 1 Deputy)
Braeside Management Committee (1 Member)⁷
Common Farm Solar CIC Directors (2 Members + 1 Officer)
Cotswold Country Park (1 Member)
Crickalde Country Way Partnership (1 Member)
England's Economic Heartland Strategic Transport Forum (1 Member) (Leader of the Council)
Forward Swindon Commissioning Board (5 Members)
Great Western Enterprise (2 Members)
Health and Wellbeing Board) (4 including Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Health)
Highworth Recreation Centre Management Committee (1 Member + 1 Deputy)
Joint Archive Board (1 Member + 1 Deputy)
Joint LEP Scrutiny Panel (3 Members)
Joint Committee of the National Parking Adjudication Service (1 Member [Cabinet Member for service area] + 1 Deputy [shadow lead member from the largest minority group])
Local Government Association (4 Members)
Local Government Information Unit (1 Member and 1 Deputy)
Lydiard Park Forum (1 Member – Cabinet Member with Portfolio Responsibility)
North Wessex Downs Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Board (1 Member + 1 Deputy)
Patrol (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee and Bus Lane Adjudication Service Joint Committee (1 Member- Cabinet Member with Portfolio Responsibility preferred)
Plas Pencelli Management Committee (5 members)
Public Power Solutions (PPS Board) (3 Members – Cabinet Member + 2 Members)
Rights of Way Local Access Forum (1 Member)
South West Councils (1 Member) (Leader of the Council)
South West Councils Employers Panel (1 Member + 1 Deputy) (Note: Cabinet Member with HR Portfolio Responsibility)
South West Councils Resources Committee (1 Member + 1 Deputy) (Note: Cabinet Member with HR Portfolio Responsibility)
South West Regional Executive Board for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (1 Member and the Chief Executive, or a nominated representative)
South Western Ambulance Service Foundation (formerly Great Western Joint Ambulance) (2 Members and Deputies)
Swindon Adoption Panel (2 Members - no Deputies)
Swindon Ocotal Link (5 Members including 1 from each minority group)
Swindon Portage (1 member)
Swindon Town Deal Board (3 seats)
Town Twinning Network (6 Members)

Viridor Credits Environmental Company Steering Group (1 Member – by invitation only)
Wessex Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (1 Member)
Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership (1 Member)
Wiltshire Community Land Trust (Cabinet Member with Portfolio Responsibility preferred)
Wiltshire Historic Buildings Trust (1 Member)
Wiltshire Pension Fund Committee (2 Members)

Cabinet Appointments:

Cabinet Members and Portfolios are to be determined by the Leader of the Council and will be tabled at the meeting.

To note the appointment to Member Project Boards and Cabinet Member Advisory Groups by the relevant Cabinet Member

ADVISORY GROUPS AND PROJECT BOARDS

1) Cabinet Member Advisory Groups (Article 7.07)

LEADER'S ADVISORY GROUP (all Cabinet Members and other Members as the Leader of the Council may so determine)

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE REVIEW WORKING GROUP (6 members - Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of Council, Cabinet Member with Portfolio Responsibility, Leader of the Opposition, Leader of the Second Minority Group, The Mayor + deputies)

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS WORKING PARTY (7 members)

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN AND LOCAL TRANSPORT BOARD ADVISORY GROUP (6 members)

LYDIARD PARK ADVISORY FORUM (7 members)

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP (5 members)

WELFARE ADVISORY GROUP (including benefits monitoring) (4 Members – Cabinet Member for Finance & shadow spokespersons)

Other CMAGs to be appointed as necessary and notice given to the Director of Law and Democratic Services

2) Advisory and Project Boards

HERITAGE BOARD (2 Members)

ART GALLERY PROJECT BOARD (3 Members)

MAJOR PROJECTS BOARD (4 Members)

NORTH STAR ADVISORY BOARD (5 Members – 3 Majority Group and 2 Opposition Group)

STEETSCENE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT PROJECT BOARD (1 Member - Usually Cabinet Member)

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (1 Member -Usually Cabinet Member)

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY BOARD (5 Members)

EQUALITIES ADVISORY FORUM (4 members – including 1 Cabinet Member)

HOUSING ADVISORY FORUM (8 Members)

TENANT FARMERS FORUM (3 Members)

LEADER’S ASSET MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

ADULT AND CHILDEN CMAG INCLUDING PUBLIC HEALTH

COMBINED AUTHORITIES CMAG

LOCALITY CHAIRS CMAG

EASTERN VILLAGES

DIGITAL SERVICES

CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ASSETS

CMAG TO REVIEW INVESTMENT IN RENEWABLE INITIATIVES

UNDAUNTED/UNDESIGNATED LANDS CMAG

SWINDON ECONOMY AND REGENERATION CMAG

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW CMAG

Appointments of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees 2020/2021

Appeals
Appointments
Audit
Licensing
Planning
Special
Standards
Scrutiny
Adult's Health, Adult's Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Resources and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Use of Special Urgency and Covid-19 decision-making powers

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

Author: Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer)

Wards: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This report informs the Council about any uses of special or urgency decision-making powers in the Constitution in the Municipal Year 2019/20. The report also seeks to inform Council about the use of the additional powers for the Covid-19 emergency period.
- 1.2 The Council's Constitution requires that Officers bring a report to Council as soon as possible after the exercise of any delegated authority under Article 14.06.02 of the Constitution. It also requires an annual report on the exercise of any special urgency requests or exemptions from Scrutiny (Paragraph 16(i). Rules of Procedure and Terms of Reference Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Part 4 of the Constitution).

2. Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the use of special or urgency powers on 16th October 2019 (Investment Opportunity Stratton St Margaret) and 7th May 2020 (Kimmerfields) and to note that the first was reported to Council on 7th November 2019 (Minute 49 2019/20 refers) while the second is elsewhere on the agenda for the meeting on 9th July 2020.
- 2.2 Note that the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) has not made any recommendations that Members change the urgency process at this time.
- 2.3 Note the Chief Executive's use of Delegated Authority under Article 14.06.02 of the Constitution, in consultation with both the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, regarding the issue of Local Authority Discretionary Grants as part of the response to Covid-19.

3. Detail

Background

- 3.1 Legislation, as reflected in the Council's Constitution, requires that the Cabinet publish 28 clear days' notice of any key or strategic decision. It also requires that any such decision should be liable to call-in to Scrutiny prior to implementation. To permit for circumstances where an urgent decision is required, the following checks and balances exist.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Douglas Campbell, 07779 413886 or docampbell@swindon.gov.uk

Use of Special Urgency and Covid-19 decision-making powers

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

- 3.1.1 Under paragraph 16 The Access to in Information Rules (Part 4 of the Constitution) any request to treat an item under the Special Urgency rule in that it is a key or strategic decision that is not on the forward plan may only proceed to determination with the consent of the Chair of Scrutiny.
- 3.1.2 Under paragraph 16(h) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure rules, the Mayor must consent that a decision is so urgent that the call-in process shall not apply. That paragraph also requires that any such decision and the reason for its urgency be reported to the next meeting of council.
- 3.2 Furthermore, paragraph 16(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure rules requires an annual report of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency along with any recommendations.
- 3.3 The Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) has reviewed the uses of the special urgency provision and is confident that the process is used rarely and only when there are appropriate, exceptional circumstances. Both His Worship the Mayor and the Chair of Scrutiny have acted appropriately as independent checks on the use of this executive authority. Therefore, Council is invited to note that there are no proposals to amend these processes at this time.
- 3.4 In the Municipal Year 2019/20, the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) determined that the following decisions were urgent, which Council is invited to note:

Issue	Exemption requested	Reported to:
Investment Opportunity - Industrial Premises, Stratton St Margaret	Special urgency – not on the forward plan and item to be exempt from publication for reasons commercially sensitive information.	Cabinet decision 16 th October 2019, Scrutiny review 21 st October 2019, Council 7 th November 2019 (Minute 49)
Kimmerfields Office purchase	Special urgency – not on the forward plan and item to be exempt from publication for reasons commercially sensitive information.	Cabinet Decision 7 th May 2020, Scrutiny 12 th May 2020. On the agenda for Council, 9 th July 2020

- 3.5 Given the number of decisions made by Cabinet or by Cabinet Members through delegated powers, the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) is confident that the processes are working adequately to provide a check and balance on

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Douglas Campbell, 07779 413886 or docampbell@swindon.gov.uk

Use of Special Urgency and Covid-19 decision-making powers

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

executive decision-making. Therefore, Council is invited to note that no proposals for change are being proposed at this time.

- 3.6 On 7th May 2020, Special Committee approved the insertion of Article 14.06.02 into the Constitution to permit a key decision to be taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the relevant Cabinet Member. However, any such exercise of this authority must be reported to the next meeting of Council and Members are invited to note the following instance of the use of this authority.

Issue	Exemption requested	Decision taken/Reported to Council
Covid-19 Response – Urgent Decision Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund	To be taken as an urgent item – approved by the Chair of Scrutiny To be exempt from call-in – approved by His Worship the Mayor	Signed: 2 nd June 2020 On the agenda for Council, 9th July 2020

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 No alternative options are proposed at this time. It is for Council to approve any changes to its Constitution.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications for this report as it covers the manner in which decisions were taken. Each Cabinet report or Cabinet Member Decision Note addressed the necessary financial and procurement implications.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and human rights considerations were taken into account in drafting this report. It is considered that the recommendations are compatible with Convention Rights.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 None

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Douglas Campbell, 07779 413886 or docampbell@swindon.gov.uk

Use of Special Urgency and Covid-19 decision-making powers

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 No Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) was undertaken as this report addresses the manner in which decisions were taken. The individual Cabinet reports or Cabinet Member Decision Notes addressed diversity issues.

Risk Management

- 5.5 None

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

8. Appendices

- 8.1 None

Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

Author:	Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport and Planning
Wards:	Penhill & Upper Stratton, St Margaret and South Marston, Covingam & Dorcan, Gorse Hill & Pinehurst
Parishes Affected:	Stratton St Margaret

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This Report invites Council to approve the Decision Statement relating to the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan following the issuing of the independent Examiner's Report. It also seeks Council's approval to proceed with a referendum on the adoption of the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 1.2 Schedule 4B (12) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and paragraph 18 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, require that a local authority must consider each of the recommendations made in the Examiner's Report and decide what action to take in response to each recommendation. If the authority is satisfied that, subject to modifications being made, the draft Neighbourhood Plan meets the legal requirements and basic conditions as set out in legislation, then the plan can proceed to referendum.
- 1.3 The production of Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan accords with policies in the Swindon Borough Local Plan. It links to the Council's Vision and Priorities 1.

2. Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 To approve the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan Decision Statement as set out in the **Appendix 1** to this Report.
- 2.2 Authorise the Director of Strategic Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services that subject to the Neighbourhood Plan being modified in accordance with Examiners Report, to take all appropriate actions to progress the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan to referendum in accordance with regulations set out in The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012.
- 2.3 Authorise the Counting Officer to undertake the referendum on 6 May 2021; or sooner should revised regulations allow.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Phil Smith, Direct Dial 01793 46 6443, psmith@swindon.gov.uk.

Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

3. Detail

Background

- 3.1 On 20 June 2013, Stratton St Margaret Parish Council requested that the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Area be designated for the purposes of producing a neighbourhood development plan for the area. Following a six week consultation Swindon Borough Council designated the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Area on 25 November 2013. The Stratton St Margaret area applied for designation a further two times following the initial application gaining approval for the proposed areas on 4 August 2015 and 17 May 2018. The most recent approval of May 2018 reflects the current parish boundary of Stratton St Margaret.
- 3.2 Stratton St Margaret Parish Council undertook a pre-submission consultation on the draft Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan from 18 February 2019 to 11 April 2019 in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Stratton St Margaret Parish Council considered the comments received during the consultation and made changes to the Plan.
- 3.3 Stratton St Margaret Parish Council submitted the draft Neighbourhood Plan (**Appendix 2**) to Swindon Borough Council in October 2019 for assessment by an independent examiner. The Plan and associated documents were publicised for consultation by Swindon Borough Council for six weeks between 13 November 2019 and 3 January 2020, in line with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 3.4 Barbara Maksymiw MRTPI was appointed as the Independent Examiner and all comments received through the Regulation 16 consultation were passed on for her consideration.

The Examiner's Report

- 3.5 The Examiner issued her Report into the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan on the 15 May 2020 (**Appendix 3**).
- 3.6 In total, the Examiner made 12 recommendations to the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan. She concluded that, subject to the modifications being made, the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan will meet the necessary basic conditions (as set out in Schedule 4b (8) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), and should proceed to referendum. For reference, the Basic Conditions are attached at **Appendix 4** to this report. She also recommends that the referendum should be confined to the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 3.7 Officers having reviewed the Examiner's Report, agree with all the recommendations and the reasons for them.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Phil Smith, Direct Dial 01793 46 6443, psmith@swindon.gov.uk.

Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

The Decision Statement

- 3.8 In order to comply with the regulations as stated in paragraph 1.2 of this Report the Borough Council must produce a decision statement in which it should consider each of the Examiner's recommendations and whether the Plan should proceed to referendum.
- 3.9 A copy of the proposed Decision Statement is attached at **Appendix 1** to this Report.
- 3.10 In summary, it is recommended that all of the Examiner's recommendations are accepted, that the Plan is modified in accordance with them and the Plan proceeds to referendum in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Weight attached to the Neighbourhood Plan at this stage

- 3.11 In light of the Covid-19 restrictions the government has amended planning guidance as follows until further notice:
- 3.11.1 Where the local planning authority has issued a decision statement (as set out under Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012) detailing its intention to send a neighbourhood plan to referendum, that plan can be given significant weight in decision-making, so far as the plan is material to the application.

Next Steps

- 3.12 Should the Council approve the Decision Statement, Swindon Borough Council will publish on its website, and in such other manner as it considers appropriate to bring the decision statement and the report to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area:
- 3.12.1 the decision and their reasons for it ("the Decision Statement");
- 3.12.2 details of where and when the decision statement may be inspected; and,
- 3.12.3 a copy of the Independent Examiner's report.
- 3.13 Should the Council agree with the recommendations, and that the Plan can proceed to referendum, officers will need to accordingly modify the Plan in cooperation with the Parish Council and produce a final version for the referendum.
- 3.14 To meet the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, a referendum which poses the question "Do you want Swindon Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Stratton St Margaret to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?" will be held in the Parish of Stratton St Margaret.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Phil Smith, Direct Dial 01793 46 6443, psmith@swindon.gov.uk.

Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

- 3.15 The government has been clear that all members of society are required to adhere to guidance to help combat the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Currently, all neighbourhood planning referendums that have been recently cancelled, or are scheduled to take place, between 16 March 2020 and 5 May 2021 are postponed in line with the Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner (Coronavirus) (Postponement of Elections and Referendums) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, until 6 May 2021.
- 3.16 Should the Coronavirus regulations be revised, the referendum would be held as soon as practically possible in accordance with any such revised regulations.
- 3.17 If the Plan passes the referendum by receiving greater than 50% of votes cast, the Council is required to make (adopt) it unless it breaches EU or Human Rights legislation. The Neighbourhood Plan would then become part of the Development Plan, and as such taken into account in planning decision-making within the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan Area.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council could choose to make a decision that differs from the examiner's recommendation. If the Council were to propose a decision that differs from the examiner's recommendation, the Council is required to:
- 4.1.1 notify all those identified on the consultation statement of the parish council and invite representations, during a period of six weeks, and
 - 4.1.2 refer the issue to a further independent examination if appropriate.
- 4.2 The Council can decide that it is not satisfied with the plan proposal with respect to meeting basic conditions, compatibility with Convention rights, definition and provisions of the Neighbourhood Plan, even if modified. Without robust grounds, which are not considered to be present in this case, refusing to take the plan to a referendum could leave the Council vulnerable to a legal challenge.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The cost of the referendum falls on the Borough Council, but this will be funded through grant payments from central government for Neighbourhood Planning. Should the Plan be approved at referendum, and subsequently made (adopted) by Swindon Borough Council. If adopted the Parish Council will receive an increase to 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts arising from development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and Human Rights implications have been taken into account in preparing this report. It is considered that the recommendations are consistent with Convention Rights. The context of this Report is guided by the relevant provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and relevant secondary legislation.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 The Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan has to be in accordance with the strategic policies of the Swindon Borough Local Plan and therefore is subject to the same assessment in terms of sustainability. In addition a separate Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion was undertaken on the Plan by SBC Planning Policy in April 2019, which concluded that the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan was unlikely to have significant effects on the environment and that a SEA was therefore not required.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 The Swindon Borough Local Plan was subject to detailed Diversity Impact Assessment and the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan has to be in general conformity with the Local Plan for it to meet the basic conditions.

Risk Management

- 5.5 Electoral services is aware of the need to proceed with the referendum in accordance with the extant regulations governing its timing.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (s151 officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1: The Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan Decision Statement made by Swindon Borough Council (draft)
- 8.2 Appendix 2: Draft Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan: Submission Version
- 8.3 Appendix 3: Independent Examiner's Report on the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan – May 2020.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Phil Smith, Direct Dial 01793 46 6443, psmith@swindon.gov.uk.

Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

8.4 Appendix 4: The Basic Condition Requirements for Neighbourhood Plans.

Appendix 1: Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statement

Introduction

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), Swindon Borough Council has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of neighbourhood development plans and orders. The Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended) outline the Local Planning Authority's responsibilities under Neighbourhood Planning and the legal process to be followed.

The Independent Examiners Report has been received for the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan which recommends that the plan proceed to referendum subject to modifications. The Council is now required to make a decision on the plan proposals and the recommendations in the Examiner's Report; and publish in a Decision Statement their decision and reasons for it.

The Council's response to the Examiner's recommendations are listed in Table 1 below.

Background

The Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan relates to the area that was designated by Swindon Borough Council as a neighbourhood area on 17th May 2018. This area is coterminous with the Stratton St Margaret Parish Council boundary.

Following submission of the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan to Swindon Borough Council the plan was publicised and representations were invited. Consultation on the plan was undertaken by the Council from 13th November 2019 to 3rd January 2020.

The Council, with the agreement of Stratton St Margaret Parish Council, appointed Barbara Maksymiw MRTPI as Independent Examiner to review whether the plan met the "Basic Conditions" (as set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) and whether it should proceed to referendum.

The Examiner's report concludes that, subject to making the modifications recommended by the Examiner, the neighbourhood plan meets the Basic Conditions set out in the legislation and should proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning referendum.

The Council is now bound by Paragraph 12(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to consider each of the recommendations made by the Examiner in their report (and the reasons for them); and decide what action to take in response to each recommendation.

Decision and Reasons

Having considered each of the recommendations made in the examiner's report, and the reasons for them, Swindon Borough Council accepts all the Examiner's recommendations in order to ensure that the draft plan meets the basic conditions as set out in Schedule 4B of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). Table 1 below lists all of the recommendations in the Examiner's Report and the Council's response to them.

Next Steps

Swindon Borough Council is satisfied that once the recommended modifications are made to the Neighbourhood Plan it would then meet the Basic Conditions and therefore a referendum must be held on the making of the Neighbourhood Plan.

As soon as possible after making a decision on the plan proposals and the Examiner's recommendations, the Council must (in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012) publish on their website and in such other manner as they consider is likely to bring the decision statement and the report to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area:

- the decision and their reasons for it ("the Decision Statement");
- details of where and when the Decision Statement may be inspected; and

If the plan obtains over 50% of the votes cast at referendum the Council can then 'make' the plan and bring it into legal force. The Neighbourhood Plan would become part of the Development Plan and would be taken into account in planning decision-making within the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan Area (defined as the existing Stratton St Margaret Parish area).

Table 1:

No	Part/Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
1.	Basic Conditions Statement	<p>In response to my query, the Parish Council, has provided some additional text to add to the Basic Conditions Statement to explain how the NP contributes to achieving sustainable development.</p> <p><i>Add the following text to the Basic Conditions Statement as a new section between the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) section (para 16) and the Conformity with the Development Plan section (para 17):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• The Stratton St Margaret NDP delivers sustainable development in all its policies:</i> <i>• Policy SSM2 seeks to encourage developers of large employment sites within the Parish to engage with the Stratton St Margaret community to ensure that development brings benefits to parishioners in the form of appropriate employment opportunities and the design of major schemes. This policy is read in conjunction with other policies in the NDP. It meets all three sustainability objectives.</i> <i>• Policy SSM3 seeks to introduce a locally-defined mix of new housing thus meeting the social objective of ensuring that a range of homes can meet the needs of present and future generations.</i> <i>• Policy SSM4 seeks to protect key community infrastructure to meet the needs of present and future generations, part of the social objective.</i> <i>• Policy SSM5 seeks to encourage greater walking and cycling in the Parish which meets the economic objective in that it identifies necessary infrastructure, but also encourages non-motorised transport which has a positive effect on how we manage climate change in a low carbon economy. It also meets a social objective in that it seeks to provide accessible services.</i> 	Accept modification for reasons to meet the Basic Conditions

No	Part/Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Policy SSM6 seeks to direct local services to neighbourhood clusters so that people can walk or cycle to them, rather than drive to more distant service centres. Like SSM5, this contributes to management of climate change in a low carbon economy.</i> • <i>Policy SSM7 identifies locally important buildings and assets which meets the social objective by fostering a well-designed environment and protects the Parish's cultural well-being. It meets the environmental objective in that it seeks to protect the built and historic environment.</i> • <i>Policy SSM8 contributes to protecting and enhancing the natural environment and seeks to allow provision for allotments which meet the environmental objective of using natural resources prudently.</i> 	
2.		<p><i>Add a new Table 3 to the Basic Conditions Statement which sets out how the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan fit with those in the merging Local Plan, along with a short explanatory paragraph. This should be based on the information supplied to me by Swindon Borough Council on 4 March 2020.</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity and correction
3.		<p>A much clearer statement should be made about the scope and timescale of the Swindon Borough Local Plan Review and the limited time frame of the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan should be also recognised more explicitly in the NP</p> <p><i>Add a new paragraph 31 and 32 to read : "31. Swindon Borough Council has prepared an updated Local Plan which it proposes to submit to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Local Plan relates to the whole Borough and provides a strategy for delivering growth for Swindon Borough up to 2036. The document provides the vision, objectives, strategic policies, development management policies and site-specific allocations for delivering new homes, jobs, services, facilities and infrastructure. The</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity and correction

No	Part/Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<p><i>consultation period on the Submission Draft of the Local Plan ran from 17 December 2019 until 31 January 2020.</i></p> <p><i>32. The emerging Local Plan could well have implications for the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan area in the longer term and these will need to be assessed through an early review of the Neighbourhood Plan. In the meantime, it is therefore appropriate that the timeframe for the current NP remains short – ie up to 2026, in line with the policies in the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan.”</i></p> <p><i>Renumber existing paragraphs 31 and 32 and paragraphs 33 and 34 respectively. Renumber all subsequent paragraphs accordingly.</i></p>	
4.	Figure 7	<p><i>Add names of Key Employment Areas within the neighbourhood plan area to Figure 7. Add Swindon Urban Area Boundary to figures 7, 8 and 9</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity and correction
5.	SSM1	<p>As drafted it is not a land use planning policy, it is a policy about the process of consultation which the Steering Group would like to see followed when proposals are being drawn up for the Strategic Development areas. It is therefore not appropriate for a Neighbourhood Plan and should be deleted.</p> <p><i>Delete Policy SMM1 and renumber subsequent policies accordingly.</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons to meet the Basic Conditions
6.	SSM2	<p>In response to my query, both Swindon Borough Council and the Parish Council has confirmed that the correct figure is between 50 and 100 dwellings and that paragraph 47 should be deleted. The Borough Council also confirmed that 341 dwellings had been built in the NP area between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2019 and that there were live planning permissions for 231 dwellings at 31 March</p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity and correction

No	Part/Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<p>2019. This means that the housing requirement set out in the strategic policies in the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 can be met. A statement to this effect should be added to the NP.</p> <p><i>Delete Paragraph 47 and insert new paragraph 42 to read "A total of 341 dwellings were built in the NP area between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2019. In addition, there were live planning consents for 231 dwellings at 31 March 2019. This means that the housing requirement set out in the strategic policies in the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 can be met." Renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly.</i></p>	
7.	SSM3	<p><i>Delete criterion c. from Policy SSM3 and renumber subsequent criteria accordingly. Reword criterion e. to read " the affordable housing provision is for smaller dwellings (1-2 bedrooms)". Delete criteria d. and f. and add new paragraph at the end of the policy to read "Development that will result in the loss of bungalows will be resisted. Housing developments designed to meet the needs of older people, including but not limited to sheltered housing, assisted living, retirement villages and nursing homes, should be located within walking distance of services."</i></p>	
8.	SSM4	<p><i>Add after "priority" in paragraph 64 " for maintenance and improvement works "</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity
9.	SSM5	<p><i>In clause A delete "on site" and replace "across the site" with "to key destinations." Reword clause B to read "Development should make a contribution towards improving and extending the pedestrian and cycle network"</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity

No	Part/Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<i>where they add pressure to it." In SSM5C, delete "tree root damage" from criterion a. ; delete "remedial work required" from criterion b.; delete "small concrete plinth slightly raised" from criterion c.; delete "very poor condition" from criterion d.; delete "tree root damage" from criterion e.; delete "cycle risk, splits in tarmac " from criterion f.; delete "tree root damage" from criterion g. and delete "tree root damage and low hanging branches" from criterion h.</i>	
10.	SSM6	<i>Add "At" before Hobley Drive in SSM6Ab.; add "In" before "The area" in SSM6Ac. And delete "seek to" after "policy SSM2 should"</i>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity
11.	SSM7	<i>Delete "A." from the first line of policy SSM7. Delete "should be considered as" in second line of policy SSM7 and replace with "are".</i>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity
12.	SSM8	<i>Reword clause SSM8Eb to read "make additional provision to meet the Parish's needs"</i>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity

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2019 -2026

Submission Draft



Stratton St Margaret Parish Council

Andrea Pellegram Ltd.

July 2019

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This draft was prepared by Dr Andrea Pellegram MRTPI with assistance from officers at Stratton St Margaret Parish Council, the Steering Group and officers at Swindon Borough Council.



Andrea Pellegram Ltd.

FOREWORD

Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to prepare a shared development vision for their area. This neighbourhood plan seeks to shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development by influencing the planning policies and decisions made by Swindon Borough Council.

Neighbourhood plans must conform with local plan policies and can amplify the planning decision-making framework. This neighbourhood plan will help ensure that planning proposals take account of Stratton St Margaret's circumstances and needs.

Decisions about planning applications must comply with policies in the Development Plan. In Stratton St Margaret, this means that planning officers, Swindon Borough Council Members and applicants must pay heed to policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 and the policies in this neighbourhood plan.



The Steering Group

This neighbourhood plan has been produced by a Steering Group made up of equal numbers of Parish Councillors and community volunteers.

As well as time spent on research through interviews and examination of strategic and factual evidence, the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has carried out many hours of consultation with residents and has considered comments and concerns about the village of Stratton St Margaret and its surroundings. This work has resulted in a Neighbourhood Plan which sets out a vision for Stratton St Margaret and will ensure that the parish continues to develop as a vibrant community whilst retaining its rural character for future generations.

Thanks are given to Swindon Borough Council's Officers who have been very helpful in this process.

Special thanks are also given to David Potter who supported the NDP.

INTRODUCTION

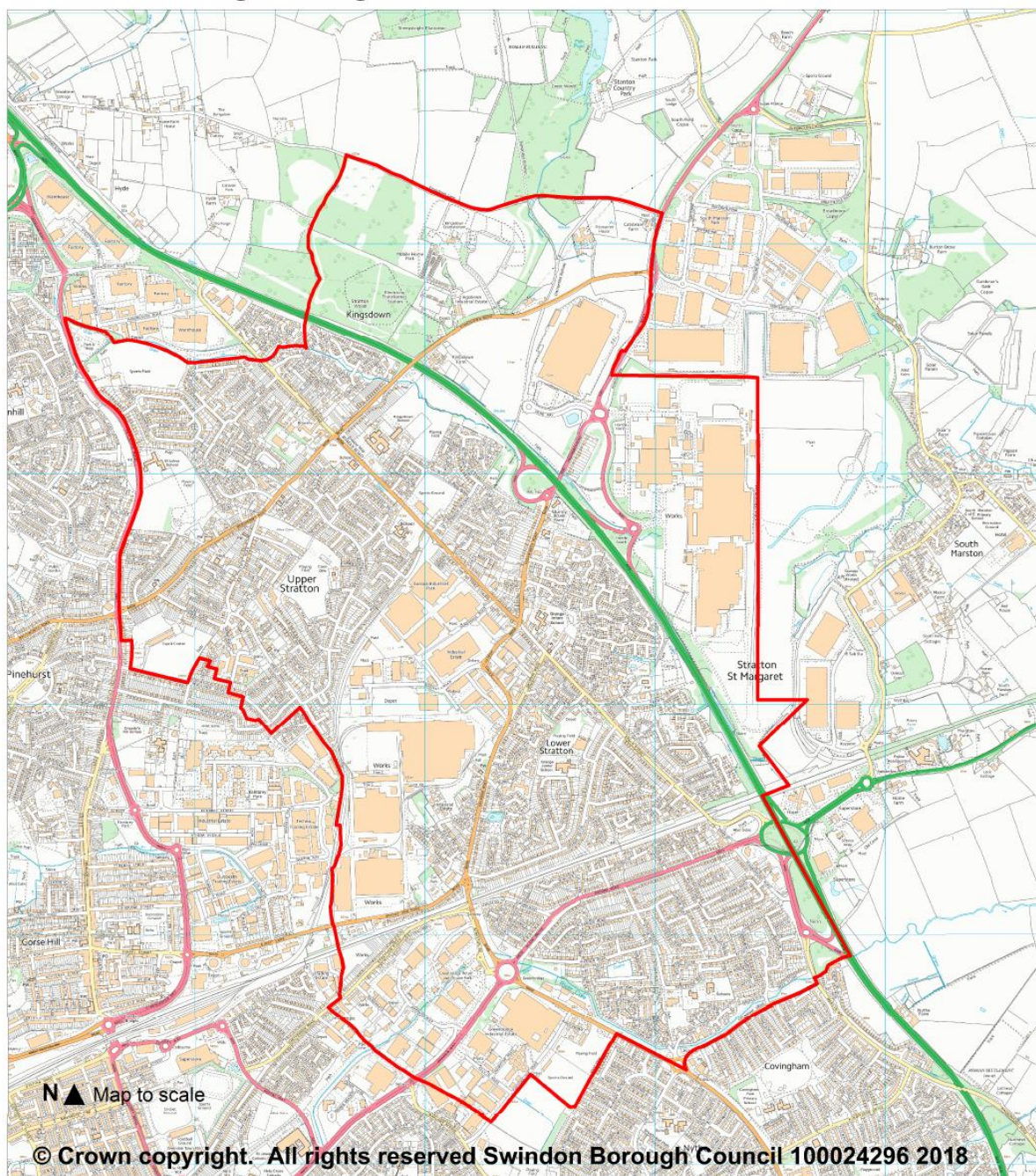
1. Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011 to give communities the right to shape and develop their areas. The Stratton St Margaret neighbourhood plan has been prepared by residents and led by Stratton St Margaret Parish Council and shaped by various surveys and public consultations to accurately reflect the needs and wants of the community.
2. Swindon Borough Council (SBC), the local planning authority, has designated a Neighbourhood Area to cover the Stratton St Margaret Parish for the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan, set out in **Figure 1**.
3. This neighbourhood plan has been created in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. This document is the consultation version of the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan that will be subject to independent examination.



Stratton St Margaret Parish Church

Figure 1: Neighbourhood Plan designated area

Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Area



OUR VISION

4. Sustainable development is defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”¹. Sustainable development must meet economic, social and environmental objectives².
5. This neighbourhood plan will aim to strengthen the parish’s sustainability by setting out policies to meet the social, cultural and economic needs of the community within the environment’s natural limits. This approach supports the Sustainable Development principles embedded in the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026.
6. Local Plan policies for Stratton St Margaret place strong emphasis on employment activities and ensuring that the Key Employment Areas are safeguarded. This neighbourhood plan will therefore support the Local Plan by identifying what is important locally to assist economic investment in the area.
7. Part of the success of Stratton St Margaret is the balance between employment, housing and community facilities. This plan seeks to keep a balance between jobs and homes whilst ensuring that the community has the access and social infrastructure it needs.
8. Stratton St Margaret residents are proud of their village heritage, and the character or ‘sense of place’ it lends the built environment.
9. Green spaces are important to the community, providing both recreational benefits and opportunities for environmental sustainability. This neighbourhood plan seeks to protect the parish’s open spaces and promote a healthy lifestyle.

¹ 1987 Brundtland Report

² NPPF, para 8.

THE VISION FOR STRATTON ST MARGARET

In 2026, Stratton St Margaret will be a place that can provide for its economic, social housing, transport, business and community needs within the wider Swindon Borough.

The parish will be a vibrant community with a distinct character and sense of place that can develop sustainably into the future.

This Neighbourhood Plan's core aims are to:

- ensure an appropriate balance between jobs, housing and community facilities in the parish;
- support the Local Plan in protecting areas of business and economic growth;
- encourage sustainable and healthy lifestyles;
- ensure Stratton St Margaret maintains a distinctive character and 'sense of place';
- protect and enhance Stratton St Margaret's open spaces.

STRATTON ST MARGARET PARISH

10. Stratton St Margaret is a parish in the northeast of the Swindon Borough. Its local planning authority is Swindon Borough Council, and it lies about two miles northeast of Swindon town centre. Its neighbouring parishes are South Marston, Covingham, Central and South Swindon, Blunsdon and Stanton Fitzwarren. Together, these parishes form a key commercial and industrial centre for the town as well as providing significant levels of housing and community services.
11. Stratton St Margaret has a distinct Victorian history. Once a separate village, it now forms a part of the greater Swindon urban area.
12. The Church of England Parish Church of Saint Margaret dates from the 13th century, with later additions in 1840s and partial rebuilding in the middle of the 20th century, and a Norman door remains. Stratton St Margaret gets its name from the Latin 'strata' meaning 'paved way' or 'street' after the former Roman Road (ErminStreet) whose course runs through Stratton.
13. The Domesday Book of 1086 records the toponym Stratone, when the parish was held by Nigel, physician to William the Conqueror. The village then consisted of three hamlets: The Street; the area around Green Road and Dores Road, including the few houses at Kingsdown; and Stratton Green, mainly around Tilley's Lane. Footpaths and coffin-ways joined the hamlets. In 1316, Queen Margaret had Upper and Lower Stratton in dower and began the association. In 1445, it is mentioned as "Margrete Stratton".
14. Stratton St Margaret Parish Council has been in existence in its present form since 1974 following the Local Government reorganisation in 1972. However, there has been a parish council serving Stratton St Margaret since 1891.
15. The separate village has now become a part of Swindon Borough's urban area. **Figure 2** shows the village's relationship with Swindon at the turn of the last Century.

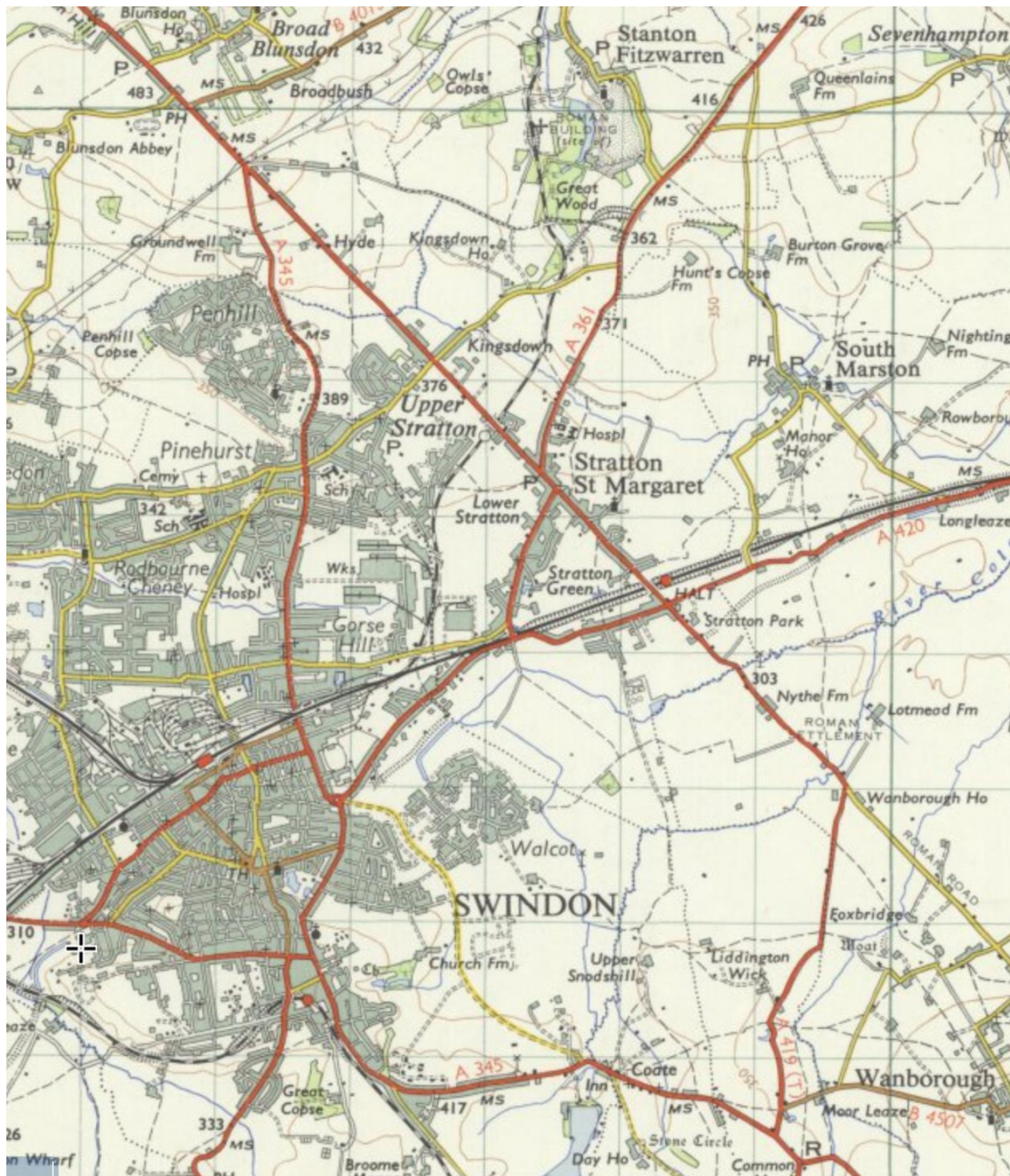
Figure 2: Map of Stratton St Margaret village, South Marston and Swindon in 1888



Source: *Ordnance Survey Map, 1888-1913*

16. By the mid 19th-Century, Swindon's developed area had reached Stratton St Margaret, as shown in **Figure 3**. As the map in Figure 1 shows, Swindon has now subsumed Stratton St Margaret which no longer has a separate identity. Policies in this neighbourhood plan seek to preserve and enhance those features that hark back to the village's past.

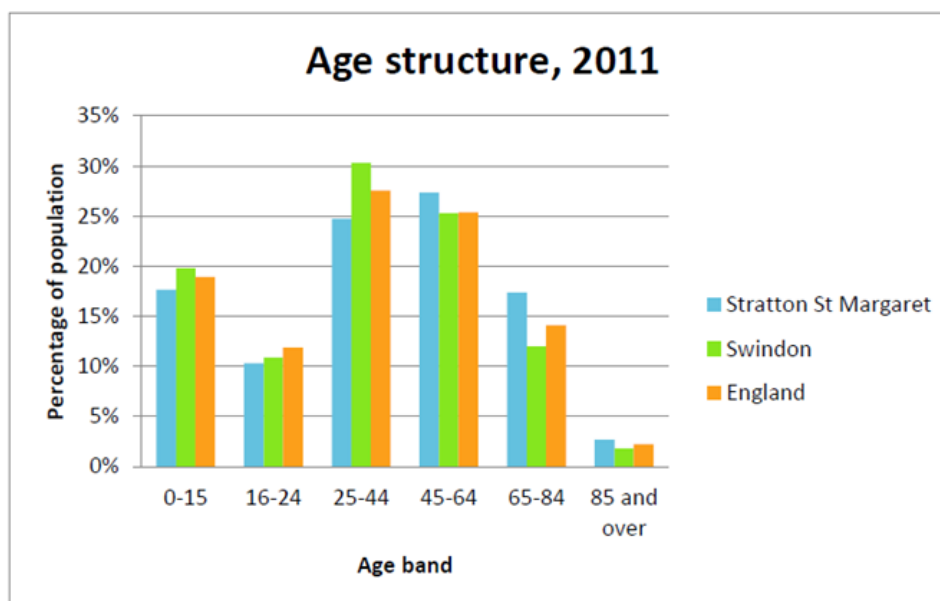
Figure 3: Map of Stratton St Margaret village, South Marston and Swindon in 1955



Source: Ordnance Survey Map 1955-1961

17. Currently the parish holds a good range of facilities, including Greenbridge Retail Park, a fire station, surgery, leisure centre, sports pitches, play parks and green spaces. It is home to nursery, infants and junior schools, a secondary school and two special education schools.
18. The population within the parish of Stratton St Margaret in 2011 was 19,369. At the time of the Census, Stratton St Margaret's population has relatively fewer people under the age of 44 and relatively more people older than 45 compared with Swindon and England, **Figure 4**.

Figure 4: Age Structure



Source: ONS, Census 2011, AECOM calculations

Figure 5: Percentage change in population and households

Percentage change, 2001-2011			
	Stratton St Margaret	Swindon	England
Population	5.1%	16.2%	7.9%
Households	7.8%	17.6%	7.9%
Household size	-2.4%	-1.2%	0.0%

Change in household numbers and size in Stratton St Margaret, 2001-2011.

Source: ONS, Census 2011, AECOM calculations

19. The parish population grew by around 5% between 2001 and 2011 censuses, shown in **Figure 5**. This was slightly lower than England and much lower than Swindon whose population has grown substantially over that period, due mainly to the amount of new housing. Over that same period, there were

around 8% additional households, but the size of the households decreased slightly.

Figure 6: Life expectancy

Gender	Stratton St Margaret 2009-13 (years) (ONS, 2015)	Swindon 2012-14 (years) (ONS, 2016)
Male	79.7	79.5
Female	83.6	83.0

Source: SSMPC's Housing Needs Survey, AECOM, 2015

20. Life expectancy in Stratton St Margaret is in line with wider Swindon and on average, people can expect to live into their late 70s or early 80s, shown in **Figure 6**.
21. Stratton St Margaret is well located for a wide range of existing and new employment opportunities, including:
 - Office jobs in the town centre
 - Specialist manufacturing jobs in East Swindon
 - Jobs associated with distribution and logistics along the A419 corridor
 - Office jobs and other employment as part of the New Eastern Villages development
22. As of the 2011 Census, 9,859 residents of Stratton St Margaret were in employment, with an unemployment rate of 3.3%. 15.69% of Stratton's residents were retired, compared to Swindon's retired population of 11.6%.
23. The Steering Group's 2015 Housing Needs Survey found that the main drivers of economic growth within Stratton St Margaret are likely to be:
 - Innovation
 - The Town Centre
 - Unlocking Urban Expansion
 - Skills

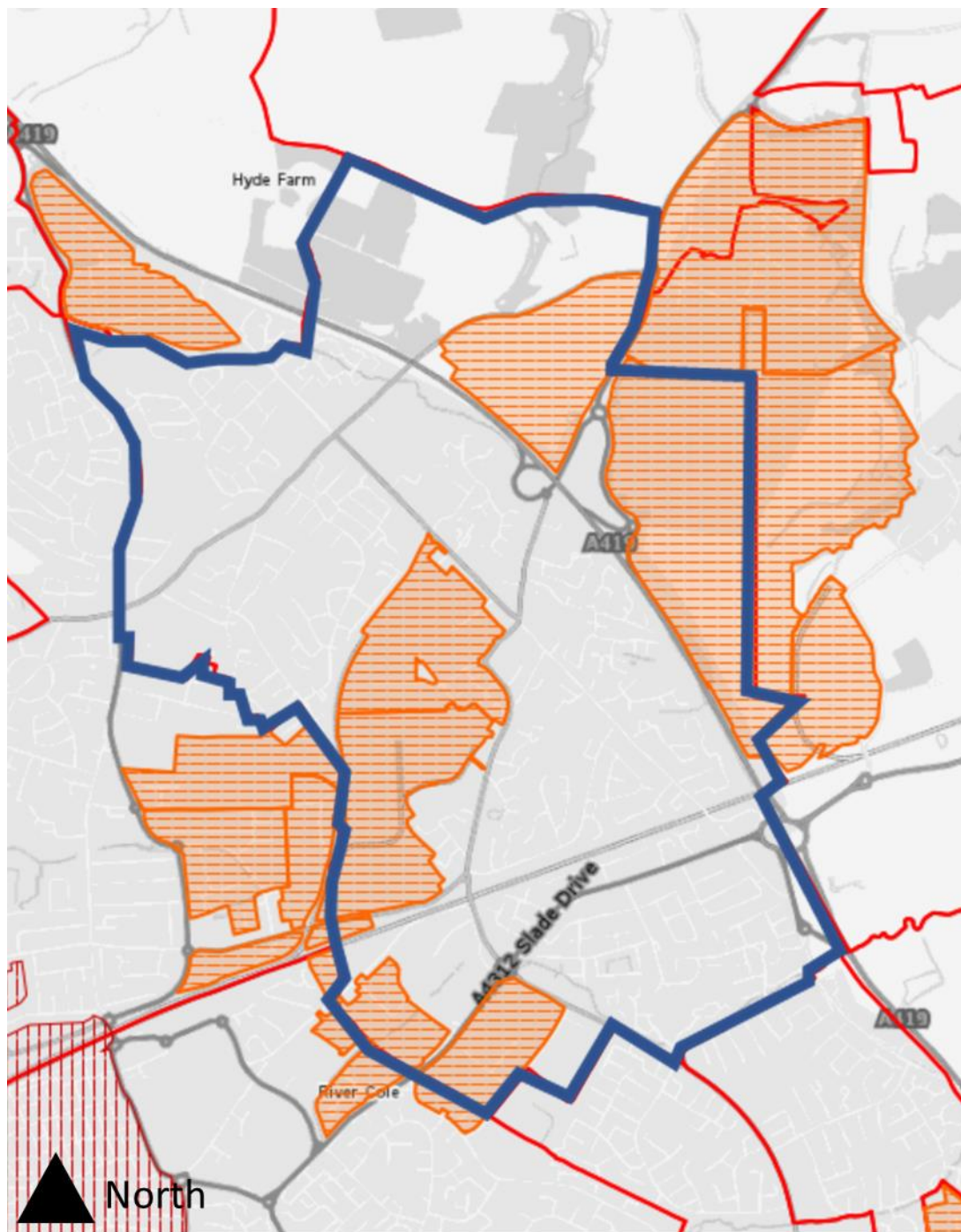
24. Some residents work from home, requiring fast broadband connections to maintain their businesses – there is a general perception that broadband speeds could improve.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Development outside the parish boundaries

25. The Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 has identified land outside the current built-up area and outside the parish boundary for major development that will allow Swindon to grow and develop. These site allocations will not be subject to the policies in this neighbourhood plan. They will however have a significant impact upon the parish's future. Much of the parish area is covered by Swindon's 'Key Employment Areas' which are shown in **Figure 7**. Key employment areas are shown in orange, red hash shows the Central Area Action plan to upgrade the town centre. Local Plan policies seek to preserve existing business use, in particular EC2 seeks to retain B class uses in all major employment areas within the parish.
26. Three strategic proposals in the Local Plan will impact upon Stratton St Margaret in particular: New Eastern Villages, Kingsdown and Swindon's Central Area. **Figure 8** shows the main strategic policy areas that lie outside the parish boundary, but which will impact upon the parish as they increase the urban envelope around it.

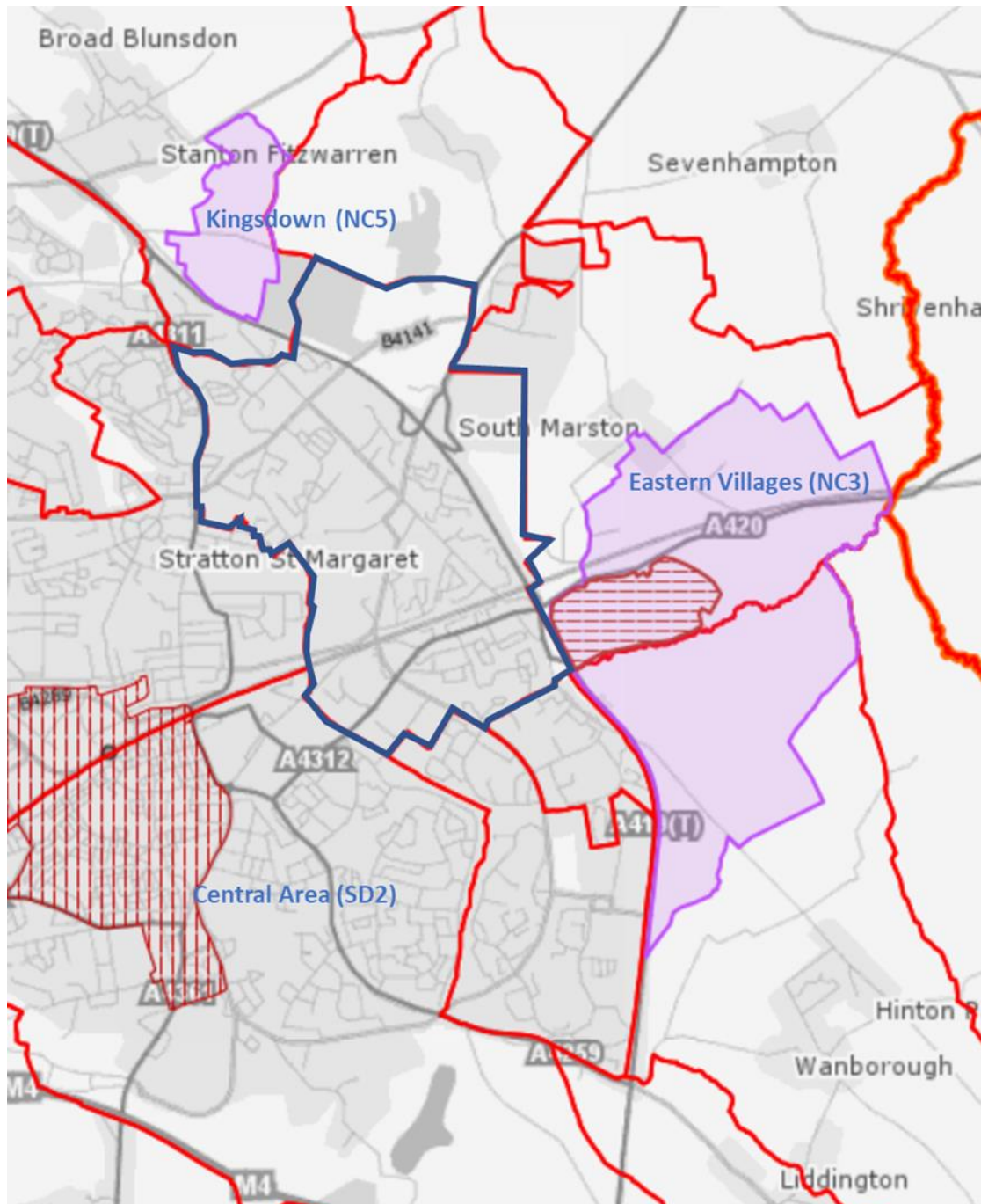
Figure 7: Key Employment Areas (Local Plan Policy EC2)



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Source: Swindon Local Plan 2026. Orange hatching denotes employment areas, blue line denotes NDP area.

Figure 8: Strategic sites outside Stratton St Margaret



Source: Swindon Local Plan 2026 (strategic policies). Pink shading and red hatching denote major site allocations with policy references. Red lines denote parish boundaries. Blue lines show NDP area.

27. The New Eastern Villages proposal seeks the creation of a new district centre across from the A419 which will contain retail and other competing land uses. The Kingsdown East proposal contains provision for a range of infrastructure improvements that are likely to impact upon the parish. The strategic policies

to strengthen Swindon Central Area will increase the office and retail activities in the town centre to the west of Greenbridge. This neighbourhood plan must therefore acknowledge these complementary but potentially competing new and renewed activities in nearby locations.

28. The Swindon Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in Planning (2019) encourages all applicants, developers and landowners to discuss their proposals with the local community (neighbours, residents, elected members, schools, colleges and other public institutions, parish or town councils, ward councillors and other interested groups) before submitting a planning application. In general, the more significant and potentially controversial the proposal, the more extensive the amount of consultation expected. (SCI, 2019, para. 3.10)
29. Stratton St Margaret Parish Council welcomes this approach and seeks early engagement on major schemes that may come forward within the parish boundaries, or that may affect land within the boundaries though the developments may themselves fall outside.
30. Strategic development proposals should take full account of impacts on Stratton St Margaret and early consideration of mitigation is required to ensure that the benefits from new development are distributed across the entire affected area.

**SSM 1 (informative): Strategic development
outside the parish boundary**

- A. Applicants promoting schemes under Local Plan policies SC2, NC3 and NC5 are encouraged to undertake full and meaningful engagement with Stratton St Margaret Parish Council regarding how proposals will impact upon the parish and how impacts will be managed.**
- B. Any supporting documents setting out how public engagement was undertaken should provide full consideration of the following:**
 - a. how the Stratton St Margaret Parish Council and community was consulted;**
 - b. issues raised during those consultations;**

- c. mitigation and management of impacts proposed in response.
- C. Engagement should ideally be undertaken from the scheme's initial design (pre-application), through to decision, and where relevant, up to discharge of conditions.

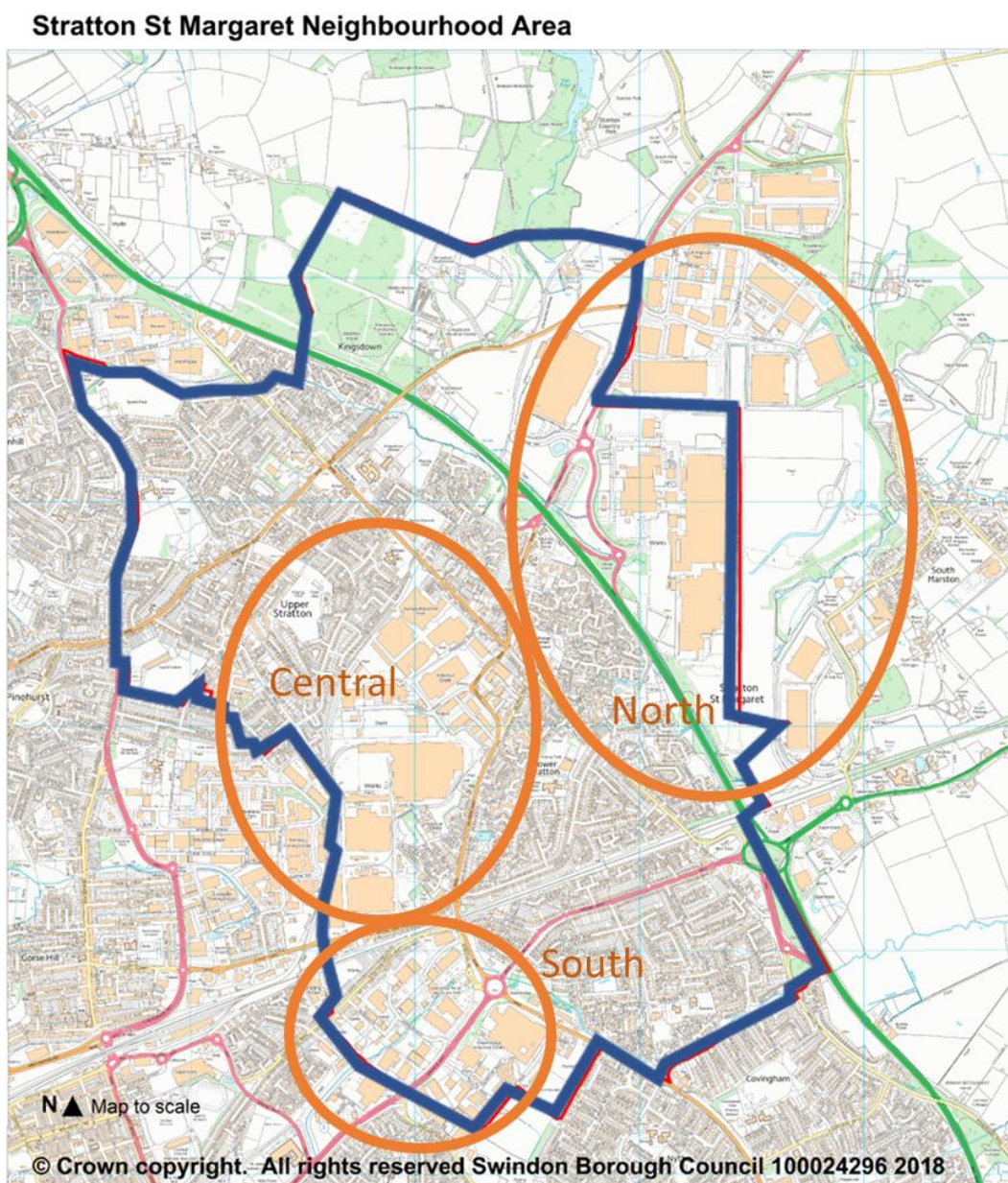
Distribution of development within the parish boundaries

31. A review of the Swindon Borough Brownfield Register and SHLAA indicated that there is very little available land suitable for development within the parish boundaries.
32. The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan will therefore focus on developments that may occur on previously developed land or small infill sites, how this relates to Local Plan strategic policies and how development can be managed from Stratton St Margaret's perspective.

Larger commercial sites

33. The spatial development pattern of Stratton St Margaret is currently around one quarter commercial, and the remainder is residential with green spaces interspersed.
34. Commercial development is located on a few very large sites dominated by either manufacturing or distribution activities though there are also pockets of smaller commercial activities under multiple ownerships.
35. There are three main commercial areas within the parish shown in **Figure 9**:
- **North:** G-Park, Honda of the UK and the B&Q Distribution Centre;
 - **Central:** BMW and light industrial activities fronted by Bridge End Road, Swindon Road and the B4006 including Powerdrills Yard on West End Road;
 - **South:** Retail, office and light industrial on either side of Drake's Way including the Greenbridge retail park.

Figure 9: Main employment centres in Stratton St Margaret



Source: Base map supplied by Swindon Borough Council. Blue line denotes NDP area; orange denotes approximate commercial area. See also Figure 7.

36. The north and central areas are dominated by large-scale manufacturing and distribution activities that occupy large parcels of land under single ownerships, though there are some smaller enterprises in the central area. Some of the largest landowners and operators are UK subsidiaries of international companies that could be affected by Brexit and international economic forces. It is conceivable that these large sites may become available in the future should macroeconomic forces render UK locations uncompetitive.

37. These very large enterprises in Stratton St Margaret stimulate the Swindon economy and are serviced by a range of local suppliers and offer jobs to local people. As such, they have a key part to play in Stratton St Margaret's prosperity. However, they also pose a risk. Should any of these companies determine that their Swindon operations were no longer required, their sites may become surplus to requirement and may ultimately become large brownfield sites that require redevelopment.
38. There is one major retail centre in the parish at Greenbridge and several small parades to service the commercial and residential areas with a mix of shops and A-class uses. The Greenbridge centre is not amongst Swindon's largest retail areas but it serves a wider market than Stratton St Margaret³.
39. Since all major sites are fully occupied and there are few brownfield opportunities within the parish, it is not possible for the neighbourhood plan to contain policies for their future redevelopment. A flexible approach will therefore be taken which seeks open dialogue between the planning authority, future developers and the Parish Council.

Policy SSM 2: Redevelopment of large sites

- A. Applicants promoting proposals for Major Development on employment land within the Stratton St Margaret Parish boundary are strongly encouraged to undertake early, full and meaningful engagement with Stratton St Margaret Parish Council regarding how proposals will impact upon the parish and how they will be managed.**
- B. Regular and robust liaison arrangements with Stratton St Margaret Parish Council and the community are strongly encouraged to be put into place by the applicant to feed into:**
- a. master planning;**
 - b. proposal design;**
 - c. impact upon residential amenity and local character;**

³ Swindon Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment 2017 table 2.1.a

d. management of impacts during construction and operation of the development.

C. Full public engagement is strongly encouraged that will provide full consideration of the following:

- a. how the Parish Council and community was consulted;**
- b. issues raised during those consultations;**
- c. mitigation and management of impacts proposed in response.**

HOUSING

40. The Parish Council commissioned AECOM consultants to prepare Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Advice (August 2015) which forms the basis of the evidence for the neighbourhood plan's housing policies.
41. The approach taken was to consider housing need rather than supply. Based on the data summarised on the quantity of dwellings required and the market factors affecting those quantities, AECOM recommended that housing need for the parish in the period 2011-2026 is in the range of 700 to 750 net additional dwellings. Bearing in mind that 646 of these dwellings had already been completed or otherwise committed by 2015, this left an outstanding target range of around 50-100 further dwellings required to 2026.
42. The AECOM analysis showed that the parish of Stratton St Margaret has a relatively ageing population, with an increasingly large proportion of its inhabitants aged 65 and over. The decrease in the proportion of children and of people aged 25-44 suggests that fewer families may have moved to, or formed, within the parish in the period 2001-2011 than previously. However, the above-average rate of growth in people aged 16-24 suggests that the parish has become more popular with younger adults over this period.
43. Neighbourhood Plan consultations indicated a general resistance to significant new housing development, but recognised the need for mixed use development and utilisation of brownfield land in the case of further housing requirement.

44. The key findings of the housing needs advice can be found in **Appendix 1**. The full report is attached as a separate document.
45. A housing mix was supported by residents, who favoured both larger detached and semi-detached homes, and smaller bungalows and independent living facilities, while there is low demand for terraced homes, flats and rented properties. The 2015 housing survey found that more houses may be required with an ageing population to allow for down-sizing.
46. To support an objective to down-size current housing in the parish, smaller independent living facilities were supported. The community also identified accessible housing for the elderly as one of the most important factors in new development.
47. Stratton St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan must align with the Swindon Local Plan 2026. Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 Policy SD2 indicates that the "remainder for Swindon" should deliver a total of 3,500 dwellings over the plan period. The Housing Need Survey for Stratton St Margaret, estimates that the appropriate proportion of this total for Stratton St Margaret Parish would be 416 dwellings.

Policy SSM 3: Housing

- A. New housing provision that preserves and enhances the character of the parish will be supported where:**
 - a. The development is of new bungalows, detached and semi-detached housing.**
 - b. The provision is not of additional terraced housing except where it would deliver smaller properties and affordable homes.**
 - c. Individual dwellings of 4-5 bedrooms.**
 - d. Development that will result in the loss of bungalows will be resisted.**
 - e. Residential schemes, as part of their affordable housing proposals, provide smaller dwellings (1-2 bedrooms).**
 - f. Housing developments is specifically designed for the older people, including but not limited to sheltered housing, assisted living, retirement villages and nursing homes, are encouraged in locations within walking distance of services**

and facilities, such as local shops, doctors' surgeries and open space.

GRANGE LEISURE AND OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES

48. One of the objectives of this neighbourhood plan is to promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles. Stratton St Margaret benefits from a range of sports facilities, including outdoor pitches, indoor sports courts and gyms.
49. There are also many active community groups in the parish, listed in **Appendix 2**. Consultation found that the parish's 'community spirit' was highly valued, with considerable pride in community events, such as the Stratton Festival and Stratton Stroll.
50. The main community facilities in the parish are Grange Leisure, Meadowcroft Community Centre, Beechcroft Library, St Margaret's and St Philip's Church Halls, Arkell's Business Centre, Churchway Bowls Club, Kingsdown School, Coleview Community Centre, the Scout Hut.
51. There are two libraries within Stratton St Margaret – Upper Stratton Library on Beechcroft Road, and Grange Community, both operated by the parish Council which hopes to support the provision of libraries in the future, subject to funding.
52. Grange Leisure, operated by the Parish Council, is the largest and most heavily used facility with a gym, sports halls, community halls, a library, as well as an outdoor multi-use games area, artificial grass pitch and grass field. It is therefore considered by many to be a community 'hub', and a true 'heart of the community'.
53. Grange Leisure is highly valued by the community and it will continue to be the primary focus for future investment by the Parish Council. It is therefore important that any future development that would prevent or hinder Grange Leisure Centre from continuing to provide this community benefit must be carefully managed so that the community infrastructure is enhanced rather than diminished.
54. The Parish Council commissioned RTP consulting to make recommendations on how to improve the financial viability and customer appeal of Grange Leisure. This was summarised in a report presented to the council in June

2018. The report made recommendations involving financial restructuring and reconfiguring of activities inside the building. The report provides evidence that the facility can be continually adapted and reformatted to provide long-term community infrastructure for the parish.

55. Consultation indicated that should new community and sports infrastructure be delivered in the future, the community would support provision of a skate park, a swimming pool, enhanced play areas, and the provision of benches in green spaces.
56. Pubs, restaurants, shops, meeting places of all kinds, services and places of worship are dispersed across the parish. The availability of nearby services and places to meet enables Stratton St Margaret residents to live their lives within their community and near their homes. The more conveniently located these services are, the more likely that patrons will visit on foot or cycle, thus improving the overall sustainability of the parish. It is therefore desirable to consider the future of these activities should they come under pressure of redevelopment or loss.
57. As with larger developments and redevelopments within the parish, the Parish Council encourages early engagement by those wishing to change the use of publicly accessible buildings. Where possible, it will be desirable to seek to retain publicly accessible developments that are of value to the community.
58. Development within the parish that will increase Grange Leisure Centre's or other community facilities' usership should make a proportionate contribution to their upkeep or enhancement. The Council will receive CIL funding which may assist in this objective.

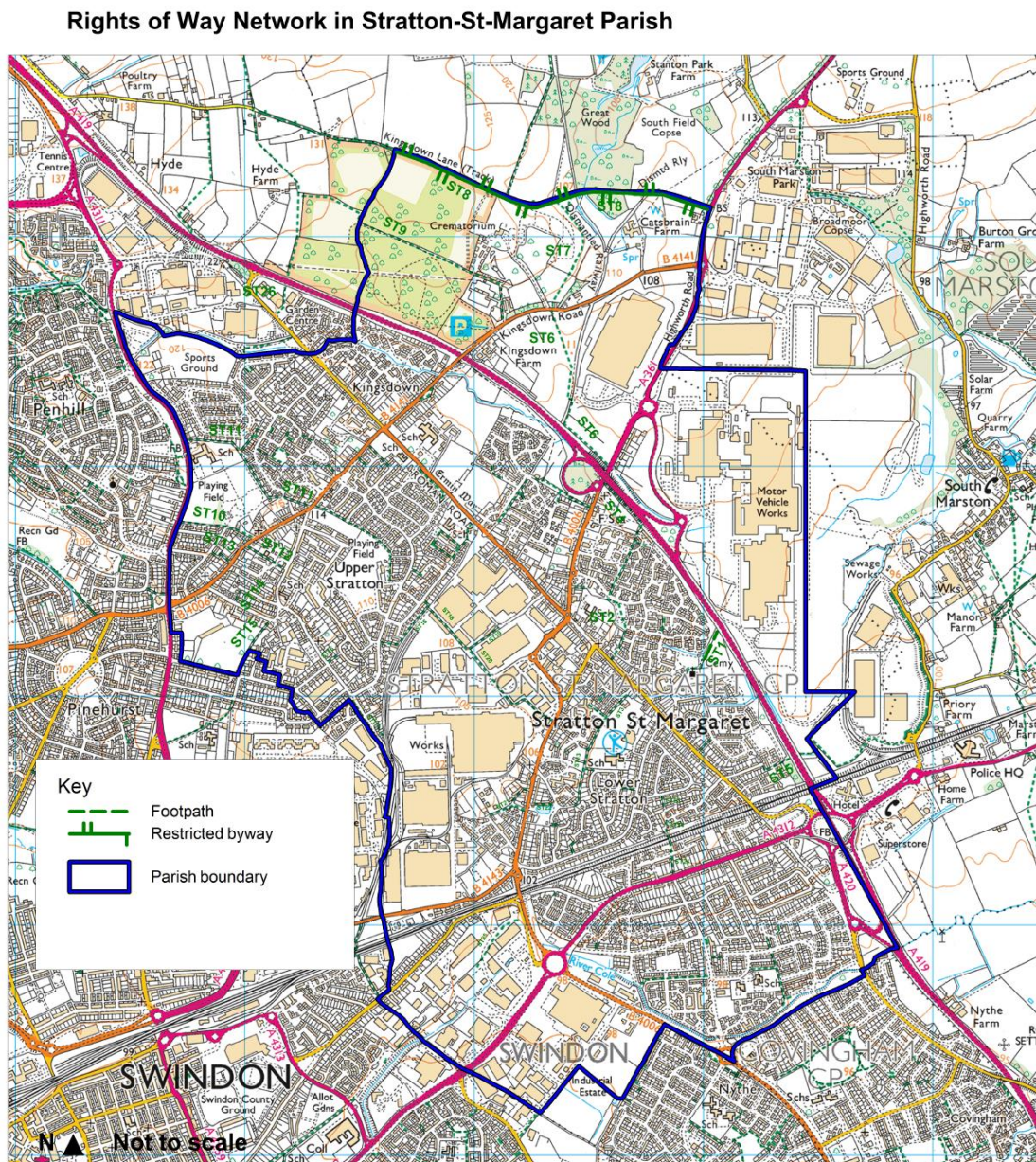
Policy SSM 4: Community facilities and publicly accessible sites

- A. Applicants promoting redevelopment or change of use of community facilities and publicly accessible sites, for instance pubs and eating establishments, shops, meeting places of all kinds, services and places of worship should undertake early engagement with the Stratton St Margaret Parish Council when formulating development proposals.**
- B. Proposals that result in the loss of community facilities and publicly accessible developments shall only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:**
 - a. Commercial facilities have been genuinely marketed for the established use for at least one year; and,**
 - b. The facility is no longer economically viable for the established use, or there is a suitable and sustainable alternative to that facility nearby, or the facility is no longer required.**
- C. Provision of new community facilities including leisure, libraries, sports facilities, children and teen play areas, and venues for events and clubs will be supported, particularly for the young and the elderly and supporting disabled and vulnerable people.**

TRAFFIC AND MOVEMENT

59. Stratton St Margaret is well located near transport links, close to the A419 bypass connecting the M4 with the M5. The parish is around 1.5 miles northeast of Swindon railway station.
60. Residents who participated in the neighbourhood plan consultation felt that Stratton St Margaret suffers significantly from traffic and congestion, and had safety concerns regarding speeding around schools. The presence of commercial development within the parish has led to high numbers of heavy goods vehicles in the parish, exacerbating common congestion worries.
61. There was a high level of community support for increased safety and cleanliness of footpaths and cycle ways. In response, this neighbourhood plan supports policy TR1 of Swindon's Local Plan, striving for increased use of sustainable transport networks within the parish.
62. **Figure 10** shows the public rights of way network in the parish. These are the interlinked safe walking and cycling opportunities in the parish that people might use as an alternative to their personal cars.
63. Footpaths and cycle ways will continue to be maintained, tidied, and where possible enhanced by Stratton St Margaret Parish Council, particularly those near to employment areas. Business co-operation will be sought here.
64. As such, priority will be afforded to the current footpaths and off-road cycle ways around the area of industrial developments on Bridge End road, Swindon Road, Hobley Drive, the Europa Industrial Park and the Techno Trading Estate. Footpaths in proximity to schools will also be a priority for maintenance.

Figure 10: Public rights of way in Stratton St Margaret



Source: Swindon Borough Council, 2018

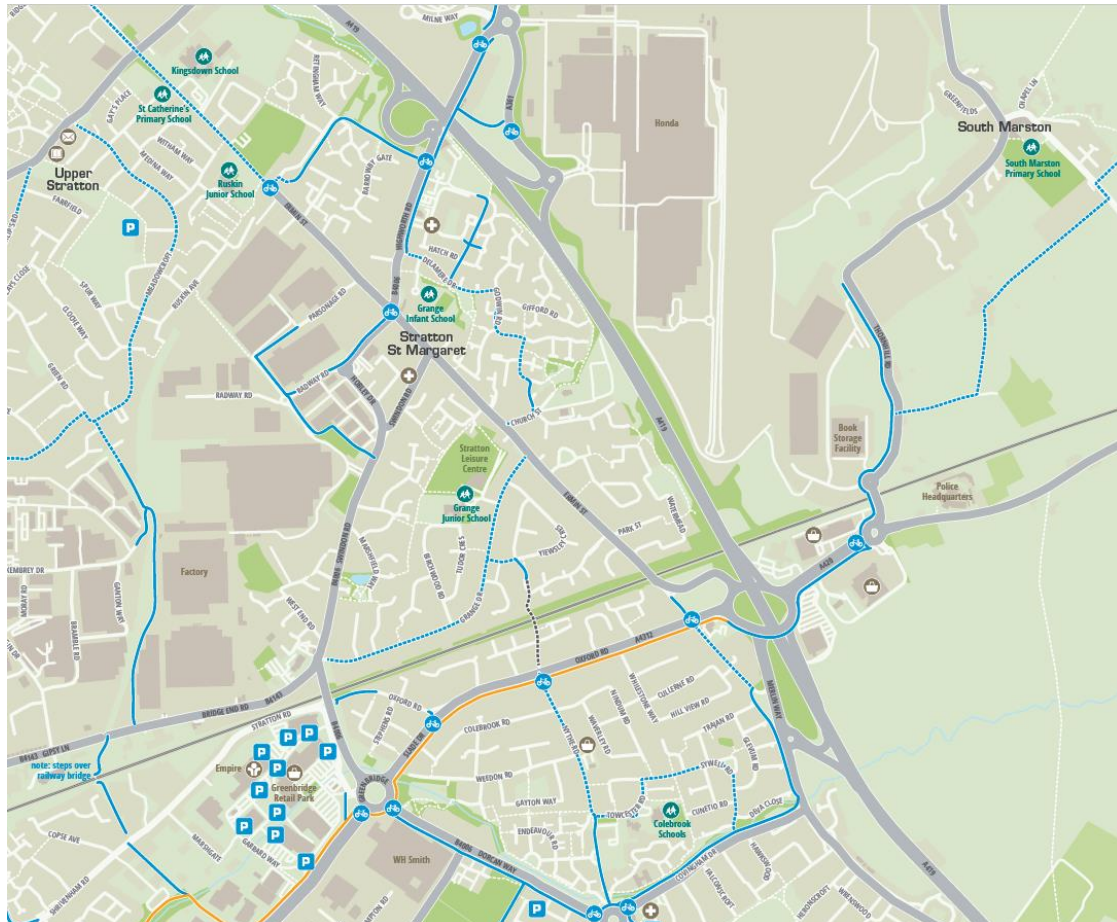
65. All footpaths were surveyed by a Parish Council officer in Summer 2018. Areas suffering from damage and which could benefit from improvements, are listed below:

- Shenton to Shaplands, tree root damage
- Church park to Rainer Close, small area of subsidence. Remedial work required

- Windbrook to scout hut, small concrete plinth, slightly raised
 - Tilly's Lane , very poor condition
 - St Phillips to Cricklade Road , tree root damage
 - Stratton Road to Drakes Way , cycle risk, splits in tarmac
 - Claridge's south path, tree root damage
 - Bridge End Road to Railway footbridge, tree root damage and low hanging branches
66. Strategic Developments under Local Plan policies NC3 New Eastern Villages and NC5 Kingsdown seek to promote inter-connectedness. The New Eastern Villages proposal seeks to provide a bridge over the A419 near Covingham Drive and the Kingsdown proposals will affect the future of Kingsdown. As these proposals come forward, under informative SSM1, the Parish Council will work with the planning authority and developers to secure appropriate community infrastructure and green linkages arising from these strategic developments.
67. Examples of recent works to improve connectivity for journeys by bike and foot in Stratton St. Margaret's boundaries includes:
- A new-build cyclepath-footway on the northern side of Covingham Drive was constructed in 2017, completing a missing link in the strategic off-road cycle and pedestrian network in the Swindon urban area and also enhancing connectivity to the Covingham district centre.
 - Oxford Road falls on the branded Eastern Flyer cycle-pedestrian route providing links to Greenbridge and central Swindon (Broadgreen, Manchester Road, town centre),
 - Improvements to the pedestrian environment of the Sandgate footbridge (working in partnership with Network Rail through the Great Western Main Line electrification scheme), a strategic link across the Great Western Main Line Railway, connecting Grange Drive and the communities off Oxford Road.
 - Previous investigation/feasibility with Network Rail (as part of the Great Western Main Line electrification programme) to future proof the alignment of the rail footbridge, which lies on the footway linking Gypsy Lane-Bridge End Road with Stratton Road.

68. **Figure 11** is an excerpt from the Swindon Cycle Map showing cycle lanes in and around Stratton St Margaret Parish. The solid blue line shows off-road cycle ways, and the dashed blue line shows the recommended off-road cycle routes promoted by Swindon Borough Council. New development, alongside investment from the Borough and Parish Councils can continue to achieve improvements to this network over time.

Figure 11: off-road cycling in Stratton St Margaret and surrounds



Source: Swindon Borough Council Cycle Map (2017)

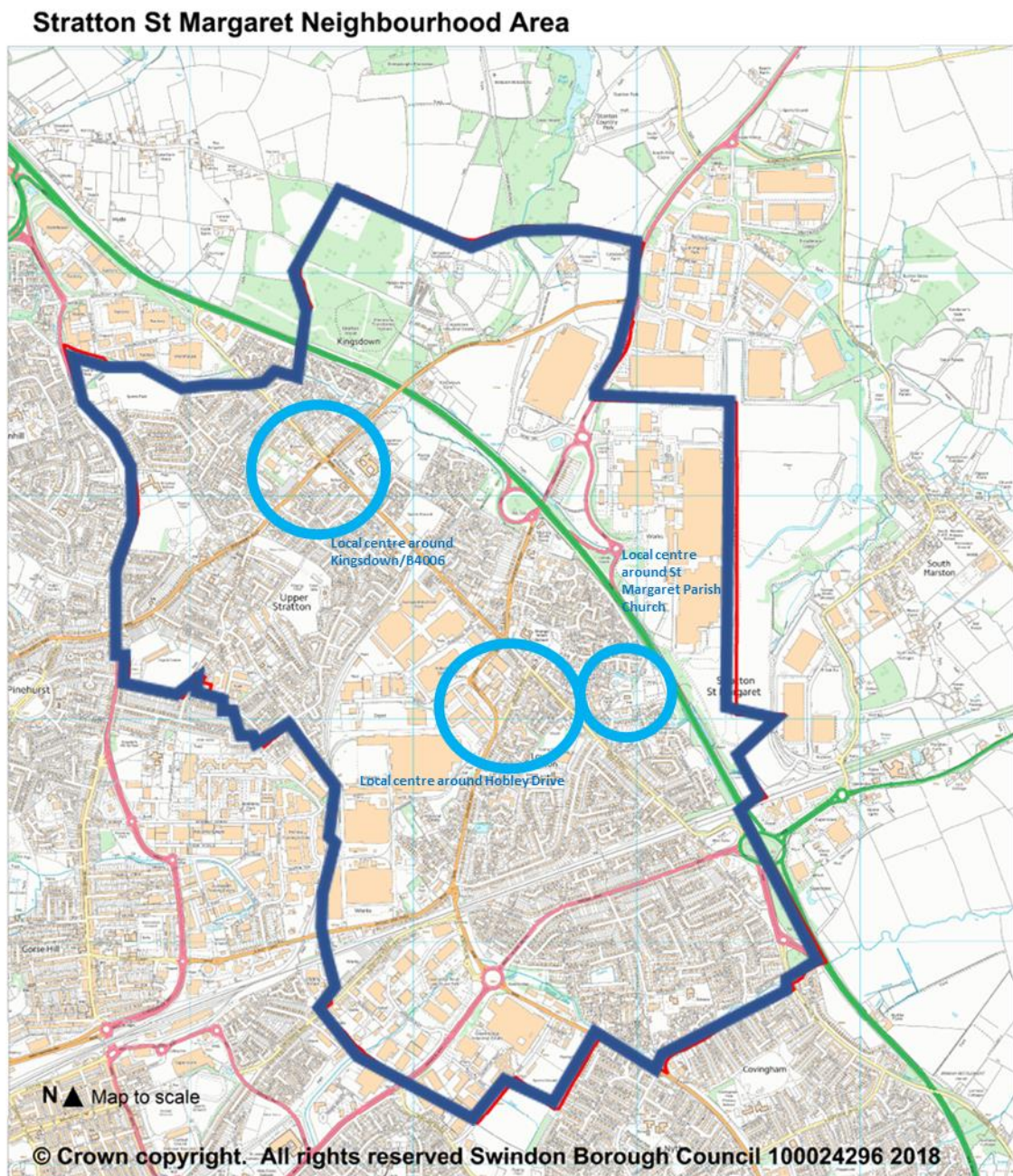
Policy SSM 5: Transport and Movement

- A. All new development should make provision for access for pedestrians and cyclists on-site by providing suitable waymarked routes to enable easy access across the site.**
- B. Where there is an off-site increase in usership of the network, development should make a contribution towards improving and extending the overall network of footpaths and cycleways in the parish.**
- C. New development in the parish should, where it would cause additional load on footpaths and cycle routes in need of improvement, introduce measures to bring them to an acceptable standard. The footpaths and cycle routes most in need of improvement are listed below, though this list is not exhaustive:**
 - a. Shenton to Shaplands, tree root damage**
 - b. Church park to Rainer Close, small area of subsidence. Remedial work required**
 - c. Windbrook to scout hut, small concrete plinth, slightly raised**
 - d. Tilly's Lane , very poor condition**
 - e. St Phillips to Cricklade Road , tree root damage**
 - f. Stratton Road to Drakes Way, cycle risk, splits in tarmac**
 - g. Claridge's south path, tree root damage**
 - h. Bridge End Road to Railway footbridge, tree root damage and low hanging branches.**

LOCAL CENTRES

69. Consultation undertaken in the preparation of the neighbourhood plan indicated that the community believed that there was no clear local centre in the parish. They further identified the lack of independent businesses, artisan outlets, restaurant and banking facilities, and their desire to see these in the parish. The historic development of the parish is by its nature urban and the original local centre around the Parish Church has long since ceased to be the focus of community activity.
70. A number of smaller local centres have developed in the parish around the Parish Church, Hobley Drive, B4006 and Highworth Road, and in the area around Kingdown on the B4006, shown in **Figure 12**. None of these areas currently have sufficient space to provide a local centre but it may be possible that in future, if land should become available under SSM2 or otherwise, there may be scope to enhance one or more of these locations as a vibrant hub or hubs featuring A1 (shops, to meet the requirements of specialist food outlets), A2 (professional and financial services, in order to provide banking) and A3 (restaurants and cafes). Meeting places, independent retailers, artisan outlets and niche business areas will be welcomed. A mixture of community uses alongside A Class uses will help to encourage footfall for the Local Centre.

Figure 12: Locations where Local Centres will be encouraged



Source: Base map supplied by Swindon Borough Council. Blue line denotes approximate locations of Local Centres.

71.

Policy SSM 6: Local Centres

- A. Development in the following areas should, where appropriate, support the establishment of local centres where A Class uses will predominate, particularly along street frontages:
 - a. In the vicinity of St Margaret's Parish Church;
 - b. Hobley Drive, B4006 and Highworth Road;
 - c. The area around Kingdown on the B4006.
- B. Where appropriate, redevelopment of employment land under policy SSM2 should seek to provide new local centres with services to complement existing centres.

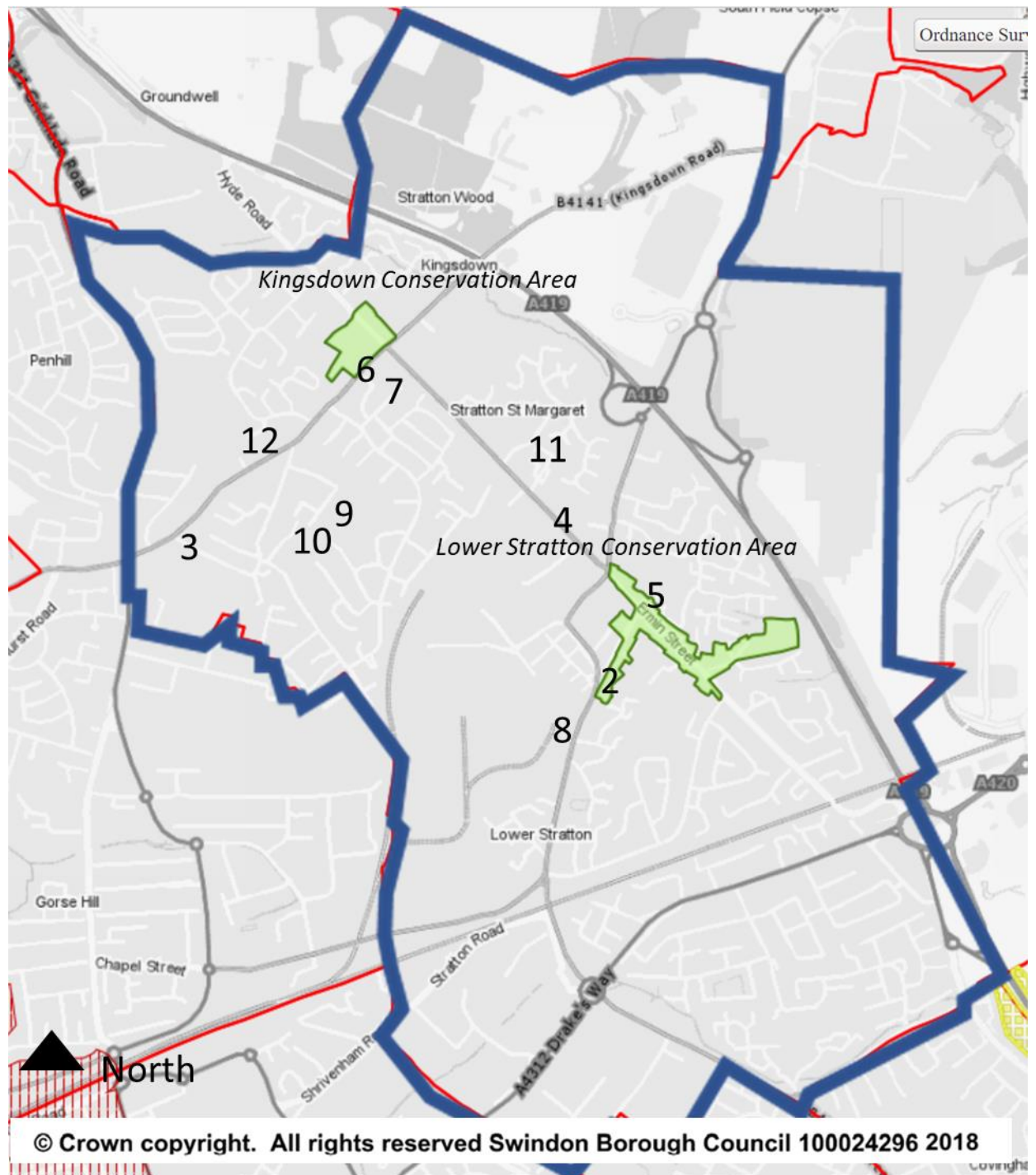
HERITAGE

- 72. Stratton St Margaret's village heritage is a major contributor to its 'sense of place'. The community are proud of their heritage and how it creates a characterful built environment. Buildings dating from during or before the Victorian era are particularly valued. The need to preserve this character is a major objective of this neighbourhood plan, supporting existing listings and Conservation Areas (shown on **Figure 11**).
- 73. There are several significant buildings and built features of importance to the local community. Listed buildings are described in **Appendix 3**. During consultation, the community identified important local features described in **Appendix 4**.
- 74. The Neighbourhood Plan steering group considered the assets identified in consultation (**Appendix 4**) and identified the following **Locally Significant Buildings** which are not listed but which are of importance to the community and worthy of protection, shown on **Figure 11**. The list was collated from various consultations as part of the preparation of the plan and in the Planning and Highways Committee of the Parish Council.

Locally Important Buildings and Assets
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Arkell's pubs⁴2. Brewery Farm House3. Boundary House, Beechcroft Road4. Ermin Street5. Methodist Church, Ermin Street7. St Philip's Church8. Stratton Education Centre9. Stratton Green Baptist Church10. Upper Stratton Baptist Church11. Chapel in Green Road Cemetery12. Wilden Square13. Beechcroft Road Methodist Church

⁴ Since there are more than one, they are not shown individually on Figure 9.

Figure 11: Conservation Areas and buildings of importance (numbered)



Source: Swindon Local Plan 2026, amended. Green shading denotes conservation areas, blue line denotes NDP area, numbers refer to the location of Locally Important Buildings and Assets.

75. This neighbourhood plan relies upon the protections afforded by the Swindon Local Plan policy EN10. It seeks the promotion of the heritage and village character of Stratton St Margaret, to preserve a 'sense of place' that residents can be proud of.

Policy SSM 7: Locally Important Buildings and Assets

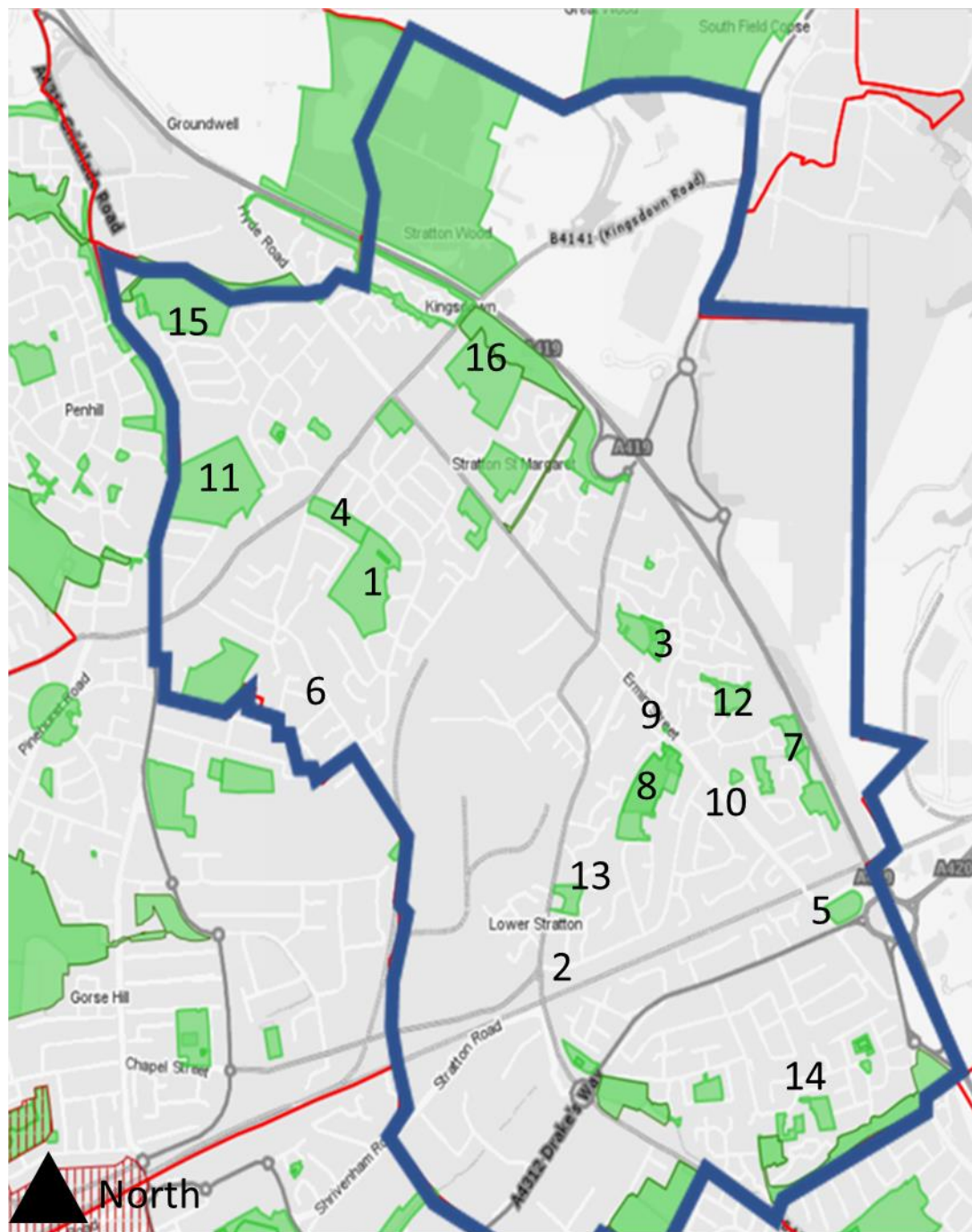
A. Locally Important Buildings as set out in paragraph 74 and Figure 11 should be considered “Non-Designated Heritage Assets” as set out in Swindon Local Plan Policy EN10 (b,g).

OPEN SPACES

76. Consultation undertaken in the preparation of the neighbourhood plan indicated that the community are immensely proud of their green spaces and want to see them protected against future development and encroachment. The densely developed nature of the parish coupled with the expected growth in local and wider-Swindon population means that preserving open spaces resources for the future is important and necessary.
77. Designated local spaces are shown in **Figure 12**.
78. Consultation indicated that some **Open Spaces** were especially valued. These include parks and fields, play parks, burial sites and allotments. Of the 31 currently managed by the Parish Council, the steering group identified the most important.

Open Spaces
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meadowcroft Playing Fields 2. Stephen's Road Play Area I 3. Delamere Play Area 4. St Philip's Allotments 5. White Hart Allotments 6. Green Road cemetery 7. Lower Stratton cemetery at St Margaret's church 8. Grange Leisure Field 9. The Remembrance Garden 10. The Peace Memorial 11. Merton Fields 12. Church Pond at St Margaret's 13. Claridge's Pond 14. Kilsby Field 15. NALGO Sports Ground 16. Kingsdown Road green space

Figure 12: Designated Open Space (Local Plan Policy EN1 and EN3)



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Source: Swindon Local Plan 2026. Green shading denotes Open Spaces under Local Plan policy EN3. Blue line denotes NDP area. Numbers refer to place names referred to in para. 80 of this report.

79. The overall tidiness and maintenance of open spaces is of great importance to residents and will remain a priority for the Parish Council. The high-quality maintenance of other private and public-sector facilities will also be promoted by the Parish Council. Over time, the Parish Council will seek to offer a wider range of activities on local green spaces and to promote better connectivity to other parts of the Borough in discussion with neighbouring parishes and the planning authority.
80. The Parish Council is best placed to identify land for additional allotments and burial space. There are no identified shortages of either allotments or burial spaces at present, so no new provisions are made in this neighbourhood plan. However, these issues will need to be kept under review.
81. Should major housing developments come forward in the parish under SSM2, it will be necessary for developers to consult Stratton St Margaret Parish Council to obtain an up to date assessment of the need for new allotments or burial space. Where existing provision is not sufficient to meet the needs of the new development, or where the development could accommodate identified need, applicants will be strongly encouraged to include additional provision in their proposals.

Policy SSM 8: Open Space, Allotments, Burial Space

- A. Loss of any Open Space (listed in Para. 78 above) will be strongly resisted and will only be supported where replacement open space of equal or greater value is provided.**
- B. Wherever possible, incidental green spaces (e.g. wider verges and odd spaces) should be retained as green spaces.**
- C. Visually or ecologically important existing trees and hedgerows should be retained to preserve their contribution to local character and green infrastructure.**
- D. All open spaces' biodiversity and habitat value should be preserved and enhanced.**
- E. Where appropriate, developers of Major Schemes should consult with the parish Council to obtain an up-to-date assessment of the need for allotments and burial space arising from the development, and where required,**
 - a. meet the need for allotment space on site; and**
 - b. make provision for the Parish Council to add to its cemetery provision.**

APPENDIX 1: Housing need Housing need

	Possible impact on housing needed	AECOM Conclusion
Affordable housing	Nearly 45% of those on the local waiting list require 2-bed or 3-bed houses. However, the total number of households in need comprises only 1.37% of all households in the parish. Between 2001 and 2011, the proportion of social rented properties grew by only half the Swindon average.	Swindon's own requirement for affordable housing is highly likely to result in adequate provision; therefore, we do not consider there is a requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to set its own affordable housing target, although the parish might consider stating that they will continue to work with the Borough Council to meet affordable housing need as it arises.
Need for smaller dwellings	<p>The SHMA notes that open market demand will be the greatest from one-person households and those over the age of 85.</p> <p>The Census shows a significant growth in single person households between 2001 and 2011 and in single person households aged over 65.</p> <p>The SHMA states that the area needs 2-bed downsizing houses/bungalows/flats, as well as 2-bed upsizing flats and 1-bed flats</p>	Provide a range of dwelling sizes, including in particular more small dwellings (1-2 bedrooms) for e.g. those in affordable need, single person households and older people wishing to downsize, and/or younger couples without children.

	Contrary to SHMA advice there needs to be more sheltered housing	
Housing type	<p>The local survey showed a significant demand for bungalows, some demand for detached and semi-detached housing, and far lower demand for terraced housing and flats.</p> <p>This is backed up by the Census [2011], which indicates the existing prevalence of semi-detached properties and relatively low level of flats.</p>	The development of new bungalows, detached and semi-detached housing could be supported by a housing mix policy, which could also seek to discourage provision of terraced housing and flats.
Increase in older person households	<p>Evidence from Census (increasing numbers of older people, and homes becoming less crowded) demonstrate older population. Some 'downsizing' of older households from larger to smaller units could free up larger units for families, although there is less demand for this type of housing compared to the rest of Swindon and England as a whole.</p>	<p>Provide dwellings suitable for older people, including units for independent living particularly suited for older occupants, such as bungalows. This would help to free up larger units for families moving into the area.</p> <p>To this end, a policy supporting downsizing for households currently under-occupying larger properties, though aspirational, could at least be a useful statement of intent.</p> <p>Monitor rates of downsizing if possible- the more that takes place, the lower the need</p>

		<p>for new family-sized/larger dwellings.</p> <p>The steering group does not support this recommendation because it is too aspirational.</p>
Demand for larger/family households	<p>The SHMA identified a drop in the number of 4-bed homes being built which could impact on Swindon's longer-term plans to reduce the amount of in-commuting.</p> <p>The parish is well located for executive/family-sized housing with proximity to Swindon, higher than average level of economic activity and travel-to-work data showing a prevalence of local employment.</p> <p>Census evidence shows only a slight increase in the number of households with children compared to the Swindon and national averages; this could be due to unmet need for larger family-sized housing.</p>	<p>Include within policy or policies on housing explicit support for larger (4-5 bedroom) dwellings for families.</p> <p>Note as per previous conclusion that downsizing rates should be monitored, as if family-sized housing is freed up through downsizing, there will correspondingly be less need to support the provision of new family housing.</p>
Potential for specialist housing for the elderly	<p>The SHMA notes that there will be approximately 5,000 additional households in Swindon with a person aged over 85 and approximately 2,000 will be one-person households, with implications for care services, suitability of existing housing in the private sector, and demand for social housing. There is unmet demand for sheltered housing for</p>	<p>Housing developments specifically designed for the elderly, including but not limited to sheltered housing, assisted living, retirement villages and nursing homes could be encouraged in locations within walking distance of services and facilities, such as local shops,</p>

	older people and it notes that 10% of additional properties required over the period 2011-2033 should be 1- or 2-bed elderly/care properties.	doctors' surgeries and open space.
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APPENDIX 2: Community Organisations in Stratton St Margaret parish

All Stars Jazz Band (did not apply but coded to grants)	Caring Matters	Grange Junior School
Art Group	Colebrook Junior School	Grange Poetry Boards
2003 Squadron Air Training Corp	Coleview Girls Football	Grange Social Club
1st Stratton St Margaret Scout Group	Coleview Community Lunch Grp	Great Western Hospital
Achievers	Coleview Pre-School	Girlguiding Swindon East
Beechcroft Thursday Club	Crocodile Lunch Club	Jubilee Appeal (vets)
BIOS Youth Project	Crosslink Football Club (minis)	Kingsdown Youth Centre
2 nd Stratton Scouts	Cruse Bereavement	Learning Disability Social Group
5th Swindon Boys Brigade	Dorcan Church	Limbless Association Swindon
21 st Swindon Scouts	Dorcan District Guides	Majestic Ballroom Group
British Legion	Focus on Carers & Self Help	Marie Curie Cancer Care
Camera Club	Friends of Upper Stratton Library	Mayors Xmas Appeal
Celtic Dance Academy	Grange Friendship Club	Meadowcroft Tenants Association

MIND	St Johns	Stratton Youth
Mrs Toop -	Ambulance	Centre
Fundraiser	St Philips PCC	Swindon 105.5
MS	Stratton	Swindon
Society/Therap	Advice Point	Animal
y Centre	Stratton Age	Sanctuary
National	Concern	Swindon
Asthma	SCLC Lunch	Children's
Campaign	Club	Scrapstore
North Dorcan	Stratton	Swindon Dial-
Senior Citizens	Bicycle	a-Ride
Northern	Stratton	Swindon &
Lights FC	Community	District Citizens
NSPCC	Art Group -	Adv
Nythe	NEW Oct 16	Swindon
Community	Stratton 1st &	District
Centre	3rd Brownies	MENCAP
Nythe Football	Stratton Jnr 5-	Swindon
Club (Minors)	a-side Football	District
Nythe County	CI	Parkinsons
Primary	Stratton	Swindon Male
Nythe	Churchway	Voice Choir
Playgroup	Bowls Club	Swindon
Relate	Stratton St	Family
Rockers	Margaret Baby	Mediation Srv
Reunited -	& Toddler	Swindon Gang
now Stardust	Group	Show
Promotions	Stratton Youth	Swindon
Ruskin Junior	Centre	Kidney
School	St Margarets	Patients Assoc
Samaritans	Church	Swindon
Shopperphone	St Margarets	Mayor's
	Pre-School	Charity

Swindon	Upper Stratton	Willows
Pegasus Brass	Baptist Church	Counselling
Band	USBC (Stratton	Service
Swindon	Festival)	Wilts & Berks
Rugby Club	USBC Kidz Club	Canal Project
Swindon	Uplands	Wiltshire
Stroke Support	Educational	Bobby Van
Swindon Town	Trust	Trust
Football in the	Upper Stratton	Wiltshire
Community	Lunch Club	Millennium
Thamesdown	Urban Arts	Appeal
Hydrotherapy	Project SSMPC	Wiltshire
Pool	Victims	Search &
The Haven	Support	Rescue
The Open Door	Wiltshire	Yew Tree Pre
Centre	White Hart	School
Trailblazers	Allotment	Youth Action
U3a - table	Societs	Wiltshire
tennis group		Vitalise

APPENDIX 3: Listed Buildings in Stratton St Margaret parish

List Entry	Name	Street	Grade	Date Listed	Grid Ref.
1023418	73 Swindon Road	Swindon Road	II	20-Sep-79	SU 17392 86924
1023415	Churchyard Tomb of Susanah Nicholas Van Acker of Erith	Church Street	II	20-Sep-79	SU 17983 87113
1023417	Gate Piers to Former Kingsdown House	Kingsdown Road	II	20-Sep-79	SU 17305 88722
1185454	Pigeon House to Rear of Premises of Coventry Drafting Company	Pigeon House Lane	II	20-Sep-79	SU 17408 87187
1185433	19 Green Road	Green Road	II	20-Sep-79	SU 16240 87360
1185514	Stratton Park	9 Wanborough Road	II	20-Sep-79	SU 18521 86251
1185393	Church of St Margaret	Church Street	I	26-Jan-95	SU 17956 87095
1299660	Church Farmhouse	Church Street	II	03-May-77	SU 17832 87030
1355906	The Wheatsheaf	167 Ermin Street	II	20-Sep-79	SU 17708 87050
1299695	Dockle Farmhouse	2 Bridge End Road	II	12-Dec-78	SU 17110 86237

1355907	41 Green Road	Green Road	II	20-Sep-79	SU 16357 87169
1023416	21 Green Road	Green Road	II	20-Sep-79	SU 16261 87338
1185439	Arkells Brewery House	Beechcroft Road	II	20-Sep-79	SU 16587 88169
1409198	Roman Road Bridge	N/A	II	18-Jul-12	SU 18224 86516
1355943	Milestone Opposite St Philip's Road	Beechcroft Road	II	20-Sep-79	SU 16281 87828

APPENDIX 4: Locally Significant Buildings and Assets identified in community consultation (not the definitive list in SSM7)

Site	Archival Information	Consultee Support
Arkell's pubs	<p>"Brewing was developed, the Star Brewery (long since defunct) was set up in Lower Stratton, as in 1843 was Arkell's Brewery, which transferred to Kingsdown in 1861" Stratton St Margaret Official Guide, Forward Publicity Ltd.</p> <p>"The old White Hart was built in the early part of the 19th century, and was the haunt of many of the users of the old canal"</p> <p>"Stratton Feast or Revel was held on the first Monday in August. At the time of this poster, the festivities tended to go on for a week. Stalls were erected from the Willow to the Crown".</p> <p>"The Crown Inn at Lower Stratton provided more than drinking. Before the Great War it sported a Quoits team." Frederick Fuller, Stratton in Camera: Photographs of Yesteryear, Red Brick Publishing, 1984</p> <p>Moonraker's; Baker's Arms (1800s); Kingsdown Inn (1847); The Rat Trap (1840s) etc. Stratton Remembered, SSMPC, 2000</p>	<p>Significant support for protection of brewery heritage from public</p> <p>The Crown – listed by SBC as possibility within criteria</p>
Upper Stratton Baptist Church	<p>"Nonconformity reached the village early. The Old Baptist Church in Swindon Road was founded in the 1740s; the primitive Methodists established a society in Lower Stratton in 1825 and Upper Stratton Baptist Church was established in the 1860s." Stratton St Margaret Official Guide, Forward Publicity Ltd.</p> <p>"Green Road Chapel was set up as an Independent Chapel in 1860 by a Mr. Tucker of Bourton. It soon became one of the social centres for Upper Stratton. A day school was set up in the chapel, until a stone built school, under the auspices of the British and Foreign School Secretary, was built nearby. The Chapel had a large Sunday School, which used to process</p>	<p>Councillor working group</p> <p>Support for Green Road chapel & cemetery protection in public survey</p>

	Upper Stratton on Treat days." <i>Frederick Fuller, Stratton in Camera: Photographs of Yesteryear, Red Brick Publishing, 1984</i> 'The Tucker Memorial Baptist Church', named after Henry Tucker <i>Stratton Remembered, SSMPC, 2000</i> Green Road chapel – built in 1869 <i>Stratton Remembered, SSMPC, 2000</i>	
Stratton Green Baptist Church	<p>"There were Baptists in Stratton Green in the 17th century. By the 18th century they had a Meeting House, in which in 1741 the hymn-writer John Cennick preached, after he had been manhandled by a hostile crowd urged on by the Vicar. A small chapel with a baptistery and balcony was built in 1851, and stayed in use until 1936."</p> <p>Frederick Fuller, <i>Stratton in Camera: Photographs of Yesteryear</i>, Red Brick Publishing, 1984</p> <p>http://www.wiltshire-opc.org.uk/Items/Stratton%20St.%20Margaret/Stratton%20St.%20Margaret%20-%20Stratton%20Green%20Baptist%20Chapel%20History%201751-2014.pdf</p>	Councillor working group
Boundary House, Beechcroft Road	<p>"The huge Boundary House stands out like a sore thumb in Upper Stratton. Built in 1894 it is said to be a replica of the owner's house in Bayswater. Named Boundary House, after Boundary Cottage which stood here, the last house at that time to pay rates and dues to Highworth rather than Swindon" Frederick Fuller, <i>Stratton in Camera: Photographs of Yesteryear</i>, Red Brick Publishing, 1984</p>	<p>Support from public surveys to protect</p> <p>Councillor working group</p>
The Methodist Church, Ermin Street	<p>"In 1883 the Primitive Methodists built an imposing chapel on Ermin Street, facing down Swindon Road. Previously this site had housed a blacksmith's shop, and on the other side of the road was a wayside pond."</p> <p>"Soon the site was occupied by the large building still standing, although the clock did not appear until the 1930s. The chapel was built by Thomas Colbourne, one of the</p>	Councillor working group

	<p>Primitive Methodist members, who built many chapels in Swindon and the districts around.”</p> <p>“It was one of the first public buildings to be lit by gas. A clock, which could not be seen by the preacher, was a prominent feature.”</p> <p>“The Primitive Methodists were always out and about in the open air, with Camp Meetings, Sunday School processions, or with special evangelical services”</p> <p>Frederick Fuller, Stratton in Camera: Photographs of Yesteryear, Red Brick Publishing, 1984</p> <p>Building cost £1,600. School room added 1897. Organ installed 1938. Stratton Remembered, SSMPC, 2000</p>	
St Philip's Church	<p>“In 1879, John Arkell provided a barrel store to be a church, called St Philip's, in Upper Stratton. The building had originally been an Independent Chapel in Regent Street, Swindon. The road in Upper Stratton was called St Philip's Road, but the new church, built in 1904, is in what is now called Beechcroft Road. The firm which built the present red brick church went bankrupt, and a Stratton builder had to finish the building. There was never enough money to build the small bell turret that had to wait for 75 years.” Frederick Fuller, Stratton in Camera: Photographs of Yesteryear, Red Brick Publishing, 1984</p> <p>Architect: William Masters of Stanton Fitzwarren. Foundation stone laid by Edith Arkell, wife of Thomas Arkell 1904 Stratton Remembered, SSMPC, 2000</p>	Councillor address – St Philip's Road chapel, cottages along St Philip's Road
Grange Infant's School	<p>“Infants was founded 10th June 1895, on 28th March 1906 it became Lower Stratton Infants Council School. In 1938 the school was given electric lighting and piped heating. The original bell turret was removed in 1939. During the war the school shared with evacuees from Barking, London. In 1945 the school became Lower Stratton County Infants and in 1963 when the juniors had moved to the new school it</p>	Councillor working group

	became Grange Infants School.” http://www.wiltshire-opc.org.uk/Items/Stratton%20St.%20Margaret/Stratton%20St.%20Margaret%20-%20Education.pdf	
Stratton Education Centre	“In 1872 there was a newly formed Stratton Board of Education which in due course built the Girls’ and Infant Schools at the junctions of Green Lane and St. Philip’s Road.” Frederick Fuller, Stratton in Camera: Photographs of Yesteryear, Red Brick Publishing, 1984	Councillor working group
Victorian Chapel at Green Road Cemetery	The Chapel is a Victorian curio and shows the religious developments in the parish. It is contemporary with the graveyard.	
Wilden Square	Originally the Quadrangle, oldest council housing in Britain	Nigel Chalk, Local Historian and Resident
Beechcroft Road Methodist Church		Nigel Chalk, Local Historian and Resident

Other structures

Milestone, Lower Stratton, outside No. 161 Swindon Road:

Carved stone post by the B4006, in parish of STRATTON ST MARGARET (SWINDON District), Lower Stratton, outside No. 161 Swindon Road, in front of fence behind tarmac footpath, on East side of road. Milestone, erected by the Lechlade to Swindon turnpike trust in the 19th century. Inscription reads; : HIGHWORTH / 5 / SWINDON / 3 / not Listed. *Heritage Gateway*

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Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan

Independent Examiner's Report

May 2020

Barbara Maksymiw

Independent Examiner BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

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Appendix 1 Background Documents

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Summary

I have been appointed by Swindon Borough Council to carry out an independent examination of the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan.

The examination was carried out in January 2020 and was undertaken by considering all the documents submitted to me, including the written representations. I visited the Neighbourhood Plan area on 11 January 2020.

The plan is based on engagement with the local community and provides a distinct set of policies, relevant to the needs of local people. Stratton St Margaret is a large urban parish which forms part of the wider Swindon Urban Area and an important residential and employment area for the town , and is home to a number of large national employers. The plan does not make any new allocations for housing or jobs, but seeks to conserve and enhance the services and facilities which already exist in the parish.

Subject to a number of modifications set out in this report, I conclude that the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions and I am pleased to recommend that it should proceed to referendum.

I recommend that the referendum should be confined to the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Barbara Maksymiw

Independent Examiner

May 2020

1. Introduction

1. Neighbourhood planning is a relatively new process, introduced by the Localism Act 2011, which enables local communities to develop planning policies to guide development in their area and help to shape the places where they live and work.

2. Stratton St Margaret Parish is situated in Wiltshire and lies two miles to north east of Swindon Town Centre. The parish was once a separate village with a distinct Victorian history, but it now forms part of the greater Swindon urban area. By the 2011 census, its population had reached over 19,000 and it is an important employment location for the District as whole. Several strategic policy areas, designed to accommodate growth pressures in Swindon, lie outside the Parish boundary but will impact on the parish as they widen the extent of the urban area around it.

3. The purpose of this report is to assess whether the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan (NP) complies with the relevant legislation and meets the Basic Conditions, which such plans are required to meet. Where necessary, the report makes recommendations about changes or modifications to the plan to ensure that it meets the legislative requirements.

4. The report also makes a recommendation about whether the NP should proceed to the referendum stage. If there is a positive recommendation at referendum, the NP can be “made” by Swindon Borough Council and so become part of the wider development plan and then used by Swindon Borough Council to determine planning applications in the plan area.

2. Appointment of the independent examiner

5. I have been appointed by Swindon Borough Council, with the agreement of Stratton St Margaret Parish Council to carry out this independent examination. The Neighbourhood Planning Independent Referral Service (NPIERS) has facilitated my appointment. I am a chartered town planner with extensive planning experience in local government and therefore have the appropriate qualifications and experience to carry out this examination. I am independent of the qualifying body and have no interest in the area that might be affected by the plan.

3. The role of the independent examiner

6. The role of the independent examiner is to ensure that the submitted NP meets the Basic Conditions together with a number of legal requirements.

7. In examining the NP I am required, under Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to check ¹ that :

- the policies in the plan relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area: and
- the policies in the plan meet the requirements of Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (that is, it specifies the period to which it has effect, does not include provision about excluded development and does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area); and
- the plan has been prepared for an area that has been designated under Section 61G of the Localism Act and has been developed by a qualifying body

8. I must also consider whether the NP meets the Basic Conditions set out in Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). A plan meets the basic conditions² if:

- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan
- the making of the plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
- the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area
- the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with European Union (EU) obligations

9. Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended) set out two additional basic conditions. These are:

- the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have significant effects on a European site ³ or a European offshore marine site ⁴ either alone or in combination with other plans or projects and
- having regard to all material considerations, it is appropriate that the neighbourhood development order is made where the development described in an order proposal is Environmental Impact Assessment development (this does not apply to this examination as

1 Set out in paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended)

2 As defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012

3 As defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 2007

it is not about a neighbourhood development order).

10. A further Basic Condition was added by legislation on 28 December 2018. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 para 1 states:

"In relation to the examination of neighbourhood development plans the following basic condition is prescribed for the purpose of paragraph 8(2)(g) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act-

- The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017."

11. As independent examiner, having examined the plan, I am required to make one of the following recommendations:

- that the plan as submitted can proceed to a referendum; or
- that the plan with recommended modifications can proceed to referendum; or
- that the plan does not meet the necessary legal requirements and cannot proceed to referendum

12. The independent examiner can only recommend modifications to ensure that the NP meets the Basic Conditions and other legislative requirements, or for the purpose of correcting errors.

13. If the plan can proceed to referendum with or without modifications, the examiner must also consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the neighbourhood plan area to which it relates.

14. Swindon Borough Council will consider the examiner's report and decide whether it is satisfied with the examiner's recommendations and will publicise its decision on whether the plan will be subject to referendum, with or without modifications. If a referendum is held and results in more than half of those voting in favour of the plan, the Council must "make" the neighbourhood plan a part of its development plan. The plan then becomes part of the development plan for the area and is a statutory consideration in guiding future development and determining planning applications in the area.

4. Compliance with matters other than the basic conditions

15. Stratton St Margaret Parish Council applied for the Parish to be designated as a neighbourhood

planning area in 2013. On 25 November 2013 Swindon Borough Council designated Stratton St Margaret Parish as a Neighbourhood Area in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. It was then re-designated on 4 August 2015 following the establishment of Nythe Parish Council. It was then re-designated for a second time in May 2018 in order to reflect changes to the parish boundary implemented by the 2016 parish governance review. The designated area reflects the revised parish boundary and does not cover any other Neighbourhood Area and the qualifying body is Stratton St Margaret Parish Council. I noted however, that the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area on the Swindon Borough Council website was out of date. This should be updated.

- **Recommendation : Update boundary of Neighbourhood Plan area on Swindon Borough Council to that approved in May 2018**

16. The Stratton St Margaret NP covers the period from 2019-2026, which accords with the plan period set by the adopted Swindon Local Plan ie up to 2026. This is a short time frame for a Neighbourhood Plan and I have commented on this further in paragraphs 64-69 below.

17. The preparation of the plan has been managed by a Steering Group made up of equal numbers of Parish Councillors and community volunteers , supplemented by planning consultant support from Andrea Pellegram.

18. I am satisfied that the NP includes policies that relate to the development and use of land and does not include provision for any excluded development. The Stratton St Margaret NP therefore meets the requirements set out in para 7 above.

5. The examination process

19. The documents which I considered during the course of the examination are listed in Appendix 1.

20. The general rule⁵ is that an examination is undertaken by the consideration of written representations only. Having considered all the information before me, including the representations made to the submitted plan (the Regulation 16 responses), I was satisfied that the Stratton St Margaret NP could be examined without the need for a public hearing.

21. During the course of the examination it was necessary to clarify several matters with Swindon

⁵ PPG para 004 ref id 41-004-20140306

Council and the Parish Council. These are set out in Appendix 2 to this report. I was provided with helpful responses to my questions and I am satisfied that I had all the information I required to carry out the examination.

22. As part of the Neighbourhood Plan Examination process, it is important for the examiner to understand the context of the neighbourhood plan in the wider area and its overall character, as these shape the issues and policies set out in the plan. I therefore made an unaccompanied site visit to the area on 11 January 2020.

23. The plan has been assessed against the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) dated February 2019 in accordance with paragraph 214 of Appendix 1, as the plan was submitted to Swindon Borough Council in autumn 2019.

6. Consultation

Consultation process

24. Effective consultation and engagement with the local community is an essential component of a successful neighbourhood plan, bringing a sense of public ownership to its proposals and helping to achieve consensus. The policies set out in the NP will be used as the basis for planning decisions – both on local planning and on planning applications – and, as such, legislation requires neighbourhood plans to be supported by public consultation.

25. In line with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012⁶, the Steering Group has prepared a Consultation Statement for the NP which sets out how the group approached public consultation, who was consulted and the outcomes.

26. Throughout the plan preparation process, the Steering Group sought to consult and engage as wide a range of people as possible and feedback has been used to inform the content and scope of the plan. The first stage of plan preparation, during 2015, involved initial consultations with developers, economic development interests and the public and social media communications began. More detailed surveys to support the NP and public consultation events followed in 2016 and 2017. In 2018 the preparation of the plan itself got under way, following the final review of the NP boundary.

27. The first formal consultation on the Stratton St Margaret Regulation 14 Draft Neighbourhood

⁶ Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

Development Plan took place in spring 2019.

28. It is clear from the Consultation Statement that the Steering Group has engaged widely with the local community and kept people informed as the plan progressed. This consultation process has helped to develop the vision for the plan and ensure that the community's vision for the Parish has been clearly shaped by the views and priorities of the community. This is:

In 2026, Stratton St Margaret will be a place that can provide for its economic, social housing, transport, business and community needs within the wider Swindon Borough. The parish will be a vibrant community with a distinct character and sense of place that can develop sustainably into the future

Representations received

29. Preparing the NP has involved two statutory six-week periods of public consultation. The first, on the Regulation 14 Draft Plan, took place between 18 March and 11 April 2019. Four written responses were received, one of which was from Swindon Borough Council. A further 51 individual responses were made through the on-line survey monkey system.

30. The second consultation on the Submission Draft NP was managed by Swindon Borough Council and took place between 13 November 2019 and 3 January 2020. This generated seven responses – four from statutory bodies and consultants and three from Swindon Borough Council.

31. Occasionally in this report I refer to representations and identify the organisation making that particular comment. However, I have not referred to every representation in my report. Nonetheless, I can assure everyone that each comment made has been looked at and carefully considered.

32. From the evidence in front of me, it is apparent that the Stratton St Margaret NP has been subject to appropriate and extensive community engagement organised by the Steering Group. I am therefore satisfied that the consultation process which has been followed complies with the requirements of the Regulations.

7. Compliance with the basic conditions

33. In my role as independent examiner I must assess whether the NP meets the Basic Conditions set out in the Regulations as described in paras 7-9 above.

34. I have considered the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions Statement produced by the Steering Group, and other supporting documentation, to assist my assessment which is set out below.

National Policy

35. National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in the supporting Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). At the heart of the planning system is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which applies to all levels of plan making. For neighbourhood plans, this means that neighbourhood plans should support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans and plan positively to shape local development. Planning Practice Guidance⁷ states that all plans should be prepared positively, be shaped by effective engagement with the local community and contain policies which are clearly written and unambiguous. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared.

36. Table 1 of the Basic Conditions Statement sets out an assessment of how each of the policies in the NP relates to the relevant paragraphs in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019. I therefore conclude that this Basic Condition is met.

Sustainable development

37. The qualifying body also has to demonstrate how a neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF⁸.

38. In response to my query, the Parish Council, has provided some additional text to add to the Basic Conditions Statement to explain how the NP contributes to achieving sustainable development. They suggest that the new text is located immediately after the section entitled “Other EU Obligations”. However, as sustainable development sits at the heart of national guidance and is more closely related to and derives from the NPPF, the new text would be better located between the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) section (para 16) and the Conformity with the Development Plan section (para 17). With this amendment, the NP meets the basic conditions.

⁷ Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 41-041-20140306

⁸ NPPF 2019 Para 16

- **Recommendation : Add the following text to the Basic Conditions Statement as a new section between the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) section (para 16) and the Conformity with the Development Plan section (para 17):**
 - **The Stratton St Margaret NDP delivers sustainable development in all its policies:**
 - **Policy SSM2 seeks to encourage developers of large employment sites within the Parish to engage with the Stratton St Margaret community to ensure that development brings benefits to parishioners in the form of appropriate employment opportunities and the design of major schemes. This policy is read in conjunction with other policies in the NDP. It meets all three sustainability objectives.**
 - **Policy SSM3 seeks to introduce a locally-defined mix of new housing thus meeting the social objective of ensuring that a range of homes can meet the needs of present and future generations.**
 - **Policy SSM4 seeks to protect key community infrastructure to meet the needs of present and future generations, part of the social objective.**
 - **Policy SSM5 seeks to encourage greater walking and cycling in the Parish which meets the economic objective in that it identifies necessary infrastructure, but also encourages non-motorised transport which has a positive effect on how we manage climate change in a low carbon economy. It also meets a social objective in that it seeks to provide accessible services.**
 - **Policy SSM6 seeks to direct local services to neighbourhood clusters so that people can walk or cycle to them, rather than drive to more distant service centres. Like SSM5, this contributes to management of climate change in a low carbon economy.**
 - **Policy SSM7 identifies locally important buildings and assets which meets the social objective by fostering a well-designed environment and protects the Parish's cultural well-being. It meets the environmental objective in that it seeks to protect the built and historic environment.**
 - **Policy SSM8 contributes to protecting and enhancing the natural environment and seeks to allow provision for allotments which meet the environmental objective of using natural resources prudently.**

Development Plan

39. The NP also has to demonstrate that it accords with the strategic policies of the Development Plan. In terms of the wider planning of Swindon Borough Council as a whole, the Neighbourhood

Development Plan has been prepared in the Swindon Borough Local Plan, which was adopted on March 2015. There is therefore an up to date development plan in place. I note also that a review of the Swindon Borough Local Plan is underway and that consultation on the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan took place between 17 December 2019 and 31 January 2020.

40. Table 2 of the Basic Conditions Statement sets an assessment of how each of the policies in the NP relates to the relevant strategic policies in the Swindon Borough Local Plan. A number of the policies are designed to support and amplify the policies in the Local Plan so that they are relevant to the particular needs and priorities of the parish.

41. In view of the very recent consultation of the emerging Local Plan, I asked Swindon Borough Council to provide an assessment of how the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan comply with those in the emerging Local Plan. This confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan was broadly aligned with the policies in the new Local Plan. In view of the relatively short life span of the Neighbourhood Plan, once it is adopted, I suggest that a clear statement about how it fits with the emerging Local Plan is added as a new Table 3 to the Basic Conditions Statement along with a short explanatory paragraph. This should be based on the information supplied to me by Swindon Borough Council on 4 March 2020.

- **Recommendation : Add a new Table 3 to the Basic Conditions Statement which sets out how the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan fit with those in the merging Local Plan, along with a short explanatory paragraph. This should be based on the information supplied to me by Swindon Borough Council on 4 March 2020.**

42. From my assessment of the plan's policies in the rest of my report, it is evident that the strategic policies of the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan have generally been carried through to the NP and that it is also broadly in line with the policies in the emerging replacement Local Plan . Therefore, subject to the recommended changes set out in Section 8 below, I conclude that the NP is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan and therefore this basic condition is met.

Basic Conditions – conclusions

43. I have considered the Basic Conditions Statement, the supporting evidence and representations made to the Stratton St Margaret NP and I am satisfied that the Plan as submitted follows the general principles set out in national planning policy and contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. It sets out a positive vision for the parish and policies to protect its

distinctive character while accommodating development needs.

44. At a practical level, however, a few of the policies in the Submission NP need some minor adjustment to ensure that they comply with the NPPF and the strategic guidance in the Swindon Borough Local Plan. I have therefore suggested a number of modifications in Section 8 below to help ensure that the plan accords with national and strategic guidance and therefore meets the basic conditions.

European obligations and Human Rights Requirements

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

45. The SEA Directive aims to provide a high level of protection to the environment by ensuring that environmental considerations are included in the process of preparing plans and programmes. A neighbourhood plan must be compatible with European Union obligations as incorporated into UK law, in order to be legally compliant. Key directives relate to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives.

46. Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations as amended in 2015 requires either that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is submitted with a Neighbourhood Plan proposal or a determination is made by the responsible authority that the plan is not likely to have “significant effects.”

47. A Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Opinion of the Stratton St Margaret NP was carried out by Swindon Borough Council in April 2019 . This concluded that the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan will not have significant effects in relation to any of the criteria set out in schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations, and therefore does not require a SEA. It also identifies that there is one internationally designated site within 9km of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. However, as the plan does not allocate sites and is in general conformity with the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan will not require a HRA.

48. I have considered all the relevant background material and I am therefore satisfied that the submitted Stratton St Margaret NP meets the requirements set out in the SEA Directive so this basic condition is met.

Human rights requirements

49. Page 6 of the Basic Conditions Statement provides a very short statement which confirms that it the Steering Group had sought to reach out to the whole community in preparing the NP and it considers that the NP is compatible with the requirements of EU obligations in relation to human rights.

50. I am satisfied therefore that the NP is compatible with the requirements of EU obligations in relation to human rights and no evidence has been submitted to me to suggest otherwise. I am satisfied, then, that the Plan does not breach the European Convention on Human Rights obligations and therefore meets the Basic Conditions.

Other Directives

51. I am not aware of any other European Directives that would apply to this NDP, and in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, I am satisfied that the plan is compatible with EU obligations.

8. Neighbourhood Plan policies

52. This section of my report considers the NP policies against the basic conditions.

53. The Plan is clearly written and is well presented, with a clear structure distinguished by separate sections. The plan policies are grouped by theme and for each policy there is a short introduction and supporting text followed by the policy itself which is set out in a coloured text box. This is an easy to follow approach and the Steering Group are to be commended on the presentation of the policies and the maps which support the plan.

54. All of the policies relate to the development and use of land and none cover excluded development, such as minerals and waste, so the statutory requirements and guidance set out in Planning Practice Guidance⁹ are met. However, some of the policies refer to development outside the NP area which may impact on the plan area and I have commented on these policies in paragraphs 71-74 below.

55. As part of this examination, my report includes a series of recommended modifications to ensure that the policies are expressed concisely and precisely in order to comply with the basic conditions.

⁹ Planning Practice Guidance PPG para 004

Where I have suggested modifications, these are identified in **bold text**. The recommended modifications relate mainly to issues of clarity and precision and are designed to ensure that the plan fully accords with national and strategic policies. I have considered the policies in the order they appear in the Plan, by section and comment on all of the policies, whether I have suggested modifications or not. Where I consider that the supporting paragraphs need amendment to help explain and justify the plan policy, I have made comments to that effect.

Background

56. This section explains the background to the plan and summarises the various stages which the Plan has gone through. This is very useful background material and I have no comments to make.

Foreword and Introduction

57. These sections introduce the Neighbourhood Plan, explains why a NP is being prepared and the approach taken to community involvement. I have no comments to make.

Our Vision

58. This section sets out the vision for the NP, which is:

*In 2026, Stratton St Margaret will be a place that can provide for its economic, social housing, transport, business and community needs within the wider Swindon Borough.
The parish will be a vibrant community with a distinct character and sense of place that can develop sustainably into the future*

59. This section also introduces the core aims for the plan. I have no comments to make.

Stratton St Margaret Parish

60. This section provides some historical context to the Parish and is useful background for the NP policies which follow. I have no comments to make.

Strategic Context

61. This section outlines the strategic context in which the Stratton St Margaret NP sits. This is important context as the parish's future is profoundly affected by the growth and development of Swindon. I saw from my site visit the extent to which major employment sites such as the B and Q distribution depot and the Honda car factory dominate the landscape. The development of further employment areas, identified in the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, both within and outside the

NP boundary confirm the Parish's importance as a key employment location for Swindon. Although there are no major residential allocations identified in the local Plan within the NP boundary, there are two large mixed-use allocations, which include new residential development, at Kingsdown and the Eastern Villages which directly abut the NP area.

62. Guidance in the NPPF is that neighbourhood plans should plan positively to support the policies in the Local Plan and should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies¹⁰. The NP therefore has to strike an appropriate balance between accepting the strategic approach set out in the Local Plan and addressing the concerns of local people as expressed through the visioning work which was undertaken during the preparation of the NP.

63. A review of the Swindon Borough Local Plan is currently under way and formal consultation on the Submission version (Regulation 19) of the plan ran between 17 December 2019 and 31 January 2020.

64. A representation has raised concerns about the timeliness of the NP, given the progress that is being made on the Swindon LP review. In particular, they wish to promote residential development at Catsbrain Farm on Kingsdown Road. The site has been identified as Site Reference S0368 in the Swindon Borough Council's Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) published in February 2019. The site is categorised as "developable" in the SHELAA and is the subject of a current planning application.

65. I saw from my site visit that the site is an open area of land on the fringe of the urban area, but outside the defined Urban Area of Swindon as identified in the adopted Local Plan. At the time of my site visit, the site was in agricultural use.

66. However, the SHELAA only identifies sites with potential for future development. It does not allocate sites to be developed. The allocation of sites for future development will take place in the Local Plan review or in any locally produced Neighbourhood Plans. Nor does the identification of potential development sites within the SHELAA imply that the council would necessarily grant planning permission for development.

67. Furthermore, guidance in the NPPF and PPG about preparing Neighbourhood Plans when Local Plans are emerging or under review says that:

¹⁰ NPPF para 28

Neighbourhood plans, when brought into force, become part of the statutory development plan for the area that they cover.

They can be developed before, after or in parallel with a local plan, but the law requires that they must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted local plan for the area (and any other strategic policies that form part of the statutory development plan where relevant, such as the London Plan). Neighbourhood plans are not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan although the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested.

Where a neighbourhood plan is brought forward before an up-to-date local plan is in place the local planning authority should take a proactive and positive approach, working collaboratively with a qualifying body. This could include sharing evidence and seeking to resolve any issues to ensure the draft neighbourhood plan has the greatest chance of success at independent examination.¹¹

68. It would therefore not be appropriate for the NP to anticipate conclusions or decisions which emerge during the course of the wider strategic review of the Local Plan, which will include reviewing and updating the strategic housing land allocations.

69. Nonetheless, a much clearer statement should be made about the scope and timescale of the Swindon Borough Local Plan Review and the limited time frame of the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan should be also recognised more explicitly in the NP .

- **Recommendation: : Add a new paragraph 31 and 32 to read : “31. Swindon Borough Council has prepared an updated Local Plan which it proposes to submit to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Local Plan relates to the whole Borough and provides a strategy for delivering growth for Swindon Borough up to 2036. The document provides the vision, objectives, strategic policies, development management policies and site-specific allocations for delivering new homes, jobs, services, facilities and infrastructure. The consultation period on the Submission Draft of the Local Plan ran from 17 December 2019 until 31 January 2020.**

¹¹ Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 61-006-20190723 :Revision date: 23 07 2019

32. The emerging Local Plan could well have implications for the Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan area in the longer term and these will need to be assessed through an early review of the Neighbourhood Plan. In the meantime, it is therefore appropriate that the timeframe for the current NP remains short – ie up to 2026, in line with the policies in the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan.” Renumber existing paragraphs 31 and 32 and paragraphs 33 and 34 respectively. Renumber all subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

70. A representation has commented that there are a number of Key Employment Areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area and, although these are shown with orange horizontal hatching on Figure 7, they are not named. I agree that naming these sites would assist future users of the plan. In response to my query, Swindon Borough Council has provided an annotated map showing the names and Local Plan reference numbers of each employment site in or adjoining the Neighbourhood Plan area. I therefore suggest that Figure 7 is annotated using this information. I also suggest that the boundary of the Swindon Urban Area defined in the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan is added to Figures 7, 8 and 9.

- **Recommendation : Add names of Key Employment Areas within the neighbourhood plan area to Figure 7. Add Swindon Urban Area Boundary to figures 7, 8 and 9**

Policy SSM1(Informative) Strategic Development outside the parish boundary

71. The Steering Group has taken positive approach to the employment and housing allocations made in the Local Plan and sets out a policy SSM1 which seeks to ensure that the impacts of these strategic sites on the NP area are dealt with as they are developed over time.

72. However, as drafted it is not a land use planning policy, it is a policy about the process of consultation which the Steering Group would like to see followed when proposals are being drawn up for the Strategic Development areas. It is therefore not appropriate for a Neighbourhood Plan and should be deleted.

- **Recommendation : Delete Policy SMM1 and renumber subsequent policies accordingly**

Policy SSM2 Redevelopment of Large Sites

73. The NP area is home to a number of established, large scale manufacturing and commercial premises – notably G-Park, Honda UK, BMW, the B and Q Distribution centre and the Greenbridge Retail Park. All are important sources of employment and key to the prosperity of Stratton St Margaret and the NP acknowledges that, should any of these companies decide that their Swindon

operations were no longer required, their sites could become surplus to requirements and ultimately become large brownfield sites with opportunities for redevelopment.

74. Policy SSM2 provides guidance in such circumstances and is aligned with the strategic guidance in policy EC2 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan. It therefore meets the basic conditions and I have no comments to make.

Policy SSM3 Housing

75. This section outlines the approach to new housing development in the NP area. By way of background, paragraph 41 states that the outstanding housing requirement for the parish is between 50 to 100 dwellings being required to 2026 . This conflicts with the statement in paragraph 47 that the requirement is 416 dwellings over the same period.

76. In response to my query, both Swindon Borough Council and the Parish Council has confirmed that the correct figure is between 50 and 100 dwellings and that paragraph 47 should be deleted.

77. The Brough Council also confirmed that 341 dwellings had been built in the NP area between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2019 and that there were live planning permissions for 231 dwellings at 31 March 2019. This means that the housing requirement set out in the strategic policies in the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 can be met. A statement to this effect should be added to the NP.

- **Recommendation : Delete Paragraph 47 and insert new paragraph 42 to read “A total of 341 dwellings were built in the NP area between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2019. In addition, there were live planning consents for 231 dwellings at 31 March 2019. This means that the housing requirement set out in the strategic policies in the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 can be met.” Renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly.**

78. Some fine tuning of Policy SSM3 is required to ensure clarity for future users of the plan. In particular, criterion c. which relates to individual dwellings of 4-5 bedrooms overlaps with criterion a. which deals more generally with bungalows, detached and semi-detached homes, regardless of size. I therefore consider criteria c. is superfluous and should be deleted.

79. To fit with the format of the other criteria, criteria e. needs to be reworded. Criteria d. and f. are standalone statements and should be expressed as part of the main policy.

- **Recommendation : Delete criterion c. from Policy SSM3 and renumber subsequent criteria accordingly. Reword criterion e. to read “ the affordable housing provision is for smaller dwellings (1-2 bedrooms)”. Delete criteria d. and f. and add new paragraph at the end of the policy to read “Development that will result in the loss of bungalows will be resisted. Housing developments designed to meet the needs of older people, including but not limited to sheltered housing, assisted living, retirement villages and nursing homes, should be located within walking distance of services.”**

Policy SSM4 Community facilities and publicly accessible sites

80. Stratton St Margaret Parish has a wide range of social and community facilities and Policy SSM4 seeks to support these. The policy accords with and amplifies the strategic guidance in policy CM4 in the Adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan so meets the basic conditions. A representation from Thames Water suggests that the NP should include policies regarding the provision of sewerage/wastewater treatment and water supply infrastructure. These matters are relevant across the Borough as a whole and to all forms of development and are therefore best dealt with by strategic policies set out in the Local Plan rather than in each individual Neighbourhood Plan. No change to the NP is therefore required.

81. On a point of detail, in paragraph 64 it is not clear what actions are being given priority so I suggest that the first sentence it is reworded to make this clear.

- **Recommendation : Add after “priority” in paragraph 64 “ for maintenance and improvement works ”**

Policy SSM5 Transport and Movement

82. Traffic and congestion is a significant issue for the parish of Stratton St Margaret and policy SSM5 is designed to ensure improvements are made to access and facilities, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. The policy accords with and amplifies the strategic guidance in policies TR1 and TR2 in the Adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan so meets the basic conditions. It is particularly helpful to have the local priorities for local transport improvements set out so clearly in the Neighbourhood Plan. However, it is not necessary to include the detail of the work required in the policy itself as this is already covered in the supporting text in paragraph 65. Some minor rewording of clause C is therefore required. Swindon Borough Council has also suggested some fine tuning of Policy SSM5 and I agree this would help to improve clarity

- **Recommendation :** In clause A delete “on site” and replace “across the site” with “to key destinations.” Reword clause B to read “Development should make a contribution towards improving and extending the pedestrian and cycle network where they add pressure to it.” In SSM5C, delete “tree root damage” from criterion a. ; delete “remedial work required” from criterion b.; delete “small concrete plinth slightly raised” from criterion c.; delete “very poor condition” from criterion d.; delete “tree root damage” from criterion e.; delete “cycle risk, splits in tarmac “ from criterion f.; delete “tree root damage” from criterion g. and delete “tree root damage and low hanging branches” from criterion h.

Policy SSM6 Local Centres

83. The lack of a distinctive local centre in the Neighbourhood Plan area was an issue raised through public consultation and policy SSM6 seeks to support and encourage improved provision, as and when opportunities arise. The approach amplifies the strategic guidance in the Swindon Borough Local Plan and so meets the basic conditions.

84. My only comment is that the policy would benefit from some minor rewording to strengthen it and improve clarity.

- **Recommendation :** Add “At” before Hobley Drive in SSM6Ab.; add “In” before “The area” in SSM6Ac. And delete “seek to” after “policy SSM2 should”

Policy SSM7 Locally Important Buildings and Assets

85. Stratton St Margaret has a distinctive heritage which contributes to its “sense of place”. The growth of the village from a small settlement outside Swindon to it effectively becoming an integral part of the wider urban area is well illustrated by Figures 2 and 3. A representation has suggested that these figures are superfluous, but I consider that they provide very useful context for the plan as a whole and particularly for Policy SSM7. They therefore should remain in the NP.

86. Policy SSM7 seeks to protect a number of Locally Important Buildings and Assets which are listed in the table on page 31 under paragraph 74 and mapped in Figure 11. The policy itself amplifies the strategic guidance in the Swindon Borough Local Plan under policy EN10 so meets the basic conditions in general terms. It would, however, benefit from some minor rewording to strengthen it and improve clarity.

- **Recommendation : Delete “A.” from the first line of policy SSM7. Delete “should be considered as” in second line of policy SSM7 and replace with “are” .**

Policy SSM8 Open Space, Allotments , Burial Space

87. Areas of open space are highly valued in the Neighbourhood Plan area and the maintenance and overall tidiness of these assets is of great importance to local people. Policy SSM8 seeks to protect existing assets and add to the provision wherever and whenever opportunities arise. It amplifies the guidance in the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan and therefore meets the basic conditions.

88. On a point of detail, the last clause of the policy would benefit from some rewording to improve clarity.

- **Recommendation : Reword clause SSM8Eb to read “make additional provision to meet the Parish’s needs”**

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

89. I have examined the Stratton St Margaret NP and I have concluded that, subject to the modifications set out in my report, it meets the basic conditions and other statutory requirements.

90. I am therefore pleased to recommend to Swindon Borough Council that, subject to the modifications set out in my report, the Stratton St Margaret NP should proceed to referendum.

91. I am also required to consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the Stratton St Margaret NP area. I see no reason why it would be necessary to alter or extend the plan area for the purposes of holding a referendum, nor have I received any representations to that effect. I therefore conclude that the plan should proceed to referendum based on the neighbourhood area approved by Swindon Borough Council in May 2018.

APPENDIX 1: Background Documents

In undertaking this examination, I have considered the following documents:

- Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2026 Submission Draft: July 2019
- Consultation Statement: Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan January
- Basic Conditions Statement: Stratton St Margaret Parish Council
- Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan - Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Opinion : Prepared by Swindon Borough Council on behalf of Stratton St Margaret Parish Council : April 2019
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) February 2019
- Planning Practice Guidance March 2014 and subsequent updates
- Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 : Adopted March 2015
- Swindon Borough Local Plan review - Proposed submission draft stage : December 2019

APPENDIX 2:

Stratton St Margaret Neighbourhood Plan Examination

Request for further information and questions from the Examiner to Swindon Borough Council and Stratton St Margaret Parish Council

I have carried out a preliminary review of the Neighbourhood Plan and the evidence submitted in support of it and there are a few points where I need some clarification or further information. I would therefore be grateful if both Councils could assist me, as appropriate, in answering the following questions.

1.Basic Conditions Statement

In order to meet the basic conditions, the NP should demonstrate how it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. However, I see no reference to this in the Basic Conditions Statement. Please can you assist?

Table 2 sets out an assessment of how the Neighbourhood Plan conforms with the Adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 and the Minerals and Waste Core Strategies. However, the review of the Swindon Borough Local Plan is now well under way and is currently at the Submission Draft consultation stage. Has there been any assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan against the emerging policies of the new Local Plan?

2.Reg 14 and Reg 16 Consultation Dates

Please can the exact dates for the Regulation 14 and Regulation 16 consultations ie start and end dates be provided?

3.Policy SSM1 and Figure 7

Policy SSM1 refers to development of strategic employment sites which are allocated in the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan and shown in Figure 7 with orange hatching. Most of these sites are located outside the NP boundary, but some lie within it. Please can names for each of these sites be provided – ideally this could be done by annotating Figure 7 and naming the sites in the key?

4. Policy SSM3 Housing

I have a query regarding the justification for Policy SSM3 Housing which is set out in paragraphs 40 to 47 of the Neighbourhood Plan. The background to this section of the NP is, I think, derived from the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Advice produced by AECOM in 2015. Broadly, that study concludes that there is a housing need in the NP area of around 700 to 750 additional dwellings, the majority of which have already been built or otherwise committed. This is reiterated in paragraph 41 of the Neighbourhood Plan. I think, therefore, that the statement in paragraph 47 of the Neighbourhood Plan which states that the NP's share of the Swindon total requirement as 416 dwellings is incorrect and should be deleted. Please can the local authority and the Steering Group give their views?

On a related point, it would be very helpful to have an indication of the number of homes that have been completed in the Parish since 2015 and the number of outstanding commitments.

Thank you for your assistance with these questions. Once I have received your responses, I may need to ask for further clarification or further queries may arise as the examination progresses.

Please note that these questions and requests for information is a public document and the answers and any associated documents will also be in the public domain. Both my questions and the responses should be placed on the Councils' websites as appropriate.

Barbara Maksymiw

16 January 2020

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Appendix 3: Definition of the Basic Conditions

As defined by Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011):

“A draft order meets the basic conditions if—

(a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the order,

(b) having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, it is appropriate to make the order,

(c) having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any conservation area, it is appropriate to make the order,

(d) the making of the order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,

(e) the making of the order is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area),

(f) the making of the order does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations, and

(g) prescribed conditions are met in relation to the order and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order.”

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Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

Author:	Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport and Planning
Wards:	Blunsdon & Highworth,
Parishes Affected:	Blunsdon

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This Report invites Council to approve the Decisions Statement relating to the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan following the issuing of the independent Examiner's Report. It also seeks Council's approval to proceed with a local referendum regarding the adoption of the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 1.2 Schedule 4B (12) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and paragraph 18 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, require that a local authority must consider each of the recommendations made in the Examiner's Report and decide what action to take in response to each recommendation. If the authority is satisfied that, subject to modifications being made, the draft Neighbourhood Plan meets the legal requirements and basic conditions as set out in legislation, then the plan can proceed to referendum.
- 1.3 The production of Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan accords with policies in the Swindon Borough Local Plan. It links to the Council's Vision and Priorities 1.

2. Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 To approve the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statement as set out in the **Appendix 1** to this Report.
- 2.2 Authorise the Director of Strategic Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services, that subject to the Neighbourhood Plan being modified in accordance with Examiners Report, to take all appropriate actions to progress the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan to referendum in accordance with regulations set out in The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012.
- 2.3 Authorise the Counting Officer to undertake the referendum in respect of the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan on the 6 May 2021; or sooner should revised regulations allow.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Phil Smith, Direct Dial 01793 466443, psmith@swindon.gov.uk.

Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

3. Detail

Background

- 3.1 On 15 April 2013, Blunsdon St Andrew Parish Council requested that the Blunsdon Neighbourhood Area be designated for the purposes of producing a neighbourhood development plan for the area. Following a six-week consultation Swindon Borough Council designated the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Area on 5 August 2013. This area is not coterminous with the present Blunsdon Parish Council boundary, but is entirely contained within the parish boundary.
- 3.2 Blunsdon Parish Council undertook a pre-submission consultation on the draft Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan from 4 May 2019 to 15 June 2019 in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Blunsdon Parish Council considered the comments received during the consultation and made changes to the Plan.
- 3.3 Blunsdon Parish Council submitted the draft Neighbourhood Plan (**Appendix 2**) to Swindon Borough Council in October 2019 for assessment by an independent examiner. The Plan and associated documents were publicised for consultation by Swindon Borough Council for six weeks between 6 November 2019 and 18 December 2019, in line with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 3.4 Deborah McCann BSc MRICS MRTPI Dip Arch Con Dip LD was appointed as the Independent Examiner and all comments received through the Regulation 16 consultation were passed on for her consideration.

The Examiner's Report

- 3.5 The Examiner issued her Report into the of Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan on the 5 May 2020 (**Appendix 3**).
- 3.6 In total, the Examiner made 14 recommendations to the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan. She concluded that, subject to the modifications being made, the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan will meet the necessary basic conditions (as set out in Schedule 4b (8) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), and should proceed to referendum. For reference, the Basic Conditions are attached at **Appendix 4** to this report. She also recommended the Referendum Area should be the same as the Plan Area, should the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan go to Referendum.
- 3.7 Officers having reviewed the Examiner's Report, agree with all the recommendations and the reasons for them.

The Decision Statement

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Phil Smith, Direct Dial 01793 466443, psmith@swindon.gov.uk.

Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

- 3.8 In order to comply with the regulations cited in paragraph 1.2 of this Report, the Borough Council must produce a Decision Statement in which it should consider each of the Examiner's recommendations and whether the plan should proceed to referendum.
- 3.9 A copy of the proposed Decision Statement is attached at Appendix 1 to this Report.
- 3.10 In summary, it is recommended that all of the Examiner's recommendations are accepted, that the Plan is modified in accordance with them and the Plan proceeds to referendum in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Weight attached to the Neighbourhood Plan at this stage

- 3.11 In light of the Covid-19 restrictions the government has amended planning guidance as follows until further notice:
- 3.11.1 Where the local planning authority has issued a decision statement (as set out under Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012) detailing its intention to send a neighbourhood plan to referendum, that plan can be given significant weight in decision-making, so far as the plan is material to the application.

Next Steps

- 3.12 Should the Council approve the Decision Statement, Swindon Borough Council will publish on its website, and in such other manner as it considers appropriate to bring the decision statement and the report to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area:
- 3.12.1 the decision and their reasons for it ("the Decision Statement");
- 3.12.2 details of where and when the decision statement may be inspected; and
- 3.12.3 a copy of the Independent Examiner's report.
- 3.13 Should the Council agree with the recommendations, and that the plan can proceed to referendum, officers will need to accordingly modify the Plan in cooperation with the Parish Council and produce a final version for the referendum.
- 3.14 To meet the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, a referendum which poses the question "Do you want Swindon Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Area to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?" will be held in the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Area.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Phil Smith, Direct Dial 01793 466443, psmith@swindon.gov.uk.

Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

- 3.15 The government has been clear that all members of society are required to adhere to guidance to help combat the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). The guidance has implications for neighbourhood planning including: the referendum process; decision-making; oral representations for examinations; and public consultation. All neighbourhood planning referendums that have been recently cancelled, or are scheduled to take place, between 16 March 2020 and 5 May 2021 are postponed in line with the Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner (Coronavirus) (Postponement of Elections and Referendums) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 until 6 May 2021.
- 3.16 Should the regulations be revised, the referendum would be held as soon as practically possible in accordance with any such revisions.
- 3.17 If the Plan passes the referendum by receiving greater than 50% of votes cast, the Council is required to make (adopt) it unless it breaches EU or Human Rights legislation. The Neighbourhood Plan would then become part of the Development Plan, and as such taken into account in planning decision-making within the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Area.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council could choose to make a decision that differs from the examiner's recommendation. If the Council were to propose a decision that differs from the examiner's recommendation, the Council is required to:
- 4.1.1 notify all those identified on the consultation statement of the parish council and invite representations, during a period of six weeks, and
 - 4.1.2 refer the issue to a further independent examination if appropriate.
- 4.2 The Council can decide that it is not satisfied with the plan proposal with respect to meeting basic conditions, compatibility with Convention rights, definition and provisions of the Neighbourhood Plan, even if modified. Without robust grounds, which are not considered to be present in this case, refusing to take the plan to a referendum could leave the Council vulnerable to a legal challenge.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The cost of the referendum falls on the Borough Council, but this will be funded through grant payments from central government for Neighbourhood Planning. Should the Plan be approved at referendum, and subsequently made (adopted) by Swindon Borough Council. If adopted the Parish Council will receive an increase to 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts arising from development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Phil Smith, Direct Dial 01793 466443, psmith@swindon.gov.uk.

Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and Human Rights implications have been taken into account in preparing this report. It is considered that the recommendations are consistent with Convention Rights. The context of this Report is guided by the relevant provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and relevant secondary legislation.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan has to be in accordance with the strategic policies of the Swindon Borough Local Plan and therefore is subject to the same assessment in terms of sustainability. In addition a separate Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion was undertaken on the Plan by SBC Planning Policy in March 2019, which concluded that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan was unlikely to have significant effects on the environment and that a SEA was therefore not required.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 The Swindon Borough Local Plan was subject to detailed Diversity Impact Assessment and the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the Local Plan for it to meet the basic conditions.

Risk Management

- 5.5 Electoral services is aware of the need to proceed with the referendum in accordance with the extant regulations governing its timing.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (s151 officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1: The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statement made by Swindon Borough Council (draft)
- 8.2 Appendix 2: Draft Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Submission Version
- 8.3 Appendix 3: Independent Examiner's Report on the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Phil Smith, Direct Dial 01793 466443, psmith@swindon.gov.uk.

Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan

Council

Date: 9th July 2020

8.4 Appendix 4: The Basic Condition Requirements for Neighbourhood Plans

Appendix 1: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statement

Introduction

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), Swindon Borough Council has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of neighbourhood development plans and orders. The Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended) outline the Local Planning Authority's responsibilities under Neighbourhood Planning and the legal process to be followed.

The Independent Examiners Report has been received for the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan which recommends that the plan proceed to referendum subject to modifications. The Council is now required to make a decision on the plan proposals and the recommendations in the Examiner's Report; and publish in a Decision Statement their decision and reasons for it.

The Council's response to the Examiner's recommendations are listed in Table 1 below.

Background

The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan relates to the area that was designated by Swindon Borough Council as a neighbourhood area on 5th August 2013. This area is not coterminous with the present Blunsdon Parish Council boundary, but is entirely contained within the parish boundary.

Following submission of the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan to Swindon Borough Council the plan was publicised and representations were invited. Consultation on the plan was undertaken by the Council from 6th November and 18th December 2019.

The Council appointed Deborah McCann BSc MRICS MRTPI Dip Arch Con Dip LD as Independent Examiner to review whether the plan met the "Basic Conditions" (as set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) and whether it should proceed to referendum.

The Examiner's report concludes that, subject to making the modifications recommended by the Examiner, the neighbourhood plan meets the Basic Conditions set out in the legislation and should proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning referendum.

The Council is now bound by Paragraph 12(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to consider each of the recommendations made by the Examiner in their report (and the reasons for them); and decide what action to take in response to each recommendation.

Decision and Reasons

Having considered each of the recommendations made in the examiner's report, and the reasons for them, Swindon Borough Council accepts all the Examiner's recommendations in order to ensure that the draft plan meets the basic conditions as set out in Schedule 4B of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). Table 1 below lists all of the recommendations in the Examiner's Report and the Council's response to them.

Next Steps

As soon as possible after making a decision on the plan proposals and the Examiner's recommendations, the Council must (in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012) publish on their website and in such other manner as they consider is likely to bring the decision statement and the report to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area:

- the decision and their reasons for it ("the Decision Statement");
- details of where and when the Decision Statement may be inspected; and
- where recommendations have been made by an Independent Examiner, a copy of the report.

If the plan obtains over 50% of the votes cast at referendum the Council can then 'make' the plan and bring it into legal force. The Neighbourhood Plan would become part of the Development Plan and would be taken into account in planning decision-making within the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Table 1:

No	Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
	Vision Statement	I am satisfied that the Blunsdon East NDP vision, aims and objectives were developed from the consultation process and that the policies within the plan reflect the vision, aims and objectives.	Noted
1	Policy 1	<p>The formatting of Appendix J should be reviewed as it currently refers to numerous Appendices and is confusing it is currently located in the evidence base supporting the plan but should be moved to become an appendix forming part of the Plan itself. The detail in each Brief is also restrictive, particularly having regard to the number of dwellings that can be accommodated on each site. In order to provide the flexibility required by the NPPF the word "maximum" in relation to housing numbers should be removed from the Briefs and replaced by "approximately". For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be modified as follows:</p> <p><i>Policy 1: Allocation of Sites for Housing</i> <i>The following sites are allocated for residential development:</i> <i>Site 7 Dinton in Broadbush</i> <i>Site 9 Land south of Holdcroft, B4019</i> <i>Site 11 Land opposite Coldharbour (Corner of B4019 with Ermin Street)</i> <i>Planning applications for developments on these three allocated sites will be supported where: -</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• they comply with all other relevant policies in the BENP and</i> <i>• they have regard for the Development Briefs outlined in Appendix J; and</i> <i>• there are no adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment of the area or the built environment of the BENP area, or such impacts are appropriately mitigated; and</i> 	Accept modification for reasons of clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions.

No	Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Flood Risk Assessments and drainage strategies in accordance with National Policy and the Development Plan are provided and the privacy and residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers is protected and</i> • <i>sufficient parking to avoid the need for on-street parking is provided and</i> • <i>a comprehensive planting scheme is submitted, including details of trees and hedgerows to be retained and how the relevant net biodiversity gains are to be achieved and</i> • <i>an appropriate archaeological assessment provided, where necessary</i> 	
2	Policy 2	<p>For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions should be modified as follows:</p> <p><i>Policy 2: Housing Development on non-allocated sites</i> <i>Proposals on non-allocated sites for minor development will be supported and are either within the settlement boundaries or are classed 'rural exception sites' providing affordable housing or starter homes, in edge of settlement locations.</i> <i>Within the settlement boundary proposals for minor residential development will be supported where:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They comply with the Development Plan and the Swindon Residential Design Guide 2016</i> • <i>They comply with all relevant policies within the BENP and the Village Design Statement</i> • <i>They conserve and enhance the natural and historic built environment of the BENP. Where there is potential for development to result in harmful impacts appropriate mitigation measures will need to be proposed.</i> <p><i>Outside the settlement boundary as defined in the Development Plan,</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions.

No	Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<p><i>land is 'open countryside' and development proposals here will not normally be permitted unless they comply with rural development policies in the Development Plan. Rural exception sites which meet identified local need and which comply with the Development Plan will be supported.</i></p>	
3	Policy 3	<p>For clarity and in order to meet the Basic Conditions Fig 9 should be modified to remove buffers 1 and 2 and buffer 3 retitled as an area of visual separation. To ensure the supporting text in the Neighbourhood Plan conforms to the modified policy Fig 10 should be removed in its entirety and replaced by a justification for policy 3a. The Justification for the policy should be modified to reflect the following policy modification.</p> <p><i>Policy 3: Development in the countryside</i> <i>Outside the defined settlement boundaries development will be strictly controlled in accordance with policies in the Development Plan. The character and identity of Blunsdon East Village will be conserved and enhanced by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Ensuring that Blunsdon East remains a separate and distinct entity separated from the Swindon Urban area.</i> <i>• Respecting the local landscape character including its setting and views into and out from the village.</i> <i>• Respecting the setting of the Broad Blunsdon East and Lower Blunsdon East Conservation Areas by conserving their special character and appearance.</i> <i>• Where there is potential for development as set out in this policy and which results in harmful impacts, appropriate mitigation measures will need to be proposed.</i> <p><i>Policy 3a Lower Blunsdon and Broad Blunsdon area of visual</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions.

No	Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<p>separation. <i>Development will not be supported in the area identified in Fig 9 if it will or is likely to erode the visual separation between Lower Blunsdon and Broad Blunsdon.</i></p>	
4	Policy 4	<p>Whilst it is important for developers to undertake early engagement with the community and the government encourages this, it cannot form part of a requirement in a neighbourhood plan policy. In addition, the other elements in this policy cannot form part of a land use policy but are either community aspirations or should be included in the main body of the plan. For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be deleted</p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions.
5	Policy 4	<p>There are two Policy 4s in the plan however as my modification of the plan requires deletion of one of them there is no requirement for renumbering.</p> <p>Policy 4: Development on the Kingsdown NC5 site <i>Proposals for the development of the Kingsdown NC5 site should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>include a Design Code informed by the Village Design Statement. The development of the Design Code in consultation with the community is encouraged.</i> <i>demonstrate how policies 3 and 5 of the BENP have been taken into account in bringing forward proposals.</i> <i>retain as many of the existing hedgerows and trees as possible, with replacement and enhancement where retention is not possible to ensure net biodiversity gain, to protect landscape character and make provision for a network of green infrastructure corridors (Policy 12);</i> <i>include the provision of key infrastructure, such as primary school, open space, pitches and a local centre as required by the size and scale of the development;</i> 	Accept modification for reasons of clarity.

No	Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that local facilities are linked to existing or new rights of way to enable and encourage sustainable movement around the village by foot and bicycle; • include traffic mitigation measures including traffic calming and design measures to minimise the creation of "rat runs" through Broad Blunsdon East in accordance with the Development Plan. 	
6	Policy 5	<p>This policy is overly prescriptive. For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be modified as follows:</p> <p>Policy 5: Preserving the character of Blunsdon East Village <i>To preserve the character of Blunsdon East Village development proposals should demonstrate how they comply with the design principles contained within the Village Design Statement.</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions.
7	Policy 6	<p>Developer contributions cannot form part of planning policy. The second paragraph of this policy should be deleted. The contents could be included in the main body of the plan. For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be modified as follows:</p> <p>Policy 6: Road Safety, traffic congestion and pollution <i>Road safety, traffic congestion and pollution are a priority for Blunsdon East and developers are strongly encouraged to discuss traffic mitigation measures with the Parish Council at the earliest possible stage in the planning process.</i> <i>To maintain Blunsdon East as a 'tranquil rural area' proposals should include mitigation measures which will offset the adverse impacts on road safety and/or air quality caused by increased traffic flows through the village as set out in the NPPF 2019 paras 108 and 109 and the traffic</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity, and to meet the Basic Conditions.

No	Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<p><i>and transport policies of the Development Plan .</i></p> <p><i>Proposals which minimise traffic congestion, are in conformity with the other policies in the BENP and result in improvements to the free flow of traffic in the village, promoting road safety and minimising air, light and noise pollution will be supported.</i></p>	
8	Policy 7	<p>This policy appears to include both community facilities and non-designated heritage assets. For Clarity the policy should be modified as follows:</p> <p><i>Policy 7: Protection of Community facilities</i></p> <p><i>Development proposals that will enhance the viability and value of community facilities will be supported in accordance with policies in the Development Plan.</i></p> <p><i>A non-exhaustive list of community facilities is set out below and proposals that would result in the loss of these or other established community facilities will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• commercial facilities have been genuinely marketed for the established use for at least one year; and</i> <i>• the facility is no longer economically viable for the established use, or there is a suitable and sustainable alternative to that facility nearby, or the facility is no longer required.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. St Leonards Church</i> <i>2. The Cold Harbour Pub</i> <i>3. The Village Hall</i> <i>4. The Village Shop</i> <i>5. The Heart in Hand Public House and Hall</i> <i>6. The Rec ground pavilion</i> <i>7. The Doctor's surgery</i> 	Accept modification for reasons of clarity.

No	Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<p>8. <i>The Methodist Church</i> 9. <i>The Baptist Church</i> Proposals for new or extended community facilities for the BENP area, including within Kingsdown NC5, will be supported particularly where they will be accessible for all residents of the BENP area</p> <p>Policy 7a Locally important non-designated heritage assets. Locally important non-designated heritage assets, including the Stubb's Hill Anti-Aircraft Battery are identified in the Village Design Statement and appendices D and E to this plan. Any proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets must be in compliance with the National Policy and Guidance, and policies in the Development plan.</p>	
9	Policy 8	For consistency the reference to the SBCLP 2026 should be replaced with "policies within the Development Plan"	Accept modification for reasons of clarity.
10	Policy 9	Policy 9 is a list of CIL priorities and not a land use planning policy used for the determination of planning applications. This policy should be deleted from the policy section of the plan but can be used in a community project/aspiration section or within the main txt of the plan.	Accept modification to meet Basic Conditions
11	Policy 10	<p>This policy mixes the designation of Local Green Space and Open Spaces and sports facilities and Green Infrastructure. The reference to Green Infrastructure relates to developer contributions and cannot form part of policy but could be included in the community section of the plan.</p> <p>I am satisfied that the area identified as the Recreation Ground does meet this requirement however it is not illustrated on Fig 9 but on Fig 11 which also illustrates 3 other sites: 1 Millennium Garden</p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity and correction

No	Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<p>2 Burytown Copse 4 Children's playground & tennis courts</p> <p>But there is no indication of why these areas are indicated on Fig 11 and no mention in the policy of wishing to designate these areas as Local Green Spaces and to avoid confusion they should be removed from Fig 11.</p> <p>For clarity the policy should be split and modified as follows.</p> <p>Policy 10: The Designation of Local Green Space <i>Due to its importance the village, the Recreation Ground shown on FIG 11 is designated as a Local Green Space. Development on the Recreation Ground will only be permitted in very special circumstances.</i></p> <p>Policy 10a Open Space and Sports Facilities <i>Proposals to expand opportunities for sport and recreation within the BENP area will be supported where they are in compliance with other policies in this plan.</i></p> <p><i>Existing sports, recreational and allotment sites (as shown on the map below) are protected from development unless alternative provision can be made locally of equivalent or better size, quality and accessibility in accordance with policies within the Development Plan.</i></p>	
12	Policy 11	<p>This policy lacks clarity and could be difficult to apply in the determination of a planning application. For clarity the policy should be modified as follows:</p> <p>Policy 11: Preservation of views of local importance <i>All new development should be of a height, mass and appearance that does not adversely affect key distinctive views (identified in Fig 14) into and out of the BENP area. Particular attention should be given to views surrounding listed buildings, the conservation areas and key landscape</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity.

No	Policy Number	Independent Examiner's Recommendations	Swindon Borough Council Decision and Reasons
		<p><i>features.</i></p> <p><i>Where appropriate and where proposals for development impact the important views they should be accompanied by a detailed Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.</i></p> <p><i>Opportunities to avoid the use of overhead cables in the future and to remove or reroute cables to ground level should be taken wherever possible.</i></p>	
13	Policy 12	<p>This policy is confusing including some repetition. For clarity the policy should be modified as follows:</p> <p>Policy 12: Protection of Trees and Hedgerows</p> <p><i>Existing hedgerows and trees should be retained for visual and ecological importance including biodiversity gain, maintaining landscape character and to secure networks of green infrastructure whenever possible.</i></p> <p><i>If the removal of a hedgerow or tree is proposed, adequate justification must be provided and where appropriate, compensatory planting provided in the near vicinity. Replacement planting should be of sufficient value to compensate for the loss of amenity of mature trees hedgerows and the biodiversity they support.</i></p> <p><i>Proposals should include information as to how trees and hedgerows that are to be retained, will be protected during construction.</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity.
14	Policy 13	<p>Lighting schemes will not be relevant for all development proposals, for clarity the first sentence of the policy should be modified as follows:</p> <p><i>Development proposals, where external lighting is required should be designed to reduce the occurrence of light pollution and are required to demonstrate how they will contribute towards minimising light pollution.</i></p> <p><i>Information on these measures should be submitted with applications.</i></p>	Accept modification for reasons of clarity.

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BLUNSDON EAST
NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAN
SUBMISSION DRAFT 2019

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FOREWORD

The Localism Act 2011 introduced Neighbourhood Planning into the hierarchy of town planning in England, giving communities the right to shape their future development at a local level.

A neighbourhood plan is a new type of planning document, created as part of the Government's new approach to planning by the Localism Act 2011, to allow local communities to have a direct influence on shaping what goes on in their areas. The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan ("BENP") must comply with higher levels of planning policy, the National Planning Policy Framework, as revised February 2019 ("NPPF") and the adopted Swindon Borough Council Local Plan 2026 ("SBCLP 2026").

In March 2013, Blunsdon St Andrew Parish Council resolved to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for the area of the Parish to the east of the A419 Trunk Road – which bisects the Parish into two distinguishable areas of the old Blunsdon Village and the newer Northern Expansion of Swindon.

Following the Community Governance Review 2016/17 undertaken by Swindon Borough Council Blunsdon St Andrew Parish Council was divided creating a new Parish of Blunsdon. The designated plan area is located within the boundary of this new Parish to the east of the A419.

Following on from these decisions the BENP has been prepared by Blunsdon Parish Council, a qualifying accountable body, and covers the period from 2019 to 2026. It was developed by a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (BENPSG), comprising of volunteers drawn from members of both the Parish Council and from the local community. This group has undertaken extensive consultation with residents and others with an interest in the area and has considered these views in preparing this plan.

The BENP reflects community-wide comments, observations, concerns and aspirations about the Parish's future, bringing them together with census information, strategic and statistical evidence into a "living promise" that mirrors the community's overwhelming desire to make the BENP area an even better place to live and work, both now and for future generations.

The BENP has set out a vision including a Village Design Statement and detailed character area assessments for the area. Identified are four themes which lead to a number of policies to meet the vision and deliver the objectives. It deals with a wide range of issues ranging from future housing development, infrastructure, road safety, services, environment and history & heritage.

The BENP, together with references to supporting documents, is set out in this document.

Once the Plan has been made, following a favourable local referendum, the BENP will form part of the development plan and become, with Swindon Borough Council's Local Plan, the starting point for deciding how the area will develop in the future.

Ian Jankinson
Chairman.



Why is a Neighbourhood Plan necessary?

- 1.1. Blunsdon has always been separated from the urban area of Swindon and has always been a rural community. However during the sixties, seventies and eighties it has grown organically around the core of the Village through infill and new housing. In parallel to this, large areas to the north of Swindon were the subject of substantial urban expansions (Abbey Meads, St Andrew's Ridge and Ash Brake). Since then through the development of the SBCLP 2026 north Swindon has grown massively through Redhouse, Oakhurst and Tadpole Garden Village. Part of the plan was the creation of the strategic allocation of Kingsdown NC5 an urban extension to the North Swindon expansion into the BENP area. This expansion has led to a variety of local challenges including pressure on infrastructure, landscape and green space, heritage assets, core services, existing resources like health care and provision of school places. All these combine to provide an opportunity for the village to utilise a neighbourhood plan, to have greater influence over development so that Blunsdon enjoys, in the words of the NPPF 2019, "a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being;"
- 1.2. To this end the BENP was framed to help to ensure a cohesive approach to the management of its sustainable growth. The constraints and challenges encountered have informed the following key objectives for this Neighbourhood Plan.

To assist the community in strengthening its community spirit and to integrate recent and future newcomers – A place people want to live.

To preserve the main village settlement's historic built environment which is vital to Blunsdon's sense of place – A pride in our Heritage.

The need to retain, improve and develop local facilities and to ensure new development creates social and commercial opportunities for the benefit of all residents – Supporting the Community.

To ensure the preservation of the character of the area and local landscape and areas surrounding the village for the benefit of both residents, wildlife and the environment – Conserving Nature and the Environment.



1.3. It is essential that the community acknowledges the importance of the above and realises that it needs to address the opportunities, challenges and constraints by planning locally for its future. Having started the process by commencing a Village Plan, the Parish Council has embraced the opportunity provided by the Localism Act 2011 and NPPF 2019.

1.4. In this context the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is:

To clearly describe the full range of social, economic and environmental influences in the BENP area and set out the issues that these raise for the future of the area.

To set out a clear vision and strategic plan for sustainable growth of the plan area which reflects the views of the whole community;

To provide a planning framework to guide future regeneration, environmental enhancement, community investment and development decisions in the neighbourhood. This planning framework will support the strategic development needs in the existing SBCLP 2026;

To set out prioritised projects which reflect the aspirations of the community and which, when implemented, will help to deliver the vision for the area;

To set out policies which can be taken into account when Swindon Borough Council is making planning decisions, negotiating developer contributions or deciding how to allocate funding derived from other sources such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the new Homes Bonus

Submitting Body

1.5. The BENP is submitted by Blunsdon Parish Council, which is a qualifying body as defined by the Localism Act 2011.

1.6. In developing a neighbourhood plan the submitting body is required to comply with a variety of legislation and compliance which will be assessed by both Swindon Borough Council and an appointed Examiner.

1.7. Full details of compliance with planning requirements at both National and Local Level, via the NPPF 2019 and SBCLP 2026 are set out in the Basic Conditions Statement. This statement also sets out how requirements to meet European Union requirements on Environmental Impact and Habitat Regulations are achieved. An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken and this is included in the Plan documentation.

1.8. Blunsdon Parish Council confirms that this Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Development Plan:

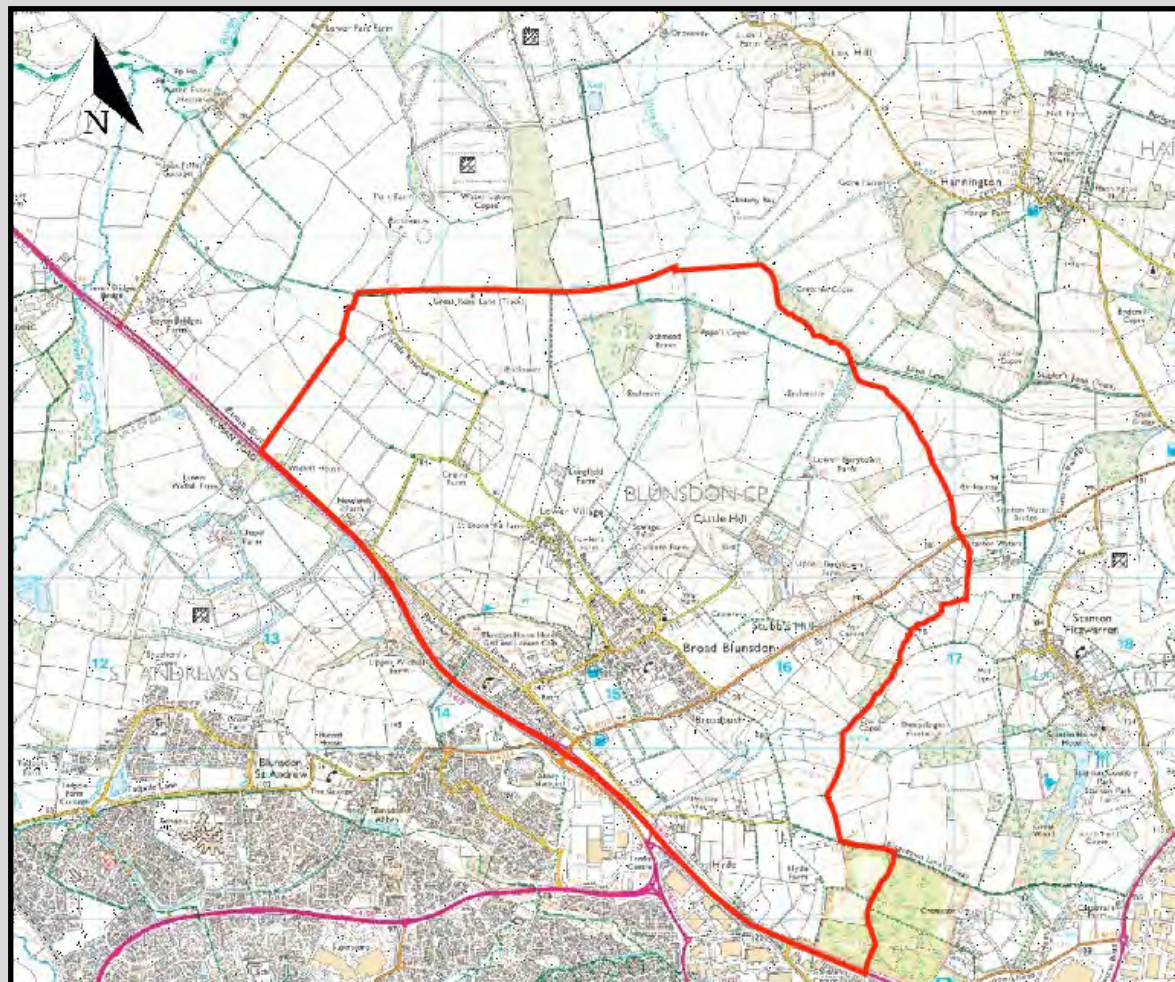
relates only to the designated area within the Parish of Blunsdon and to no other Neighbourhood Areas; and

is the only Neighbourhood Development Plan in the designated area. No other Neighbourhood Development Plan exists nor is in development for part or all of the designated area.3. Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Area



The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 1.9. The BENP applies to the major part of the Parish of Blunsdon in the Borough of Swindon designated as Blunsdon East. A copy of the SBC decision notice is set out in Appendix H.
- 1.10. Following on from discussions with Swindon Borough Council, and local consultation the designation of the BENP plan area, as set out on the map below, was approved by the Council on 5th August 2013.

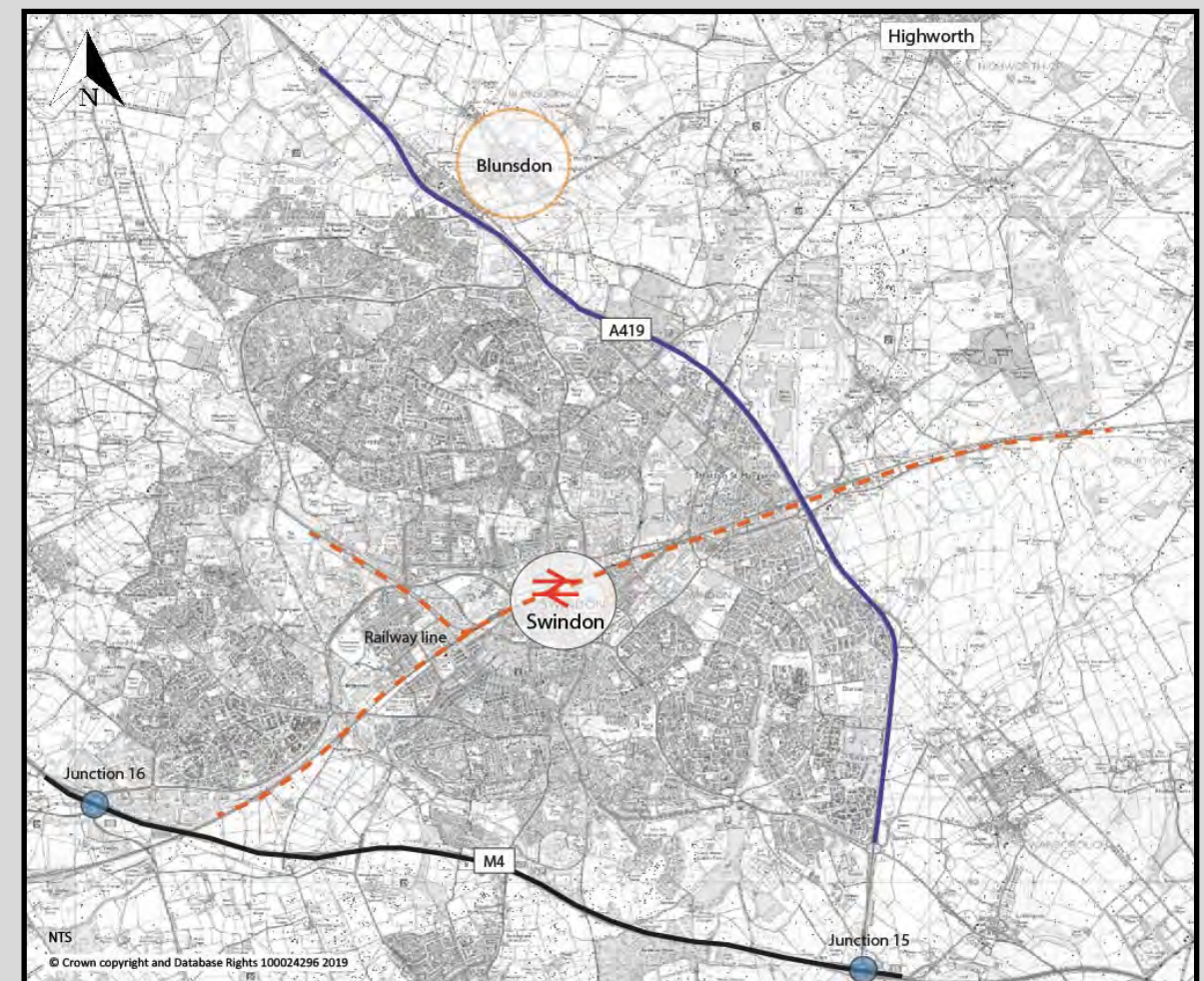


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FIG 1 Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Area

Blunsdon Location

- 1.11. Blunsdon is located in and adjacent to the western limit of the Midvale Ridge National Character Area. FIGS 2 and 1 respectively show both the local context of the district and the neighbourhood plan area within it.



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FIG 2 Location of Blunsdon

The Origins of Blunsdon

1.12. The village of Blunsdon has been in existence, as a place of human habitation, for literally millennia. There is clear archaeological evidence for significantly early occupation of the area around Blunsdon with one obvious example being the Iron Age hill fort on Castle Hill and later evidence of medieval ridge and furrow ploughing. Roman occupation is evident from the position of the village adjacent to Ermin Street which runs through the Neighbourhood plan area.

1.13. Later, from medieval through to Victorian times the Blunsdon area was a farming community with its centre around Manor Farm and St Leonards Church. More recent human impact is now visible through the presence of historic and heritage buildings such as Manor Farm in Upper Village or Broad Blunsdon and Larges farm in Lower Village and the 37 other listed buildings¹. This development has continued into the 20th and early 21st centuries as new houses were added to the original core settlement to form the cohesive village of Blunsdon that we see today .



¹ See Appendix E for full list and map

Blunsdon’s place in the environment

- 1.14.The BENP area is situated predominantly within both the National Character Areas (NCA) named as the Mid Vale Ridge NCA09 and Upper Thames Clay Vales NCA108.
- 1.15.The Midvale Ridge National Character Area (NCA) is a band of low-lying limestone hills stretching east–west from the Vale of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire to Swindon. It is surrounded by the flat lands of the Oxfordshire clay vales, giving extensive views across the surrounding countryside. It is a predominantly agricultural area with a mixed arable/ pastoral farming landscape, cereals being the most important arable crop. The settlement pattern is characterised by small nucleated villages along the top of the ridge and along the spring lines. The area is significant for its geological sites and the unusual geology gives rise to habitats that are uncommon in the south of England. These in turn support a variety of rare plants and invertebrates. The NCA is notably more wooded in character than the surrounding Upper Thames Clay Vales NCA with about 9 per cent woodland coverage.

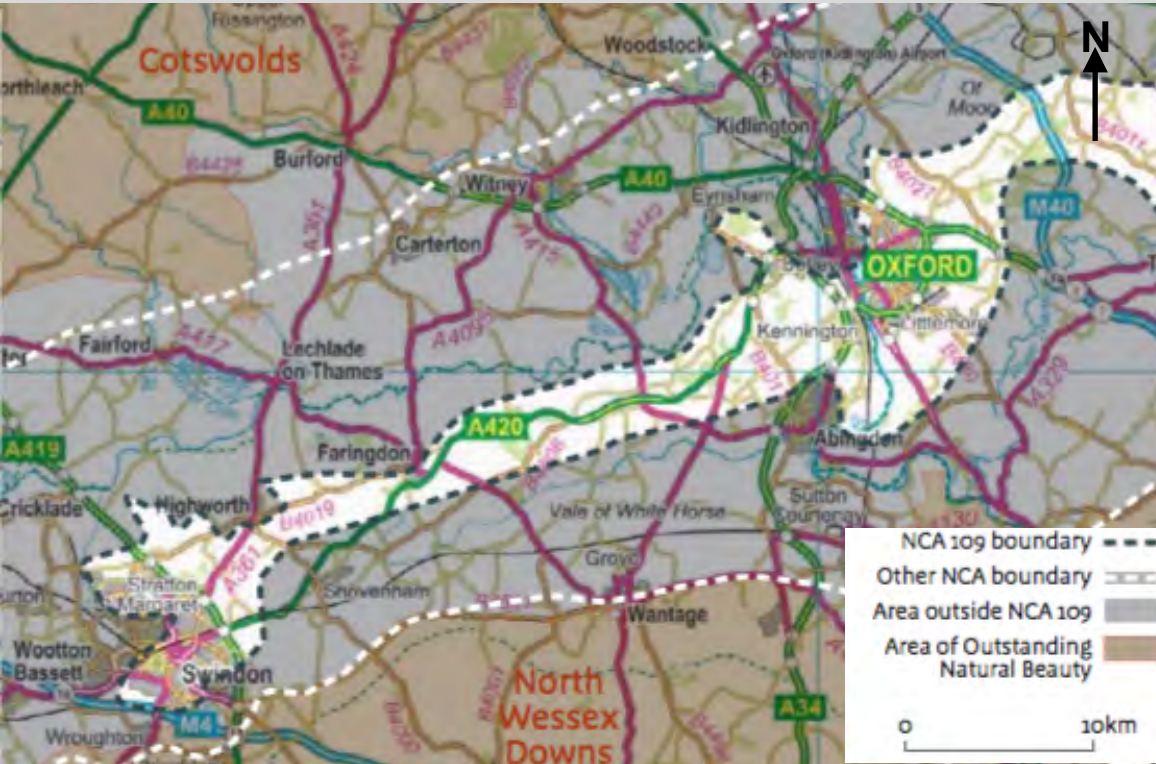
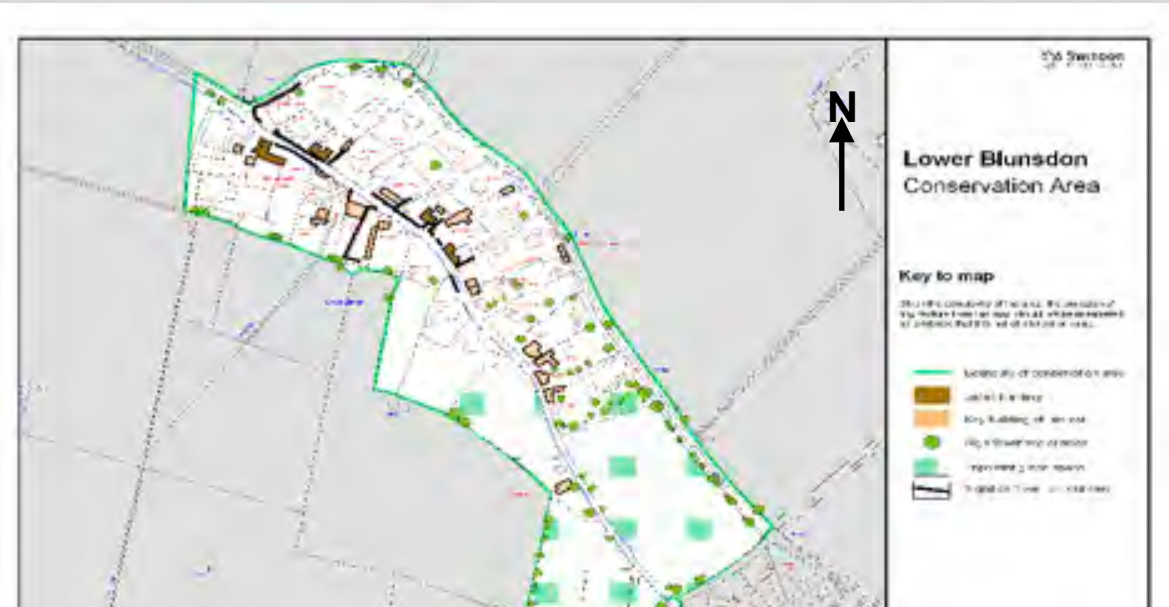


FIG 3 National Character Area 109 - Midvale Ridge

- 1.16.Evidence of previous land use is still clearly visible from iron-age and Romano-British settlements. The continued expansion of Swindon will present challenges for preserving the landscape character and biodiversity of the ridge but also opportunities for improving the provision of green infrastructure and access.
- 1.17.The description of the Midvale Ridge sets out a number of Statements of Environmental Opportunities (SEO) which the BENP both recognises and seeks to encapsulate in its own policies. The Midvale opportunities are.
- ◆ SEO 1: Maintain the historic environment and cultural character of the Midvale Ridge by ensuring that permitted development is well integrated to preserve local distinctiveness and sense of place and providing green space and recreational opportunities for the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.
 - ◆ SEO 2: Manage, enhance and expand the valuable semi-natural habitats of the Midvale Ridge such as fens, grassland and calcareous heathland to benefit biodiversity, prevent soil erosion, improve water regulation and quality, support pollinators and protect and enhance wildlife corridors.
 - ◆ SEO 3: Manage and enhance the woodland cover and expand areas of native broadleaved woodland to benefit landscape character and biodiversity, for carbon sequestration, to prevent soil erosion, improve water quality, supply renewable fuel and to provide access and recreation opportunities.
 - ◆ SEO 4: Maintain and enhance the National Character Area’s internationally important geological heritage for the educational benefits it provides, its contribution to a sense of place and history and to increase recreational opportunities.

Conservation Areas

1.18.The BENP has two designated Conservation Areas:



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FIG 4 Blunsdon Lower Village



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FIG 5 Broad Blunsdon - East and West

1.19.These areas are protected by SBCLP 2026 and the BENP objective is ‘to protect and enhance the heritage and historic sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area for the benefit of present and future residents and the community.’

Historical assets

1.20.Blunsdon Parish has one recognised scheduled monument, Blunsdon Hill fort and lynchets, Castle Hill, as well as a number of other archaeological sites and finds within the BENP area as identified in The Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Environment Record. A schedule of all 37 Listed buildings is set out in Appendix E

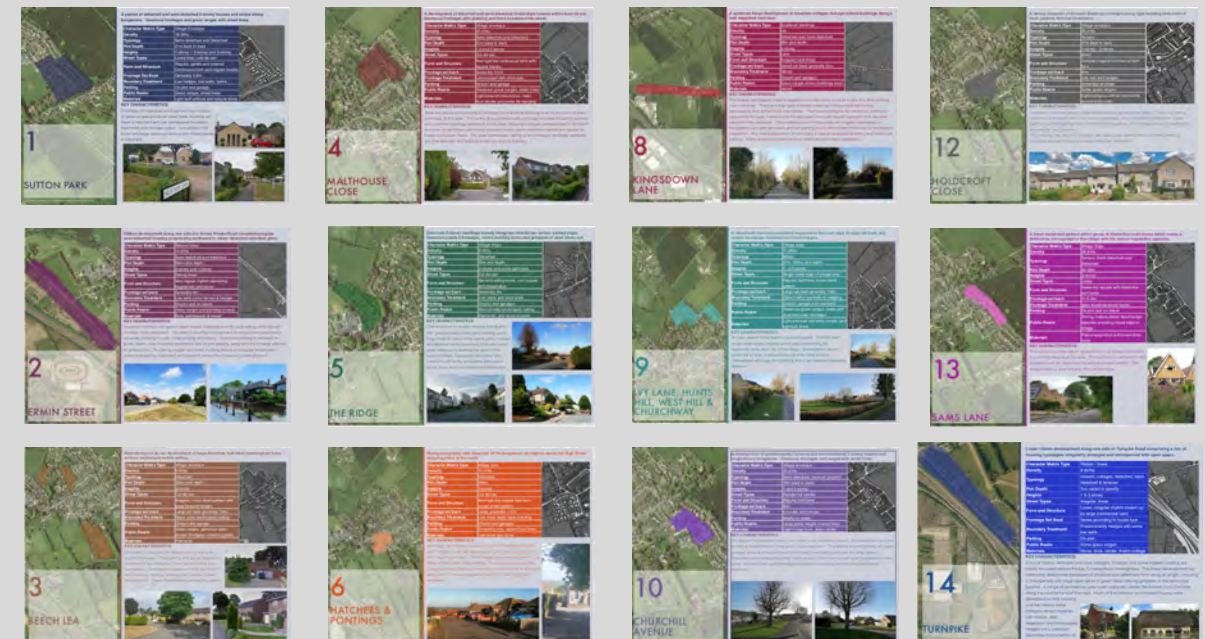
1.21.A key objective for the BENP is to protect and preserve these assets. The Neighbourhood Plan process revealed evidence of community support for a Blunsdon Heritage Trail around the parish highlighting these heritage assets and providing information about the general history of the area and about the specific heritage assets. Full details of the trail are set out in Appendix D.



FIG 6 Blunsdon Hill Fort

Village Design Statement

- 1.5. In recent years, new approaches have been developed to help local communities identify and conserve local character in each area. Therefore, local communities can produce their own Village Design Statements ("VDS") These describe the distinctive character of individual villages and the surrounding countryside and identify design principles which should influence any future development in individual settlements.
- 1.6. The concepts were developed and introduced by Natural England's predecessors the Countryside Commission and Countryside Agency, and through the Localism Act and the NPPF 2019, as a means of helping to conserve and enhance local distinctiveness.
- 1.7. The BENP VDS has the following main objectives:
- To describe the distinctive character of the village and the surrounding countryside
 - To demonstrate how this local character can be protected and enhanced in new developments
 - To influence future policies when the planning authority is updating the Local Plan
- 1.8. To reinforce this a group of volunteers were asked to carry out character assessments across distinct parts of the village. These have been integrated into the VDS and have outlined principles within those areas which developers should incorporate when designing places, buildings and extensions. The design principles will be used to secure identity, character and distinctiveness and provide supplementary guidance to the SBCLP 2026 and the Swindon Residential Design Guide 2016 in the determination of planning applications within the BENP area.



Basic Conditions Statement

- 2.1. A Basic Conditions Statement has been prepared to accompany the BENP: see Appendix A. This sets out the process and compliance with planning legislation and other requirements that need to be met in preparing a neighbourhood plan.

European Legislation

- 2.2. The Basic Conditions Statement also sets out how requirements to meet European Union requirements on Environmental Impact and Habitat Regulations are achieved.
- 2.3. An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken and this is included in the Plan documentation – see Appendix B.

Consultation

- 2.4. A Statement of consultation has been prepared which sets out the consultations that have been undertaken demonstrating that the plan fully accords with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. These consultations have met the requirements of Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. A detailed statement is set out in Appendix G.



BLUNSDON - A VISION

3

The Vision

- 3.1. Our starting point for preparing this plan was to ensure that the residents of the BENP area were given the opportunity to decide what should happen in their community and where it should take place. The vision has been defined by the desires and aspirations of local residents and other stakeholders of BENP. The objectives and policies that are set out in the BENP derive directly from the views and opinions expressed in the Residents Surveys and at many other consultation events hosted by community volunteers. The community has said it wants the Plan to shape the future so that:

'Blunsdon will continue to be a safe and tranquil rural area with a strong community spirit and a diverse population. It will value its unique rural setting on the Mid Vale ridge and its historic heritage while improving communication links with Swindon and the wider area.'

- 3.2. This vision encapsulates the view of the residents and other stakeholders of BENP and is supported by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group looking to 2026. To achieve this vision we have followed four themes, set out opposite each of which is supported by a number of objectives and policies, which are set out in the following pages.
- 3.3. The policies set out in this plan are designed to meet these objectives and to meet the aspirations set out in the Vision for Blunsdon.

A PLACE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE

A PRIDE IN OUR HERITAGE

SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

CONSERVING NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT



A PLACE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE

- 3.4. To maintain the village character of Blunsdon by managing development on the scale envisaged in the SBCLP 2026. In practical terms this will be limited to small scale low density developments over the plan period.
- 3.5. To maintain areas of separation to protect the unique identity of Blunsdon and prevent coalescence with adjacent, existing and proposed urban areas such as the strategic allocated site at Kingsdown (SBCLP 2026 Policy NC5), while ensuring connectivity and integrated development.
- 3.6. To benefit from the new sustainable links, rights of way and environmental enhancements to be delivered at the strategic allocated site of Kingsdown. The VDS character assessments (CA) should also be used to influence the future design of areas such as Kingsdown, for example CA7- Broadbush and CA8- Kingsdown Lane.
- 3.7. To ensure the objectives above are achieved through collaborative solutions for infrastructure, public realm and road safety and to ensure that Blunsdon grows sustainably with regard to suitable community facilities’.

A PRIDE IN OUR HERITAGE

- 3.8. To protect and enhance the heritage and historic sites within the BENP area for the benefit of present and future residents and the community.
- 3.9. To ensure developments and alterations are sympathetic and appropriate.
- 3.10. To recognise and promote the area’s heritage and history.
- 3.11. To register and protect Assets of Community Value within the BENP area.
- 3.12. To protect valued views in and out of the village and the approaches from the West, North and East as detailed in the VDS, Character Assessments.

SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

- 3.13. To ensure opportunities for home working and employment on existing sites and to consider future use of land for employment where this would be compatible in size and scale with the village setting.
- 3.14. To enhance the lifestyle of the Community by:
 - ✦ Working with partners to ensure access to superfast broadband network to support employment and leisure activities;
 - ✦ Improving footpath and cycle links;
 - ✦ Maintaining and improving existing open spaces;
 - ✦ Providing allotment space;
 - ✦ Protecting and improving sports facilities and play areas;
 - ✦ Encouraging the addition of open space and green infrastructure both within the design of each individual development and the wider environment

CONSERVING THE ENVIRONMENT

- 3.15. To preserve, improve and enhance the green infrastructure, open spaces and environmental assets within the BENP area.
- 3.16. In accord with SBCLP2026 policies EN1, EN2, EN4, and EN5 to support the development of the community forest and provide habitats that sustain and improve the biodiversity of the area to include the protection and retention of existing trees and hedgerows.
- 3.17. To preserve special views from the hilltop village, to mitigate against the disruption of these views and protect views in to the village.
- 3.18. To reduce light pollution to minimise risks to health, hazards to road users and to encourage the presence of nocturnal wildlife.

Objectives	Policies
<p>To maintain the village character of Blunsdon by managing development on the scale envisaged in the SBCLP 2026. In practical terms this will be limited to small scale low density developments over the plan period.</p>	<p>P1 – Allocation of sites for housing P2 – Housing Developments on non-allocated sites</p>
<p>To maintain areas of separation to protect the unique identity of Blunsdon and prevent coalescence with adjacent, existing and proposed urban areas such as the strategic allocated site at Kingsdown (SBCLP 2026 Policy NC5), while ensuring connectivity and integrated development.</p>	<p>P3- Rural Buffers</p>
<p>To benefit from the new sustainable links, rights of way and environmental enhancements to be delivered at the strategic allocated site of Kingsdown. The VDS character assessments (CA) should also be used to influence the future design of areas such as Kingsdown, for example CA7- Broadbush and CA8- Kingsdown Lane.</p>	<p>P4– Early Community Engagement with Developers P5 – Preserving the design and character of Blunsdon Village</p>
<p>To ensure the objectives above are achieved through collaborative solutions for infrastructure, public realm and road safety and to ensure that Blunsdon grows sustainably with regard to suitable community facilities</p>	<p>P6 – Road Safety, traffic congestion and pollution P9 - Infrastructure Requirements and Funding for Community projects</p>
<p>4.1. The following policies are designed to support the overall aspects of the vision for the BENP area to make it a place people</p>	

Policy 1: Allocation of Sites for Housing

Intent

4.2. This policy reflects the national and local need to increase the supply of housing. Policy SD2 (para 3.26) of the SBCLP 2026 notes that “the scale of development at individual settlements should be proportional to the size and function of the settlements”.

4.3. In consultations BENP residents have consistently expressed their strong opposition to further large-scale developments due to the negative impact on local services and traffic congestion causing pollution. At the consultation of April 2014 there was marked consensus with over 90% of responses agreeing or strongly agreeing with the following statements:

Q9 *We have enough houses*

Q11 *I am worried about future housing plans*

Q12 *Plans to extend the urban area in Blunsdon by 1650 houses will adversely affect the area*

4.4. Nevertheless, the BENP Steering Group wanted to take a positive approach and consulted the community again in July 2018 to identify the local appetite for plan-led development in the village.

4.5. Large scale or major development was not acceptable to the community but 79% of respondents agreed that it was appropriate for the BENP to allocate minor developments on small sites, where ‘minor development’ is taken to be between 1 and 9 dwellings inclusive as defined by the Department of Communities and Local Government²

4.6. This policy sets out sites that have been identified for development within the BENP area.

Policy 1: Allocation of Sites for Housing

Planning applications for minor developments on the three sites allocated within this plan will be supported where: -

- ♦ They comply with all other policies in this plan especially, but not exclusively, Policy 4 which encourages early interaction with developers and Policy 5 regarding the Village Design Statement; and
- ♦ They comply with the provisions of the Development Brief outlined in Appendix J; and
- ♦ There are no adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment of the area or the built environment of the BENP area, or such impacts are appropriately mitigated; and
- ♦ Flood Risk Assessments and drainage strategies in accordance with Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 Policy EN6: Flood Risk are provided



² Planning Applications Decisions - Major and Minor Developments, England, District by Outcome as found on:
<https://data.gov.uk/dataset/planning-applications-decisions-major-and-minor-developments-england-district-by-outcome>



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FIG 7 Site put forward across Blunsdon

- 4.7. Sites that are shown in Appendix J (AECOM Report Fig 2-1 and table 2.1.1) and those identified as meeting the BENP Site Allocation Criteria for potential development are set out in the subsequent table.
- 4.8. Following a call for sites, 9 potential sites were put forward for selection (Appendix J AECOM Report Fig 2-1 and table 2.1.1). These were put to the community in July 2018, and following analysis of feedback, 5 sites were shortlisted for further consideration. Various selection criteria were applied, and the process resulted in the selection of three sites for small-scale development as follows:

FIG 8 Sites allocated for residential development				
Site Ref	OS Grid Ref	Location	Size (ha)	Potential allocation
D	152902	Dinton Broadbush	0.11	2 dwellings
B	148901	Blunsdon Land Ltd	1.00	9 dwellings
A	148902	Land East of Ermin St	1.00	9 dwellings

4.9. Appendix J contains a development brief to guide development of the three sites in a consistent and plan-led fashion, taking account of the sites’ opportunities and constraints.

Justification

- 4.10. The BENP area has already been subject to levels of development considerably in excess of the requirements of the Adopted Local Plan. Paragraph 3.26 of the SBCLP 2026 states that ‘Other Villages’ (of which Blunsdon is one, together with Wanborough; Chiseldon; Bishopstone and Hinton Parva; Badbury; Liddington; Hannington; Castle Eaton; and Stanton Fitzwarren), should contribute at least 100 dwellings.
- 4.11. Notwithstanding, 521 dwellings have already been approved within the BENP area at:
- ◆ Hillside 65 dwellings - S/13/1223 & S/17/0455
 - ◆ Blunsdon Heights 57 dwellings - S/15/0364
 - ◆ Blunsdon Chase 69 dwellings - S/14/1304
 - ◆ Reservoir site High St 52 dwellings - S/16/2034
 - ◆ Holdcroft 54 dwellings - S17/0528
 - ◆ Golf Course 100 dwellings - S/17/1032
 - ◆ Sams Lane 70 dwellings - S/18/0405
 - ◆ Blunsdon Land 43 dwellings - S/19/0294

- 4.12. In addition, under the SBCLP 2026, the BENP area is scheduled to receive an additional 1,650 houses under the strategic allocation of Kingsdown NC5 Urban extension area. Existing infrastructure within the BENP area such as highways, school facilities, health care provision and shopping amenity does not support further large-scale development (the Kingsdown NC5 development provides specifically for its needs). Further large-scale developments would significantly and adversely impact the amenity of existing residents.
- 4.13. The call for potential development sites produced only 9 nominations³. These nominated sites, as well as those already nominated under the SHLAA process, were evaluated for suitability against defined criteria and for compatibility with the overall BENP. Details of the site selection and evaluation process are set out in Appendix J.
- 4.14. The age profile of current residents is set out in the Equality Impact Assessment in Appendix B and is defined as “ageing”. By allocating small-scale housing development at a low density it is hoped that this will help meet the needs of local residents wishing to remain in the village - particularly if bungalows are provided.
- 4.15. Site B is within the setting of Broad Blunsdon Conservation Area. Development proposals should retain the existing open rural setting of the Broad Blunsdon Conservation Area. In order to mitigate against potential indirect harm to this setting, development should be restricted to the western part of the site and proposals should demonstrate appropriate consideration of siting, density and scale.
- 4.16. Development proposals for Site B should also demonstrate how the nearby listed milestone will be protected whilst the development is being built out.

³ Of these 3 have been subject to formal application.



Policy 2: Housing Development on non-allocated sites

Intent

- 4.17 To conform with both the NPPF 2019, and the SBCLP 2026 Policies.
- 4.18. To provide constructive guidance on development proposals for sites not identified in Policy 1.

Policy 2: Housing Development on non-allocated sites

Proposals outside the sites identified by Policy 1 will be supported where they are of a small scale and are either within the settlement boundaries or are classed 'rural exception sites' providing affordable housing or starter homes⁴, in edge of settlement locations.

Within the settlement boundary proposals for minor residential development will be supported where:

- ♦ They comply with SBCLP 2026 and the Swindon Residential Design Guide 2016
- ♦ They comply with all other policies within the BENP and the Village Design Statement
- ♦ They conserve and enhance the natural and historic built environment of the BENP. Where there is potential for development to result in harmful impacts appropriate mitigation measures will need to be proposed.

Outside the defined settlement boundary as defined by the SBCLP 2026 Proposals Map, land is defined as 'open countryside' and development proposals here will not normally be permitted unless they comply with rural development policies in SBCLP 2026. Rural exception sites which meet identified local need and which comply with SBCLP Policy HA5 will be supported.

4 A starter home means the official definition in the Housing and Planning Act 2016

Justification

- 4.19. The SBCLP 2026 is not sufficiently bespoke to the unique character and village setting of the BENP. Therefore, in response to community consultation a VDS was created to provide additional detail and guidance on housing needs and design both for development of the BENP allocated sites subject to Policy 1, and for additional development supported by this Policy.
- 4.20. Support for affordable housing as rural exception sites supports SBC's 'Swindon Strategic Housing Market Assessment' 2012 which indicated that there is a shortfall in the provision of affordable housing across the Borough. (Appendix F). Based on SBC figures (as collated in the AECOM report – see Appendix J), 30% of the approved dwellings are classed as affordable so the BENP area has already contributed to the overall SBC shortfall.
- 4.21. It is clear that the bulk of new housing within the BENP area doesn't meet this need, due to pricing levels. The average house price in Broad Blunsdon over recent years has been £436,000. This is 159% of the average house price across all areas of Swindon⁵ and more than double the average house price for first time buyers for the area as standard two-bedroom first-time buyer homes costs between £170,000 and £180,000⁶.



5 <http://www.plumplot.co.uk/Swindon-house-prices.html>

6 <https://www.homesandproperty.co.uk/property-news/home-buyers-are-flocking-to-swindon-i>

Policy 3: Rural Buffers

Intent

- 4.22. To ensure that the village of Blunsdon retains its individual character as a rural village and remains a distinct entity from the Swindon urban area.
- 4.23. The BENP Landscape & Visual Sensitivity Analysis identifies a number of key views within the designated BENP Area which should be preserved and the creation of rural buffers is essential to this objective.
- 4.24. To facilitate the objectives of SBCLP 2026 specifically paras 3.26, 5.86 and 5.107 and SBCLP 2026 Policies SD2 and NC5f.
- 4.25. To mirror the policies for other non-urban village settings as set out in the SBCLP 2026 particularly RA2a, NC1g and NC3e, HA5 and para 5.127.
- 4.26. To meet the environmental objectives set out in the National Character area Profile for the Midvale Ridge 109.



Policy 3: Rural Buffers

The character and identity of Blunsdon Village will be preserved and enhanced by:

- ♦ The establishment of three rural buffers as shown on FIG 9 which should remain as open countryside.
- ♦ Ensuring that Blunsdon remains a separate and distinct entity separated from the Swindon Urban area.
- ♦ Respecting the local landscape character including its setting and views into and out from the village.
- ♦ Respecting the setting of the Broad Blunsdon and Lower Blunsdon Conservation Areas by conserving their special character and appearance.

Development proposals in these Rural Buffers will only be supported where they are in accordance with SBCLP 2026 Policy EC5 (Farm Diversification) or are an essential requirement directly related to the economic or social needs of the rural community⁷. Where there is potential for development as set out in this policy and which results in harmful impacts, appropriate mitigation measures will need to be proposed.

⁷ For example Local Open Space, Allotments, recreation and sports facilities that do not harm the visual separation of Blunsdon from adjacent urban areas

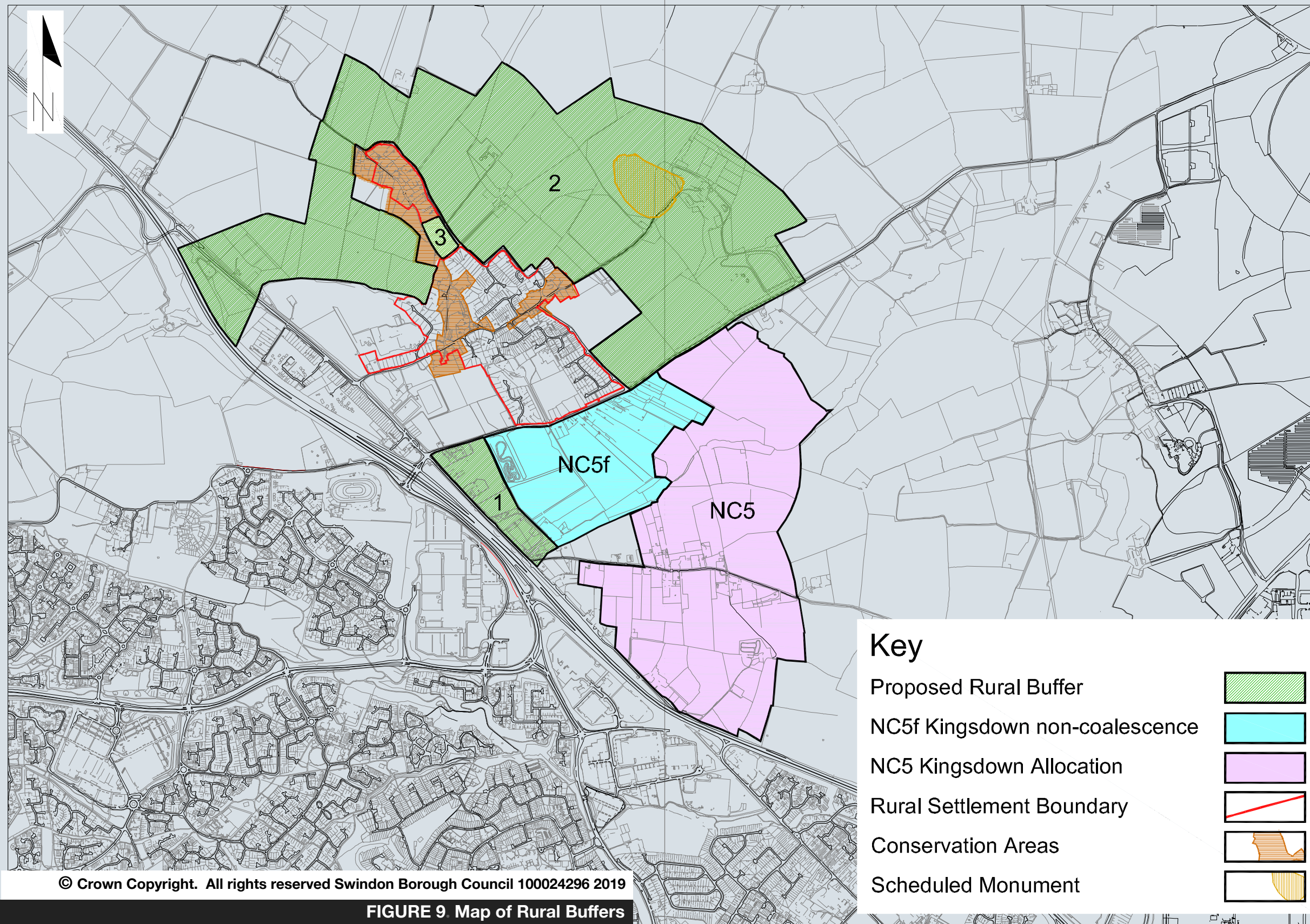


FIG 10 Justification for Rural Buffers			
	Description	Justification	
NC5f	Land to the south of the B4019 between the Village and the allocated strategic site of Kingsdown NC5	SBCLP 2026 under policy NC5 establishes a principle of non-coalescence between the new development and the existing settlement as follows: f. The character and identity of Broad Blunsdon, including Broadbush, shall be protected by a principle of non-coalescence between the settlements. The area designated by the BENP covers the area already identified by SBC in the Local Plan 2026.	
1	Land to the west and adjacent to the NC5 non-coalescence area	This area completes the green space between Blunsdon village and the urban area of Swindon, including NC5, and supports SBCLP 2026 Policy NC5 which states “The character and identity of Broad Blunsdon, including Broadbush, shall be protected by a principle of non-coalescence between the settlements.”	
2	Land surrounding the village envelope, following the contours of the Mid-Vale Ridge	This area is important to ensure that any development adjacent to the settlement boundary to the east of the village does not join up with the Kingsdown NC5 area and create an urban expansion stretching from the south, across the B4019 and up to the existing settlement boundary close to the Broad Blunsdon Conservation Area, St Leonards Church and the local cemetery. This accords with SBCLP 2026 policies NC5 and SD2 para 3.26 “the villages in the borough have distinct characteristics and features that are worthy of protection and enhancement, and therefore development should be at a scale in keeping with the historic form and character of the village”. “The character and identity of Broad Blunsdon, including Broadbush, shall be protected by a principle of non-coalescence between the settlements.” Allocation of this area is critical to preserve the overall tranquillity of the village particularly that of the local cemetery. This area surrounding this historic Stubbs Hill Anti-Aircraft battery also supports the SBCLP 2026 policy EN10 in protecting the historic environment, including listed buildings and any archaeological features. (Archaeological features in this location are listed in the Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Environment Record as MWI 16873 Stubb’s Hill Battery and MWI 14649 Undated trackway). The Buffer to the west of the Lower Blunsdon Conservation Area and the A419 is intended to safeguard and provide a defensible boundary between the village and Tadpole Farm and any future development in that area.	
3	Land between Upper and Lower Village formed by Ivy Lane, Front Lane, Back Lane and the wooded area south of Grove House	This area of land is the clear dividing line between Upper and Lower Villages. The Lower Blunsdon Conservation Area Appraisal states “Open space between the built form of Lower Blunsdon and Broad Blunsdon separates the two settlements and maintains the individual identity of each.” In addition, a planning inspector stated that “I agree that the field [referring to the above paddock]...play[s] a vital role in maintaining the separate identities of the two parts of Blunsdon.” Ref: T/APP/X3920/A/88/103837/P4 29th March 1989	

Justification

4.27. In order to determine the extent of the rural buffers, each area was assessed with the following principles in mind:

- ◆ topographical features - hills, ridges, valleys, which if breached would adversely affect a settlement's separate distinctiveness;
- ◆ visual coalescence - views into and out of settlements which should remain free from further development to retain the openness of the landscape character;
- ◆ setting to the village - using an assessment of the surrounding countryside and each settlement's relationship to it through a LVSA (Connected Landscapes LVSA Appendix I);
- ◆ defensible boundaries - appropriate boundaries such as roads, rivers or fields.

4.28. The BENP area consists of the village of Blunsdon, a number of Conservation Areas, and areas of open, mainly agricultural, countryside and the BENP area should continue to exist as an area separated from the urban area of Swindon.

4.29. BENP supports reasonable, orderly and well-designed small-scale developments which are directly related to the economic or social needs of the rural community and retains and enhances the character of the BENP area.

4.30. The concept of rural buffers is in line with a number of planning requirements both national and as established by SBC, particularly:

- ◆ NPPF para 170
- ◆ SBCLP 2026 paras 3.26, 5.86 and 5.107
- ◆ SBCLP 2026 policies SD2 and NC5f

4.31. This policy mirrors the policies for other non-urban village settings within the SBC area and is therefore derived from the SBCLP 2026 particularly:

- ◆ SBCLP 2026 policies RA2a, NC1g, NC3e and HA5 a
- ◆ SBCLP 2026 para 5.127

4.32. Although not carried forward into the current SBCLP 2026 the immediately preceding version SBCLP 2011 (ENV10, ENV24) required the creation of 'rural buffers' to ensure that villages surrounding Swindon did not become part of the urban area.

4.33. During consultations held with local residents, particularly from the responses to question 19 of the questionnaires collated in April 2014, 71% of respondents identified areas to ensure the separation of the village from the urban areas of Swindon. These responses formed the basis for the areas of rural buffers contained in this policy.

4.34. Based on outputs from consultations in November 2017 the Parish Council commissioned an independent Landscape & Visual Sensitivity Analysis ("LVSA") (Appendix I) from Connected Landscapes. This report concluded (section 6.3 of the LVSA) that: "The balance between built form and the more natural environment (albeit one that is heavily managed through agriculture) which characterises the local landscape is assessed as being of medium sensitivity to appropriately-located small-scale development, but high sensitivity to large-scale development, especially any which substantially extends or lies outside of the existing settlement boundary."



Policy 4: Early Community Engagement with Developers

Intent

- 4.35. To comply with NPPF 2019 paragraphs 128 and 129, which require the evolution and assessment of 'design quality to take account of the views of the local community' and 'to include workshops to engage the local community'. Applicants should be encouraged if not already required by law to engage with the local community before submitting their applications, NPPF 2019, paragraphs 39 and 40.
- 4.36. To engage with the developer(s) of the strategic Kingsdown site NC5 so that local community views are fully considered during the design and construction phases of the development.
- 4.37. To ensure that the local community is aware of and understands any planning application to be submitted or any proposed changes to already submitted or approved applications.



Policy 4: Early Community Engagement with Developers

For developments generally

In the initial development and design stage prior to submitting a planning application to SBC, developers are encouraged to engage with the local community to understand particular local views about the proposal (SBCLP 2026 Policy LN1)

Developers are particularly encouraged to engage with the community prior to submitting any planning application to discuss issues including, but not limited to:

- ✦ Modelling of traffic flows and mitigation to avoid possible congestion and 'rat-running' through the village;
- ✦ Public transport options including a review of bus services, new footpaths (including the changes to the Heritage Trail) and cycle ways;
- ✦ Provision or enhancement to core services;
- ✦ The upgrading of the Recreation Ground, pavilion and parking areas to further support increased demand and accessibility issues.
- ✦ How developer contributions can be utilised to improve and/or mitigate deficiencies in local infrastructure or where local infrastructure is at capacity (see BENP P10 & SBCLP 2026 Policy IN1).

- 4.38. To comply with the requirement of the Statement of Community Involvement, applicants should be encouraged to demonstrate that the views of the local community have been sought and taken into account in the formulation of development proposals. The level of detail provided should reflect the scale of the development.

Policy 4: Early Community Engagement with Developers

For development on the Kingsdown NC5 site

This plan encourages the formulation of a separate Design Code for the Kingsdown Development, NC5, informed by Policy 5 – Village Design Statement and asks that this forms part of the early community engagement with developers.

The BENP community will engage with the developers of the Kingsdown strategic allocation in order to ensure that:

- ✦ any area of non-coalescence or rural buffer is treated as a minimum standard (Policy 3 & Policy 5)
- ✦ as many of the existing hedgerows and trees as possible are retained and to allow enhancement and replacement where retention is not possible. This is to ensure net biodiversity gain, landscape character and provision of a network of green infrastructure corridors (Policy 12);
- ✦ the development provides key infrastructure, such as primary school, open space, pitches and a local centre;
- ✦ local facilities are linked to existing or new rights of way to enable and encourage sustainable movement around the village by foot and bicycle;
- ✦ traffic mitigation measures required eg traffic calming and measures to minimise rat running through Broad Blunsdon are carried out as per SBCLP 2026 Policy NC5.

Justification

- 4.39. The Plan recognises that, under SBCLP 2026 NC5 - Kingsdown, a number of new houses and ancillary development will be completed at the southern end of the plan area albeit as an urban extension connected to Urban Swindon by a bridge over the A419. It also recognises that there may be a limited number of applications for infill development and extensions to existing dwellings.
- 4.40. NPPF 2019 (para 39) states “Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better co-ordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.” The BENP fully supports this concept of early discussion with developers engaging with the local community, primarily the Parish Council, before any applications are submitted.
- 4.41. Early engagement will lead to issues being raised and for an increased potential for these to be resolved at an early stage allowing a smoother translation into a full planning application.
- 4.42. It is also important that both developers and Swindon Borough Council engage with the local community throughout the planning process especially where proposals are altered part way through the planning process so that community views are fully understood. This should apply whether the changes require a new application or where application to vary under section 73 is made.
- 4.43. Consultation on variations should initially be conducted through the Parish Council which will encourage involvement of the wider community.

Policy 5: Preserving the design and character of Blunsdon Village

Intent

- 4.44. To support the objectives of the BENP in preserving the character of the village, a Village Design Statement has been prepared for the BENP area. This Statement supports a number of SBCLP 2026 policies and the principles and urban design principles derived from SBCLP 2026 Policy DE1.
- 4.45. The Village Design Statement (VDS), Appendix C is an important tool for use in helping to protect the character of the BENP area. It is the principle statement to help influence decisions on design and development. The VDS sets out the character of the village and its environs included within the BENP area against which planning applications may be assessed. The VDS is not concerned with whether development should take place but with how planned development should be carried out, so that it is in harmony with its setting and contributes to the conservation and, where possible, enhancement of the local environment.
- 4.46. The VDS does not specifically cover the strategic Kingsdown site as it is considered that this will have a separate identity and hence be subject to specific and localised design guidelines. However, it is hoped that the VDS will be used as a guide for the development as well as being subject to input from the local community through engagement with developers.

Policy 5: Preserving the design and character of Blunsdon Village

All development within the BENP area, other than that within the Strategic Site NC5, is required to comply with the VDS.

Development proposals should demonstrate how they comply with the design principles contained within the VDS.



Justification

- 4.47. Any proposed development or change should be informed by an understanding of the history, status and character of Blunsdon and the essential need to protect and enhance the quality of the built and natural environment.
- 4.48. It is recognised that it is not just the larger developments that can adversely affect the environment, a small extension or alteration to a house or garden can change the character of a place, as can minor changes to open spaces, paths, roads, verges, hedges, windows, fences and railings.
- 4.49. There is a desire for the maintenance of the village character and it is important that a common ethos is agreed for all development. The VDS is intended to positively influence all decisions on the choice of design details that might have an impact on the quality and character of the area.
- 4.50. The conservation areas appraisals already provide a degree of protection for those designated areas and the VDS serves to dovetail with those appraisals. These appraisals, management plans and the accompanying maps have been prepared in collaboration with Blunsdon Parish Council.
- 4.51. A Landscape Visual Sensitivity Analysis (“LVSA”) was commissioned from an independent consultancy. The full report is set out in Appendix I and it concluded that:

Section 4.37

The published county and, particularly, district level landscape character assessments are considered to accurately reflect the character of the landscape surrounding Broad Blunsdon and Lower Village. Views to and from the higher ground where Broad Blunsdon is located are noted as being both important and sensitive (see also Appendix 5: Topography).

Section 4.38

The landscape is undesignated at either national/statutory or local/non-statutory levels (see Appendix 6: Environmental Designations and Local Plan Policies) but is nevertheless an attractive edge-of-settlement agricultural landscape with strong field boundary vegetation. The latter results in sometimes limited inter-visibility, though elsewhere the topography allows long views across the Thames Vale. The local landscape is therefore considered to be of medium value.



Policy 6: Road Safety, traffic congestion and pollution

Intent

- 4.52. This Policy is intended to support the Vision of Blunsdon continuing to be a tranquil village and will also help to improve the environment and maintain 'road safety, in the the interest of promoting sustainable travel and in compliance with NPPF healthy living'.
- 4.53. At every consultation a majority of comments related to increased traffic flows and the inadequacy of current road capacity and the safety and pollution issues that this causes.
- 4.54. As per the Highways England comments on the Kingsdown development outline planning application S/OUT/17/1821 "The (Coldharbour) junction as a whole is forecast to operate above capacity." Developers and SBC are encouraged to consider the cumulative effect of all approved developments on traffic flow, road safety and pollution levels.
- 4.55. The use of developer contributions for road safety and environmental issues derives directly from the SBCLP 2026 Policy NC5 which states that development should include:
- ◆ mitigation contributions for the highway network;
 - ◆ vehicular access routes from Cold Harbour Junction and the B4019 east of Broad Blunsdon, designed in such a way to discourage additional trips through Broad Blunsdon and Broadbush and protect the amenity of Kingsdown Lane including appropriate green infrastructure;
 - ◆ measures to minimise 'rat-running' through Broad Blunsdon village and from Cold Harbour Junction;

Policy 6: Road Safety, traffic congestion and pollution

To maintain Blunsdon as a 'tranquil rural area' developers should actively consider steps which will offset any adverse impacts on road safety or pollution caused by increased traffic flows through the village during the construction and thereafter as set out in the SBCLP 2026 Policies TR1 and TR2 and NPPF 2019 paras 108 and 109.

Developers, during pre-application consultation and within planning applications including any Statement of Community Involvement, should provide suggestions on how their contributions can be used to enhance or mitigate the effects of traffic flow, promote road safety and minimise air, light and noise pollution.

Traffic Congestion Proposals that accord with the policies in the BENP and result in improvements to the free flow of traffic in the village, promote road safety and minimise air, light and noise pollution will be supported.

Road safety, traffic congestion and pollution are a priority for Blunsdon and developers are strongly encouraged to discuss the above traffic mitigation measures with the Parish Council at the earliest possible stage in the planning process.

Justification

- 4.56. While it is recognised that the BENP cannot deal with highways matters directly the safety of pedestrians and other road users remains a key priority. The residents in the BENP area are particularly concerned about the increase in traffic and its impact on road safety and pollution that local developments have caused, in particular along Broadbush at the 'Cold Harbour' junction and the rat running through the village. This concern will only increase with developments that have already been approved, that may be approved and are supported by the SBCLP.

4.57. As set out by Highways England in response to planning application S/OUT/17/1821, with this planned growth there will be increasing strains put upon the transportation network in the BENP and its rural location.

4.58. To manage this growth in traffic appropriately, it is likely that measures to improve and enhance road safety, and minimise the impact of pollution, will need to be considered in key areas.

4.59. New development can potentially bring forward road safety infrastructure improvements. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and other developer sourced money may be used for community identified road safety projects including proposals to reduce or minimise pollution.

4.60. Poorly designed and/or installed outdoor lighting can create a hazard to motorists, cyclists and pedestrians in transit at night. Impact of lighting is considered in detail in Policy 13 – Dark Skies below.



Objectives		Policies
To protect and enhance the heritage and historic sites within the BENP area for the benefit of present and future residents and the community		P5 – Preserving the design and character of Blunsdon Village
To ensure developments and alterations are sympathetic and appropriate.		P5 – Preserving the design and character of Blunsdon Village
To recognise and promote the area’s heritage and history.		P5 – Preserving the design and character of Blunsdon Village P7 – Protection of community facilities and locally important assets
To register and protect Assets of Community Value within the BENP area.		P7 – Protection of community facilities and locally important assets P9 - Infrastructure Requirements and Funding for Community projects
To protect valued views in and out of the village and the approaches from the West, North and East as detailed in the VDS, Character Assessments.		P11 - Preservation of Views of local importance

5. The following policies aim to conserve and where appropriate enhance the significance and setting of all heritage assets.

Policy 7: Protection of Community facilities and locally important assets

Intent

- 5.1. Consultation for the BENP identified a number of areas of land and/or buildings which are integral to the functioning of the community. This policy seeks to ensure that such facilities are preserved or enhanced for the benefit of the community.
- 5.2. To recognise and protect all the significant historic and heritage sites including those highlighted in the VDS (Appendix C) and the Blunsdon Heritage Trail. (Appendix D)
- 5.3. Community facilities will be enabled through appropriate CIL and Section 106 planning gain contributions from developers to ensure adequate services and infrastructure provision.

Policy 7: Protection of Community facilities and locally important assets

Development proposals that will enhance the viability and value of community facilities will be supported. (ref SBCLP 2026 Policy CM4)

A non-exhaustive list of community facilities is set out below and any development is expected to conserve and enhance them and any other sites which may be considered as such assets:

St Leonards Church The Rec ground pavilion

The Cold Harbour Pub The Doctor's surgery

The Village Hall The Methodist Church

The Village shop The Baptist Church

The Stubb's Hill Anti-Aircraft Battery

The Heart in Hand Public House and Hall

Proposals for new or extended community facilities for the BENP area, including within Kingsdown NC5, will be supported particularly where they will be accessible for all residents of the BENP area



Justification

- 5.4. The community at all levels benefits from certain facilities and, in order to preserve those benefits, it is important that the character and usage of those facilities is not diminished.
- 5.5. Where proposals are made to alter the use or character of such facilities it will be necessary to consider whether retention of the facility is economically viable and whether it can still deliver value to the community.
- 5.6. Where the facility is seen to be of benefit to the community and remains economically viable then consideration should be given to the acquisition of that facility to provide ongoing value to the community. This is in accordance with Part 5 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 5.7. The BENP sets out strategic objectives derived from the first consultation and questionnaire with its residents and the two that specifically apply to this policy are:
- ◆ **Heritage/History:** To protect and enhance the heritage and historic sites within the BENP area for the benefit of present and future residents and the community at large.
 - ◆ **Environment:** To protect and preserve the landscape context and rural views in and out of the village and to preserve and enhance the environmental assets within BENP area.
- 5.8. Feedback from the local consultations identified many local facilities that should be preserved and a method of recognising the significant History and Heritage sites within the BENP is the development of the Blunsdon Heritage Trail. Details of the trail and identified locally important facilities are set out in Appendix D.



Objectives		Policies
To ensure opportunities for home working and employment on existing sites and to consider future use of land for employment where this would be compatible in size and scale with the village setting.		P8 – Employment
To enhance the lifestyle of the community by:		P8 – Employment
♦ Working with partners to ensure access to superfast broadband network to support employment and leisure activities;		
♦ Improving footpath and cycle links;		
♦ Maintaining and improving existing open spaces;		P9 – Infrastructure Requirements and Funding for Community Projects
♦ Providing allotment space;		
♦ Protecting and improving sports facilities and play areas;		P10 – Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Sports Facilities
♦ Encouraging the addition of open space and green infrastructure both within the design of each individual development and the wider environment.		P5 – Preserving the design and character of Blunsdon Village P10 – Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Sports Facilities

6. These policies aim to retain conserve and enhance the benefits of the existing open space, play areas and sports facilities and to enhance and improve green infrastructure.

Policy 8: Employment

Intent

- 6.1. This policy seeks to ensure that there are enhanced employment opportunities within the BENP area which meet the following requirements:

Policy 8: Employment

The BENP encourages proposals that will enable homeworking, co-working or provide new local employment opportunities, subject to the policies contained within the BENP and SBCLP 2026 provided that:

- ✦ There are no harmful impacts on residential amenity through smell, dust, noise, pollution, increased traffic movements, transit of heavy goods or other interference with the quiet enjoyment of residents; and
- ✦ There are no harmful impacts on the natural and historic environment of the area or the built environment of the BENP area and proposals comply with other BENP policies; and
- ✦ There is no unacceptable traffic impact within the BENP area. Where any proposal could generate heavy goods traffic, they must demonstrate with the assistance of a Transport Statement that the proposal will not have an unacceptable traffic impact.

Proposals that comply with this policy will be supported

Justification

- 6.2. Most employment for residents of the BENP area is provided either in Swindon or further afield resulting in the need for employees to use private transport to travel to work (due to the limited availability of public transport) and hence creating additional traffic movements at peak hours. This impacts on the overall levels of traffic and pollution within the village.
- 6.3. Public transport links to the area are provided only by a limited bus service which necessitates most workers using cars to get to work. This adds to the stress already in existence on the current road network as well as adding to local pollution levels.
- 6.4. The ability to work effectively from home would reduce the impacts of traffic and pollution in the local area.



Policy 9: Infrastructure Requirements and Funding for Community Projects

Intent

- 6.5. It is a general requirement that development can in some circumstances by means of a financial contribution make an appropriate contribution to the local community which is payable either to the Parish Council or managed by Swindon Borough Council. This policy seeks to encourage the direction of funds received into specific facilities that will be of benefit to the community as a whole.
- 6.6. When projects are identified the Parish Council will seek external funds for such a project or will seek matching funding sources to maximise investment opportunities.

Justification

- 6.7. Legislation requires that development at all levels contribute towards the good of the community and to cover the expenses that will fall to the local community relating to their developments. For instance, the building of new housing requires the provision of services, such as education, to the residents.
- 6.8. In circumstances where that provision cannot be met on site but is provided for by means of an offsite financial contribution from a development, this policy seeks to ensure that any financial contribution is received to support the delivery of prioritised community projects.
- 6.9. Where on-site or off-site infrastructure is required and there is an expectation that it will be owned or managed by the Parish Council, the landowner/developer will be expected to approach and discuss this with the Parish Council. in advance of submission of any planning application. Any application submitted should be supported by a statement that identifies the level of discussion or any agreement with the Parish Council.

Policy 9: Infrastructure Requirements and Funding for Community Projects

Any financial contributions received through the Community Infrastructure Levy for direct local benefit agreed under Section 106 or otherwise generated by development within the boundary of the Parish and paid over to the Parish Council should be used to support projects listed below, but not exclusively.

Any developer contributions received by the Parish Council from the LPA on developments within the BENP area or from areas which affect it will be allocated to Community projects agreed at the time and may include Traffic mitigation projects.

A list of projects will be developed by the Parish Council. This list will be reviewed annually through discussion with members of the local community, users of Parish facilities and through the Annual Parish Meeting.

Projects listed to date which may merit use of external funding include:

- ✦ Highways improvements and road safety measures;
- ✦ Enhancement to the conservation areas;
- ✦ Enhancements to the Blunsdon Heritage Trail;
- ✦ Rights of way and cycle network;
- ✦ Provision for connection to efficient broadband services;
- ✦ Provision of allotments;
- ✦ Development and enhancement of Multi-Use Games Area;
- ✦ Improvement to the existing sporting facilities associated with the Recreation Ground to encourage or extend the use of available facilities;
- ✦ Enlargement of existing cemetery provisions for the local community.

Other projects that comply with policies and aspirations within this plan may also be supported.

Objectives		Policies
To preserve, improve and enhance the green infrastructure, open spaces and environmental assets within the BENP area.		P10 – Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Sports Facilities
In accord with SBCLP 2026 policies EN1, EN2, EN4, and EN5 to support the development of the community forest and provide habitats that sustain and improve the biodiversity of the area to include the protection and retention of existing trees and hedgerows.		P12 – Protection of Trees and Hedgerows
To preserve special views from the hilltop village to mitigate against the disruption of these views and protect views to the village.		P11 – Preservation of views of local importance P9 – Infrastructure Requirements and Funding for community projects
To reduce light pollution to minimise risks to health, hazards to road users and to encourage the presence of nocturnal wildlife.		P13 – Dark Skies

7. These policies aim to retain and enhance:
- ◆ The benefits of the existing conservation areas;
 - ◆ Green infrastructure, community forest and Biodiversity in line with SBCLP 2026 policies EN1, EN2 and EN3;
 - ◆ The presence of nocturnal wildlife in an essentially rural area;
 - ◆ The open spaces within the BENP area;
 - ◆ The exceptional views and vistas enjoyed by residents

Policy 10: Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Sports Facilities

Intent

- 7.1. The availability of green space and the protection of local history and heritage assets were identified as ‘most important’ in the first questionnaire and the designation of a village green was also strongly supported in the second questionnaire. The most important central space that serves as a village green, and most supported in the questionnaire feedback, is the Recreation Ground. Historically it has been the space most often used for village events. It is therefore proposed to designate this as a Local Green Space.
- 7.2. It is vital that the Recreation Ground is protected and preserved as an informal Village Green that continues to remain open to residents. It is the BENP area’s only formal outdoor playing space.
- 7.3. This open space has a significant visual impact on the BENP area and designating it as a Local Green Space will protect this important site into the future.
- 7.4. As part of a healthy community it is important that leisure facilities are provided. A number of sporting opportunities already exist in the BENP area and these should be retained and enhanced wherever possible.
- 7.5. Ensure that any other identified green spaces put forward by the community are considered for designation given the level of housing pressure on the village, and the need for breathing space, play areas and leisure facilities.

Policy 10: Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Sports Facilities

The Parish Council has a statutory duty to ensure net biodiversity gain and order to reflect the demands and aspirations of residents and preserve its’ crucial role in the village, the Recreation Ground shown on FIG 9 is designated as a Local Green Space. Development on the Recreation Ground will only be permitted where it promotes and enhances the recreational use and visual attributes of open space.

Proposals to expand opportunities for sport and recreation within the BENP area will be supported where they are in compliance with other policies in this plan.

Existing sports, recreational and allotment sites (as shown on the map below) are protected from development unless alternative provision can be made locally of equivalent or better size, quality and accessibility in accordance with SBCLP 2026 EN3;

In order to maximise opportunities for contributions towards green infrastructure and the Great Western Community Forest, where appropriate, development proposals should comply with SBCLP Policies EN1, EN2.

Justification

- 7.6. The SBC Open Space Audit and Assessment Review 2014 Part A: Report rated Blunsdon as average for quality of open space and only average/poor on accessibility. The report also stated that Blunsdon had an under-provision in play spaces, open spaces and allotments. The volume of additional housing built since then has exacerbated the situation and more should be done to correct this under-provision.
- 7.7. Opportunities should be maximised to enhance connectivity between developments for walkers and cyclists.

- 7.8. It is vital that the Recreation Ground is protected and enhanced to ensure preservation of open space open to residents at this crucial central location. Blunsdon is short of open space as discussed above, and this site being particularly important to the local community meets the criteria for designation as a Local Green Space in the NPPF 2019, paragraphs 99-101.
- 7.9. These open spaces have a significant visual impact on the BENP area and efforts should be made to incorporate the use of these spaces where possible.
- 7.10. This aim is supported by the NPPF 2019 paragraphs 96-97.
- 7.11. Retention and expansion of open spaces and sporting facilities is a crucial element in establishing and preserving the health and well-being of the community.

Key

- 1 Millennium Garden
- 2 Burytown Copse
- 3 Recreation Ground
- 4 Children’s playground & tennis courts



Policy 11: Preservation of views of local importance

Intent

- 7.12. Landscape setting is an important part of this area, as the views of the surrounding land are a significant input to its character which reinforces the distinctive identity as a rural settlement on and above the Thames plain. There are spectacular views both from and into the village from many viewpoints. Northwards, there are some exceptional panoramic views over the Thames valley towards the Cotswolds, and back inwards towards the village.
- 7.13. Southwards, the views are blocked by new developments; nevertheless, some open views of fields are visible and provide some evidence of the settlement's pastoral origins, helping to depict its rural location. There are good views from the public footpath from Broadbush to the tributary of the Bydemill Brook.
- 7.14. There is a desire to seek compliance with the Statement of Environmental Opportunity SEO1 contained in the Midvale Ridge National Character Area profile.
- 7.15. Based on outputs from consultations in November 2017 the Parish Council commissioned an independent Landscape & Visual Sensitivity Analysis ("LVSA") (Appendix I) from Connected Landscapes. This report concluded that "6.5 Six of the nine views are assessed as being of high sensitivity to residential development, with the remaining three views considered to be of medium sensitivity."
- 7.16. The intention is to preserve the views which surround the Village and are considered by the residents to be of high aesthetic value. Details of a number of the views which are of merit and worthy of preservation, as determined by the residents during the consultation process, are set out in the table⁷ and on the map at FIG 14 and are:

⁷ See Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Analysis, Connected Landscapes, December 2017.

- 7.17. In addition to the views identified during the consultation process the Blunsdon Conservation Area Appraisal⁸ identifies 6 further views which should be protected (FIG 12). These views should be included within the terms of this policy as well as retaining protection from their conservation area status.



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FIG 12 Views and Vistas in Conservation Area Appraisal

Policy 11: Preservation of views of local importance

Development proposals should conserve and enhance the key views and vistas identified by the LVSA⁹ and in the Conservation area appraisals.

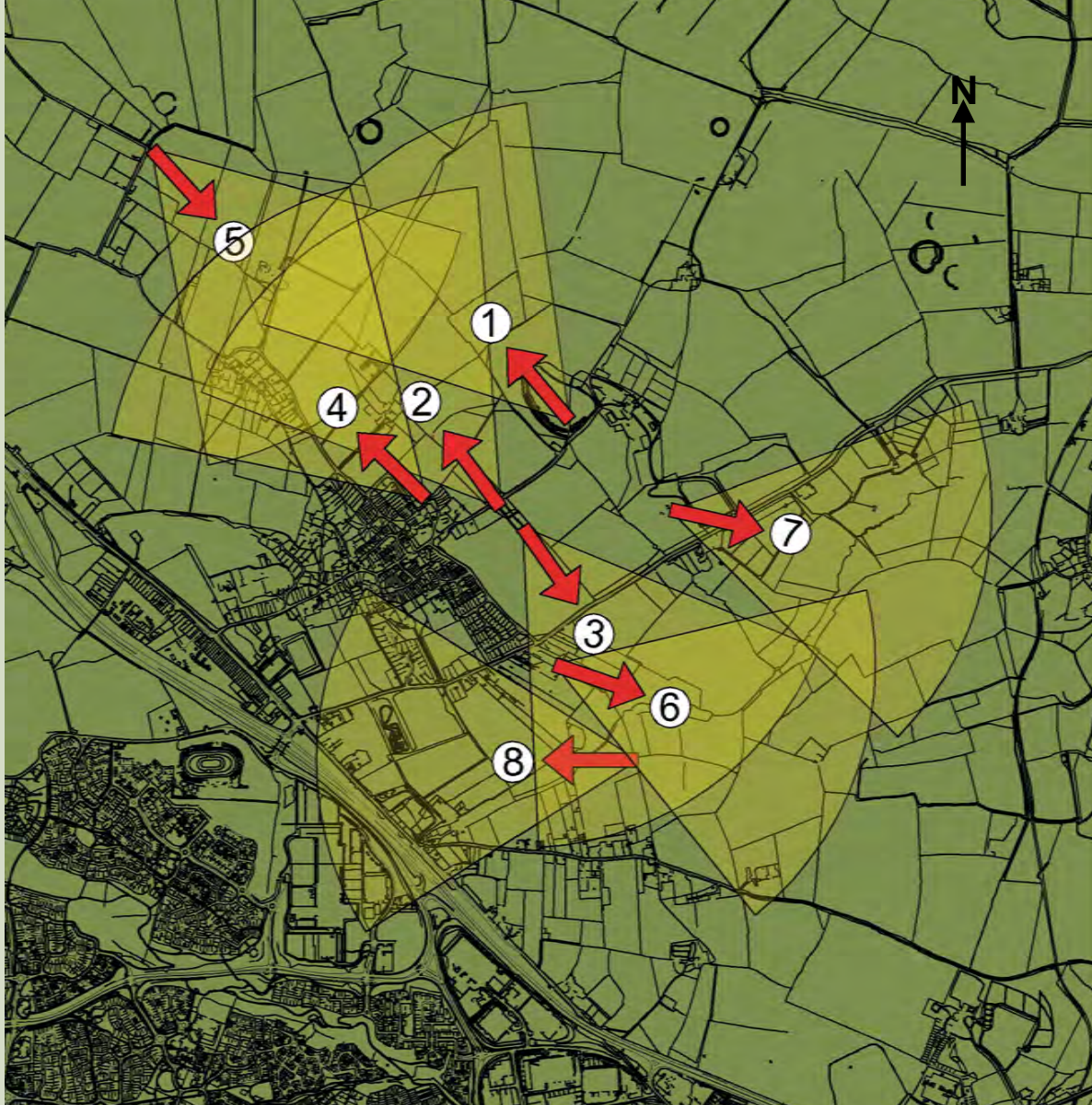
Opportunities to avoid the use of overhead cables in the future and to remove or reroute cables to ground level should be taken where possible.

Where appropriate any proposals for developments should be accompanied by a detailed Landscape Statement to include impact on the specific views details listed in this plan.

⁸ https://www.swindon.gov.uk/.../conservation_area_appraisal_broad_blunsdon.pdf

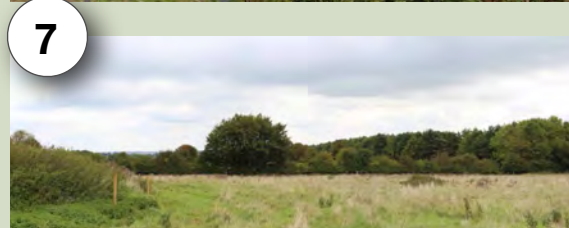
⁹ Full details are set out in the LVSA report contained in Appendix 1.

FIG 13 Extract from Landscape & Visual Sensitivity Analysis			
VP no.	OS Grid reference	High Sensitivity	Medium Sensitivity
		Description	
1	SU 15745 91115	Public footpath crossing Castle Hill, looking north/north-west	
2	SU 15467 90819	Field gateway on Burytown Lane, looking north-west	
3	SU 15577 90733	Blunsdon Cemetery, looking south-east	
4	SU 15250 90832	Field gateway on Churchway, looking north-west	
5	SU 14264 92064	South-east end of Little Rose Lane, looking south-east	
6	SU 15714 90242	Public footpath heading south-east from Broadbush, looking south-east	
7	SU 16093 90748	Public footpath on Stubb's Hill, looking east and south	
8	SU 15979 89880	Public footpath to north of Kingsdown Lane, looking northeast	
9	SU 14933 90926	Junction of Back Lane and Ivy Lane, looking north	



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FIG 14 Key Views and Vistas in LSWA



Justification

- 7.18. Much of the BENP area is located on a ridge giving rise to a number of views over extensive countryside as well as being visible from many sides.
- 7.19. The Heritage trail provides a number of views both into and out of the village.
- 7.20. To encourage any development, through the VDS, even at individual house level, to be cognisant of the valued views into and out of the village and the approaches from the West, North and East as detailed in the VDS, Character Assessments (Appendix C). Also to preserve those views where they are panoramic or only glimpsed between buildings;
- 7.21. This policy supports the Midvale Ridge statement SEO1 which seeks to ensure maintaining of “the extensive views across the surrounding country side.”
- 7.22. Key views have been identified which link into and form a crucial element of the Blunsdon Heritage trail. (see ii)
- 7.23. Both Conservation Area Appraisals refer to the importance of views. That for the main village identifies specific views (see the map 7) while that for Lower Village states:



- 7.24. Landscape setting is an important part of the special interest of this conservation area. Views of surrounding land, especially looking south to the ridge, contribute significantly to the character of Lower Blunsdon. Elsewhere, wide gaps between buildings and views through, and out of, the area are important for the character of the village.
- 7.25. As part of the neighbourhood plan consultation process and through the commissioning of a Landscape Visual Sensitivity Analysis (“LVSA”), 9 important views were identified and 6 views highlighted in the CAAP’s surrounding the village that are considered “of merit and worthy of preservation” because they provide the undeveloped setting to the hilltop village.



Policy 12: Protection of Trees and Hedgerows

Intent

7.26. Trees which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) and those in Conservation Areas are subject to specific control. Many trees, however, are not subject to these controls and when affected by development proposals require specific protection.

Policy 12: Protection of Trees and Hedgerows

Development proposals must seek to retain trees and hedgerows of amenity value and biodiversity value whenever possible.

Development proposals affecting trees and hedgerows must be accompanied by an arboriculture survey which justifies any felling in terms of the health of trees or danger presented by any tree as a result of its condition or position.

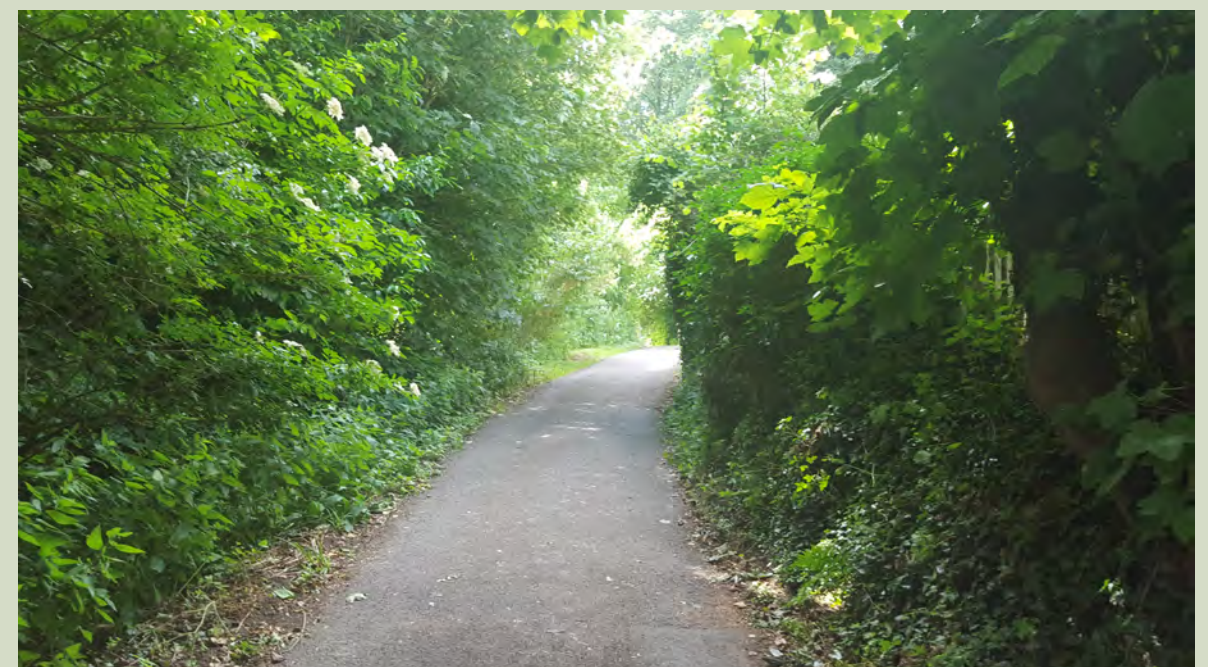
Existing hedgerows and trees should be retained for visual and ecological importance such as biodiversity gain, landscape character and to secure networks of green infrastructure. If the removal of a hedgerow or tree is proposed, adequate justification must be provided and where appropriate, compensatory planting provided in the near vicinity. Replacement planting should be of sufficient value to compensate for the loss of amenity of mature trees, hedgerows and the biodiversity they support.

Proposals should include information as to how trees and hedgerows that are to be retained, will be protected during construction.

Justification

7.27. As set out in the LVSA and the VDS much of the area included within the BENP area has been used for agricultural purposes for many years even centuries. The resultant hedgerows and standing trees therefore form an essential part of the landscape, are integral to preserving the character of the area and hence are worthy of protection.

7.28. The strategic Great Western Community Forest ("GWCF") which Swindon hosts is a project that has been planting trees and developing wooded areas for over 10 years. Locally trees and hedgerows are an important part of the landscape as set out in the LSVSA undertaken for this plan (see point i) and in the more general assessment of the landscape for example analysis of the character of the Midvale Ridge.



Policy 13: Dark Skies

Intent

- 7.29. To reduce light pollution in the BENP area and to improve views of the night sky.
- 7.30. To avoid any increase in risk to human health and hazard to road users.
- 7.31. To support the natural biodiversity through encouragement of nocturnal wildlife in an essentially rural area.

Policy 13: Dark Skies

Developments should be designed to reduce the occurrence of light pollution and are required to demonstrate how they will contribute towards minimising light pollution. Information on these measures must be submitted with applications.

Any lighting scheme that would normally require planning permission (e.g. floodlighting, lighting on poles etc.) or development that includes such a scheme would not be supported unless accompanied by a Lighting Assessment.

The Lighting Assessment should:

- ✦ Demonstrate that all available and feasible mitigation solutions would be implemented to reduce light pollution to a minimum so as to avoid loss of visual amenity to those residing within or visiting the BENP plan area and to reduce impact on nocturnal wildlife.
- ✦ Demonstrate that the proposed lighting scheme is unavoidable to ensure road and personal safety of the development and that the benefits significantly outweigh the negative impact including any impact on nocturnal wildlife: and
- ✦ Set out the operating hours of the light impact and demonstrate that these have been reduced to a minimum.

Justification

- 7.32. The majority of the BENP area is not lit at night which reduces overall light pollution and contributes to the benefit of “dark skies” in the area.
- 7.33. Paragraph 180 (c) of the NPPF 2019 supports planning policies and decisions that reduce the impact of light pollution especially in “intrinsically dark” landscapes and nature conserva
- 7.34. Scientific evidence suggests that exposure to artificial light at night can present significant risks to human health¹⁰
- 7.35. Poorly designed and/or installed outdoor lighting can create a hazard to motorists, cyclists and pedestrians in transit at night.
- 7.36. Dark skies are important for nocturnal wildlife such as bats and owls.
- 7.37. In clear skies it is possible to enjoy a bright view of the stars and this is valued by local residents.

¹⁰ International Dark Sky Association <http://darksky.org/our-work/public-policy/>

8. Implementation

- 8.1. Once approved the BENP formally becomes part of the development plan for Swindon Borough. It is the responsibility of the Parish Council assisted by the BENP steering group to monitor progress against the objectives of the BENP and the implementation plan to ensure that the aspirations of the community are being met.

9. Monitoring

- 9.1. Monitoring may lead to a review of the BENP in due course to keep it up-to-date and relevant. Formal amendments to the Plan will have to follow a similar process as was used to prepare the original Plan. The Parish Council will undertake regular reviews and report accordingly.

APPENDICES

9

A - Basic Conditions Statement

B – Equalities Impact Assessment

C – Village Design Statement

D – The Blunsdon Heritage Trail

E – Scheduled monuments, Listed Buildings and Archaeological sites

F- Evidence Base

G – Statement of Consultation

H – Decision Notice

I – Landscape Visual Sensitivity Analysis

J – Assessment of potential development sites

K - Kingsdown NC5 Policy and Map

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Independent Examiner's Report of the
Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan

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5th May 2020

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SECTION 2

Summary

As the Independent Examiner appointed by Swindon Borough Council to examine the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan, I can summarise my findings as follows:

- 1. I find the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan and the policies within it, subject to the recommended modifications does meet the Basic Conditions.*
- 2. I am satisfied that the Referendum Area should be the same as the Plan Area, should the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan go to Referendum.*
- 3. I have read the Blunsdon East Consultation Statement and the representations made in connection with this subject I consider that the consultation process was robust and that the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies reflect the outcome of the consultation process including recording representations and tracking the changes made as a result of those representations.*
- 4. I find that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan can, subject to the recommended modifications proceed to Referendum.*
- 5. The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Area is within the area covered by Swindon Borough Council. At the time of my examination, the development plan for the area is the Swindon Local Plan 2026 adopted on the 26th of March 2015.*

SECTION 3

Introduction

1. Neighbourhood Plan Examination.

My name is Deborah McCann and I am the Independent Examiner appointed to examine the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan.

I am independent of the qualifying body, I do not have any interest in the land in the plan area, and I have appropriate qualifications and experience, including experience in public, private and community sectors.

My role is to consider whether the submitted Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions and has taken into account human rights; and to recommend whether the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to Referendum. My role is as set out in more detail below under the section covering the Examiner's Role. My recommendation is given in summary in Section 2 and in full under Section 5 of this document.

The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan has to be independently examined following processes set out in the Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The expectation is that the examination of the issues by the examiner is to take the form of the consideration of the written representations. However, there are two circumstances when an examiner may consider it necessary to hold a hearing. These are where the examiner considers that it is necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue or to ensure a person has a fair chance to put a case. Having read the plan and considered the representations I concluded that it was not necessary to hold a Hearing.

2. The Role of Examiner including the examination process and legislative background.

The examiner is required to check whether the neighbourhood plan:

- *Has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body*
- *Has been prepared for an area that has been properly designated for such plan preparation*
- *Meets the requirements to*
 - i) specify the period to which it has effect;*
 - ii) not include provision about excluded development; and*
 - iii) not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and that*
- *Its policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.*

The examiner must assess whether a neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other matters set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

As an independent Examiner, having examined the Plan, I am required to make one of the following recommendations:

- 1. The Plan can proceed to a Referendum*
- 2. The Plan with recommended modifications can proceed to a Referendum*

Where a policy does not meet the Basic Conditions or other legal requirement I may, on occasion, need to delete wording, including potentially an entire plan policy and/or section of text, although I will first consider modifying the policy rather than deleting it. Where a policy concerns a non-land use matter, advice in the Planning Practice Guidance states “Wider community aspirations than those relating to development and use of land can be included in a neighbourhood plan, but actions dealing with non-land use matters should be clearly identifiable. For example, set out in a companion document or annex.” As such, when considering the deletion of any non-land use matters from the plan, I will consider if I can make a modification to place the relevant proposed actions in a non-statutory annex to the plan, dealing with ‘Wider Community Aspirations’. I will not generally refer back to parties on these detailed revisions. I will make modification either in order to meet the Basic Conditions, to correct errors or provide clarification. However, the focus

of my examination, as set out in legislation is relatively narrow, I must focus on compliance with the Basic Conditions. The main purpose of a neighbourhood plan is to provide a framework for the determination of planning applications, policies in a plan which have elements which either seek to control things which fall outside the scope of the planning system or introduce requirements which are indiscriminate in terms of the size of development or are overly onerous and would not meet the Basic Conditions. In these circumstances it will be necessary to make modifications to the plan. In making any modifications I have a duty to ensure that the Basic Conditions are met however I am also very careful to ensure, where possible that the intention and spirit of the plan is retained so that the plan, when modified still reflects the community's intent in producing their neighbourhood plan.

3. The Plan does not meet the legal requirements and cannot proceed to a Referendum

3.1 I am also required to recommend whether the Referendum Area should be different from the Plan Area, should the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan go to Referendum.

3.2 In examining the Plan, I am required to check, under Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, whether:

- the policies in the Plan relate to the development and use of land for a designated Neighbourhood Area are in line with the requirements of Section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*
- the Plan meets the requirements of Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to specify the period for which it has effect*
- the Plan has been prepared for an area designated under the Localism Act 2011 and has been developed and submitted for examination by a qualifying body.*

3.3 I am also required to determine whether the Plan complies with the Basic Conditions, which are that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan:

- *Has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;*
- *Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;*
and
- *Is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan for the area.*

There is now an additional Basic Condition to be considered. Since the 28th of December 2018, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Such 2 para 1 has stated:

"In relation to the examination of Neighbourhood Plans the following basic condition is prescribed for the purpose of paragraph 8(2)(g) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act-

The making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017."

The Plan must also not breach, and otherwise be compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.

Swindon Council will consider my report and decide whether it is satisfied with my recommendations. The Council will publicise its decision on whether or not the plan will be submitted to a referendum, with or without modifications. If the Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to a referendum, then 28 working days' notice will be given of the referendum procedure and Neighbourhood Plan details. If the referendum results in more than half those voting (i.e. greater than 50%), voting in favour of the plan, then the Council must "make" the Neighbourhood Plan a part of its Development Plan as soon as possible. If approved by a referendum and then "made" by the local planning authority, the Neighbourhood Plan then forms part of the Development Plan.

SECTION 4

The Report

1. Appointment of the Independent examiner

Swindon Borough Council appointed me as the Independent Examiner for the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan with the agreement of the Blunsdon Parish Council.

2. Qualifying body

I am satisfied that Blunsdon Parish Council is the Qualifying Body.

3. Neighbourhood Plan Area

When the Neighbourhood Plan was commissioned the Parish was Blunsdon St Andrew and the area of that Parish for which the NP was designated was the East of that Parish. When the Community Governance Review happened in 2016/7 this split the Parish at the new A419 into St Andrews Parish and Blunsdon Parish the designated area lies within the 'new' Blunsdon Parish but does not cover the entire Parish.

This change to Parish boundaries and names explains the inconsistency of name applied to the Neighbourhood Plan in various supporting documents.

The Qualifying Body have confirmed that there are no other neighbourhood plans covering the designated area.

4. Plan Period

The Plan identifies the period to which it relates as 2019 to 2026 to align with the Swindon Local Plan 2026 adopted on the 26th of March 2015.

5. Swindon Borough Council Regulation 15 Assessment of the Plan.

Blunsdon Parish Council, the Qualifying Body, submitted the plan to Swindon Borough Council for consideration under Part 5 Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended for

Blunsdon parish. The Council has made an initial assessment of the submitted Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan and the supporting documents and is satisfied that these comply with the specified criteria.

6. The Consultation Process

The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted for examination with a Consultation Statement which sets out the consultation process that has led to the production of the plan, as set out in the regulations in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Statement describes the approach to consultation, the stages undertaken and explains how the Plan has been amended in relation to comments received. It is set out according to the requirements in Regulation 15.1.b of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012):

(a) It contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Plan;

(b) It explains how they were consulted;

(c) It summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and

(d) It describes how these issues and concerns were considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

Having examined the documents and considered the focus of the Neighbourhood Plan I conclude that the consultation process was robust, well conducted and recorded.

A list of statutory bodies consulted is included in the Consultation Statement.

7.Regulation 16 consultation by Swindon Council and record of responses.

Swindon Borough Council placed the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan out for consultation under Regulation 16 for the required 6-week period ending on Wednesday the 18th of December 2019.

A number of detailed representations were received during the consultation period and these were supplied by the Council as part of the supporting information for the examination process. I considered the representations, have taken them into account in my examination of the plan and referred to them where appropriate.

8.Site Visit

I carried out an unaccompanied site visit to familiarise myself with the Neighbourhood Plan Area on the 29th January 2020.

9. Questions for Clarification

During the course of my examination I found it necessary to seek clarification on BENP policies 1 and 3. The details of these questions and the Qualifying Body's response is available to view on the Swindon BC website. I make reference to this in more detail in my comment on the relevant policies.

10. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

The Qualifying Body have produced a Basic Conditions Statement. The purpose of this statement is to set out in some detail how the Neighbourhood Plan as submitted meets the Basic Conditions. It is the Examiner's Role to take this document into consideration but also take an independent view as to whether or not the assessment as submitted is correct.

I have to determine whether the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan:

- 1. Has regard to national policies and advice*
- 2. Contributes to sustainable development*
- 3. Is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the appropriate*

Development Plan

4. *Is not in breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.*
5. *There is now an additional Basic Condition to be considered. Since the 28th of December 2018, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Such 2 para 1 has stated:*

"In relation to the examination of neighbourhood development plans the following basic condition is prescribed for the purpose of paragraph 8(2)(g) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act—

The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017."

Documents brought to my attention by the Borough Council for my examination include:

- *Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - the main document which includes policies developed in consultation with the community at various engagement events and workshops.*
- *Basic Conditions Statement - sets out how the plan meets the Basic Conditions*
- *Consultation Statement – sets out how the community, and other stakeholders, have been involved in preparing the Plan.*

Comment on Documents submitted

I am satisfied having regard to these documents and other relevant documents, policies and legislation that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan does, subject to the recommended modifications, meet the Basic Conditions.

11.Planning Policy

11.1. National Planning Policy

National Policy guidance is in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). At the time of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan the relevant NPPF was the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) February 2019 (as updated).

To meet the Basic Conditions, the Plan must have “regard to national policy and advice”. In addition, the NPPF requires that a Neighbourhood Plan “must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan”.

Paragraph 29 states:

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.”

The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan does not need to repeat these national policies, but to demonstrate it has taken them into account.

I have examined the and consider that, subject to modification, the plan does have “regard for National Policy and Advice” and therefore the Plan, subject to minor modification does meet the Basic Conditions in this respect.

11.2 Local Planning Policy- The Development Plan

The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Area is within the area covered by Swindon Borough Council. At the time of my examination, the development plan for the area is the Swindon Core Strategy 2015-2026 (WCS) which was adopted on 20th January 2015.

To meet the Basic Conditions, the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Neighbourhood Plan must be in “general conformity” with the strategic policies of the development plan.

The NPPF 2019 (updated) states:

“20. Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for:

a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;

b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);

c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and

d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.”

Neighbourhood Plans should only contain non-strategic policies. The NPPF 2019(updated) states:

“Non-strategic policies

28. Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.

29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.”

Should there be a conflict between a policy in a neighbourhood plan and a

policy in a Local Plan, section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy, which is contained in the last document to become part of the development plan.

The distinction between strategic and non-strategic policies is important because of the relationship with Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Plans only have to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan (Localism Act 2011, Schedule 4B, s7 (2)(e)) When made, neighbourhood plan policies take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the local plan, where they are in conflict.

Planning Policy Guidance paragraph 41-076-20140306 sets out that:

“Strategic policies will be different in each local planning authority area. When reaching a view on whether a policy is a strategic policy the following are useful considerations:

- whether the policy sets out an overarching direction or objective*
- whether the policy seeks to shape the broad characteristics of development*
- the scale at which the policy is intended to operate*
- whether the policy sets a framework for decisions on how competing priorities should be balanced*
- whether the policy sets a standard or other requirement that is essential to achieving the wider vision and aspirations in the Local Plan*
- in the case of site allocations, whether bringing the site forward is central to achieving the vision and aspirations of the Local Plan*
- whether the Local Plan identifies the policy as being strategic”*

I have examined the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan and consider that, subject to modification, the plan is in general conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Development Plan and does meet the Basic Conditions in this

respect.

12. Other Relevant Policy Considerations

12.1 European Convention on Human Rights (ECMR) and other European Union Obligations

As a 'local plan', the Neighbourhood Plan is required to take cognisance of the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC.

The Steering Group sought and obtained a SEA Screening Assessment for the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan from Swindon Borough Council. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening exercise was carried out in consultation with relevant statutory bodies. The conclusion of the screening was that a SEA was not required under European Directive 2001/42/EC.

12.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) refers to the assessment required for any plan or project to assess the potential implications for European wildlife sites. The HRA looks at whether the implementation of the plan or project would harm the habitats or species for which European wildlife sites are designated.

The screening assessment looked at the potential impact of the Plan on sites within 15km of the Neighbourhood Plan area. There is only one internationally designated site within the search area: The Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC – approximately 11 km to the north-west.

The Swindon Local Plan 2026 was subject to an HRA during its production. This assessment looked at internationally designated sites within 15km of the Borough boundary. The HRA addendum report concluded: 'The policies, [in The Swindon Local Plan] were not likely to have adverse effects on the integrity of European sites, provided that the avoidance and mitigation measures recommended within the HRA Report were incorporated into the Local Plan'.

The conclusion from the Swindon Local Plan's HRA Report was that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan does not require an additional HRA assessment.

During the course of my examination I sought confirmation that the Court of Justice of the European Union ('CJEU')'s Judgment in People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta (April 2018) did not change this conclusion.

Swindon Borough Council provided the following confirmation:

"The Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report remains appropriate and no changes are considered necessary in light of the People Over Wind judgement. The review concludes that the SEA and HRA screening determination of October 2018 was properly reached, remains valid and there is no need to progress to Appropriate Assessment."

I am satisfied with this response.

12.3 Sustainable development

Paragraphs 7 to 14 of the NPPF (Feb 2019 as updated) identify the components of sustainable development, and how planning applications and local plans can meet these requirements.

The Basic Conditions Statement sets out how the neighbourhood plan addresses the requirement to achieve sustainable development.

My conclusion is that the principles of Sustainable Development required in the NPPF have been taken into account in the development of the plan and its policies and where issues have been identified they were addressed by revisions to the document prior to submission. I am satisfied that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan subject to the recommended modifications addresses the sustainability issues adequately.

The Neighbourhood Plan is required to take cognisance of the European Convention of Human Rights and to comply with the Human Rights Act 1998.

I am satisfied that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan has done so.

I am therefore satisfied that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions on EU obligations.

12.4 Excluded development

I am satisfied that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan does not cover County matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure such as highways and railways or other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

12.5 Development and use of land

I am satisfied that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan, subject to modification covers development and land use matters.

General Comments

Planning Guidance on preparing neighbourhood plans and policies is clear, it states:

“A policy in a neighbourhood plan should be clear and unambiguous. It should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared.

Neighbourhood planning can inspire local people and businesses to consider other ways to improve their neighbourhood than through the development and use of land. They may identify specific action or policies to deliver these improvements. Wider community aspirations than those relating to development and use of land can be included in a neighbourhood plan, but actions dealing with non-land use matters should be clearly identifiable. For example, set out in a companion document or annex.”

In order to provide clarity and to ensure that the policies in the Blunsdon East

Neighbourhood Plan meet the Basic Conditions it has been necessary for me to make modifications to a number of policies. This includes modifications where policies have sought to introduce controls outside the scope of the planning system or where existing policy already sets out the scope of control.

Where I found reference to the current Swindon Local Plan in proposed policies, I have replaced this by reference to the Development Plan to accommodate any changes to Local Plan Policy which may occur before the date of 2026.

As I have found it necessary to modify a number of policies it may also be necessary to modify the supporting text within the plan to align with the modified policies, where this is necessary. The details of these modifications are set out within my comments on the related policies. My comments on policies are in blue with the modified policies in red.

13.The Neighbourhood Plan Vision, Strategic Aims and Policies

13.1 VISION Statement

'Blunsdon East will continue to be a safe and tranquil rural area with a strong community spirit and a diverse population. It will value its unique rural setting on the Mid Vale ridge and its historic heritage while improving communication links with Swindon and the wider area.'

COMMENT

I am satisfied that the Blunsdon East NDP vision, aims and objectives were developed from the consultation process and that the policies within the plan reflect the vision, aims and objectives.

13.2 BLUNSDON EAST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

Policy 1: Allocation of Sites for Housing

Planning applications for minor developments on the three sites allocated within this plan will be supported where: -

✦ *They comply with all other policies in this plan especially, but not exclusively, Policy 4 which encourages early interaction with developers and Policy 5 regarding the Village Design Statement; and*

✦ *They comply with the provisions of the Development Brief outlined in Appendix J; and*

✦ *There are no adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment of the area or the built environment of the BENP area, or such impacts are appropriately mitigated; and*

✦ *Flood Risk Assessments and drainage strategies in accordance with Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 Policy EN6: Flood Risk are provided*

COMMENT

The Blunsdon NE Neighbourhood Plan allocates three sites for residential development and a development brief has been prepared for each site and forms part of appendix J, this is currently located in the evidence base supporting the plan.

The number of dwellings supported on each site is not reflected in the size of the site and it is difficult to understand how the yield from each site has been arrived at.

During my examination I requested further clarification on this policy, and this was provided by the Qualifying Body and I have taken this into account in arriving at my conclusions. My request for my clarification and the QB response is available to see on the Swindon BC website.

Whilst I understand the points raised by the QB in their clarification, for the purpose of my examination I am required to consider the sites as presented, including the red line areas. The development of these sites for the number of dwellings anticipated by this policy could lead to unnecessarily low-density development not having regard for National

Policy.

The formatting of Appendix J should be reviewed as it currently refers to numerous Appendices and is confusing it is currently located in the evidence base supporting the plan but should be moved to become an appendix forming part of the Plan itself. The detail in each Brief is also restrictive, particularly having regard to the number of dwellings that can be accommodated on each site. In order to provide the flexibility required by the NPPF the word “maximum” in relation to housing numbers should be removed from the Briefs and replaced by “approximately”.

For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be modified as follows:

Policy 1: Allocation of Sites for Housing

The following sites are allocated for residential development:

Site 7 Dinton in Broadbush

Site 9 Land south of Holdcroft, B4019

Site 11 Land opposite Coldharbour (Corner of B4019 with Ermin Street)

Planning applications for developments on these three allocated sites will be supported where: -

- they comply with all other relevant policies in the BENP and*
- they have regard for the Development Briefs outlined in Appendix J; and*
- there are no adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment of the area or the built environment of the BENP area, or such impacts are appropriately mitigated; and*
- Flood Risk Assessments and drainage strategies in accordance with National Policy and the Development Plan are provided and*

- *the privacy and residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers is protected and*
- *sufficient parking to avoid the need for on-street parking is provided and*
- *a comprehensive planting scheme is submitted, including details of trees and hedgerows to be retained and how the relevant net biodiversity gains are to be achieved and*
- *an appropriate archaeological assessment provided, where necessary*

Policy 2: Housing Development on non-allocated sites

Proposals outside the sites identified by Policy 1 will be supported where they are of a small scale and are either within the settlement boundaries or are classed ‘rural exception sites’ providing affordable housing or starter homes, in edge of settlement locations.

Within the settlement boundary proposals for minor residential development will be supported where:

✦ ***They comply with SBCLP 2026 and the Swindon Residential Design Guide 2016***

✦ ***They comply with all other policies within the BENP and the Village Design Statement***

✦ ***They conserve and enhance the natural and historic built environment of the BENP. Where there is potential for development to result in harmful impacts appropriate mitigation measures will need to be proposed.***

Outside the defined settlement boundary as defined by the SBCLP 2026 Proposals Map, land is defined as ‘open countryside’ and development proposals here will not normally be permitted unless they comply with rural development policies in SBCLP 2026. Rural exception sites which

meet identified local need and which comply with SBCLP Policy HA5 will be supported.

COMMENT

I have received numerous representations regarding the inadequacy of housing provision within the neighbourhood plan area and the failure to express a housing need figure. Having regard to the permissions already granted and the strategic allocation at Kingsdown NC5 I am satisfied that there is adequate flexibility for the delivery of housing to provide for local and strategic need and that the plan in this respect will contribute to the delivery of sustainable development.

For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions should be modified as follows:

Policy 2: Housing Development on non-allocated sites

Proposals on non-allocated sites for minor development will be supported and are either within the settlement boundaries or are classed 'rural exception sites' providing affordable housing or starter homes, in edge of settlement locations.

Within the settlement boundary proposals for minor residential development will be supported where:

- They comply with the Development Plan and the Swindon Residential Design Guide 2016**
- They comply with all relevant policies within the BENP and the Village Design Statement**
- They conserve and enhance the natural and historic built environment of the BENP.**

Where there is potential for development to result in harmful impacts appropriate mitigation measures will need to be proposed.

Outside the settlement boundary as defined in the Development Plan, land is 'open countryside' and development proposals here will not normally be permitted unless they comply with rural development policies in the Development Plan. Rural exception sites which meet identified local need and which comply with the Development Plan will be supported.

Policy 3: Rural Buffers

The character and identity of Blunsdon East Village will be preserved and enhanced by:

- ✦ The establishment of three rural buffers as shown on FIG 9 which should remain as open countryside.***
- ✦ Ensuring that Blunsdon East remains a separate and distinct entity separated from the Swindon Urban area.***
- ✦ Respecting the local landscape character including its setting and views into and out from the village.***
- ✦ Respecting the setting of the Broad Blunsdon East and Lower Blunsdon East Conservation Areas by conserving their special character and appearance.***

Development proposals in these Rural Buffers will only be supported where they are in accordance with SBCLP 2026 Policy EC5 (Farm Diversification) or are an essential requirement directly related to the economic or social needs of the rural community. Where there is potential for development as set out in this policy and which results in harmful impacts, appropriate mitigation measures will need to be proposed.

COMMENT

During the course of my examination I sought clarification on this policy

and the Qualifying Body provided a response which I have taken into consideration in reaching my conclusions. My request for my clarification and the QB response is available to see on the Swindon BC website.

The QB have explained in detail the reasons behind the formulation of this policy and I understand the concerns the community have raised. However, my role is to ensure that the policy proposed meets the Basic Conditions.

The policy as currently worded is overly restrictive and in areas conflicts/ overlaps with existing Development Plan policy.

Areas 1 and 2 identified on Fig 9 as rural buffers are already identified as open countryside in the Swindon Local Plan and development is strictly controlled by existing local plan policies:

EC5: Farm Diversification

HA5: Rural Exception Sites

HA6: Agricultural Workers Dwellings and

HA7: Conversion of Buildings to Residential Use in the Countryside

Rural Buffer 3 seeks to preserve the visual gap between the Upper and Lower villages. The Lower Blunsdon Conservation Area Appraisal states “Open space between the built form of Lower Blunsdon and Broad Blunsdon separates the two settlements and maintains the individual identity of each.” I therefore consider it is reasonable to seek the retention of the visual gap between Lower Blunsdon and Broad Blunsdon.

For clarity and in order to meet the Basic Conditions Fig 9 should be modified to remove buffers 1 and 2 and buffer 3 retitled as an area of visual separation.

To ensure the supporting text in the Neighbourhood Plan conforms to the modified policy Fig 10 should be removed in its entirety and replaced by a justification for policy 3a. The Justification for the policy should be modified to reflect the following policy modification.

Policy 3: Development in the countryside

Outside the defined settlement boundaries development will be strictly controlled in accordance with policies in the Development Plan.

The character and identity of Blunsdon East Village will be conserved and enhanced by:

- Ensuring that Blunsdon East remains a separate and distinct entity separated from the Swindon Urban area.***
- Respecting the local landscape character including its setting and views into and out from the village.***
- Respecting the setting of the Broad Blunsdon East and Lower Blunsdon East Conservation Areas by conserving their special character and appearance.***
- Where there is potential for development as set out in this policy and which results in harmful impacts, appropriate mitigation measures will need to be proposed.***

Policy 3a Lower Blunsdon and Broad Blunsdon area of visual separation.

Development will not be supported in the area identified in Fig 9 if it will or is likely to erode the visual separation between Lower Blunsdon and Broad Blunsdon.

Policy 4: Early Community Engagement with Developers

For developments generally

In the initial development and design stage prior to submitting a

planning application to SBC, developers are encouraged to engage with the local community to understand particular local views about the proposal (SBCLP 2026 Policy LN1)

Developers are particularly encouraged to engage with the community prior to submitting any planning application to discuss issues including, but not limited to:

✦ Modelling of traffic flows and mitigation to avoid possible congestion and ‘rat-running’ through the village;

✦ Public transport options including a review of bus services, new footpaths (including the changes to the Heritage Trail) and cycle ways;

✦ Provision or enhancement to core services;

✦ The upgrading of the Recreation Ground, pavilion and parking areas to further support increased demand and accessibility issues.

✦ How developer contributions can be utilised to improve and/or mitigate deficiencies in local infrastructure or where local infrastructure is at capacity (see BENP P10 & SBCLP 2026 Policy IN1).

COMMENT

Whilst it is important for developers to undertake early engagement with the community and the government encourages this, it cannot form part of a requirement in a neighbourhood plan policy. In addition, the other elements in this policy cannot form part of a land use policy but are either community aspirations or should be included in the main body of the plan. For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be deleted.

Policy 4: Early Community Engagement with Developers

For development on the Kingsdown NC5 site

This plan encourages the formulation of a separate Design Code for the Kingsdown Development, NC5, informed by Policy 5 – Village Design Statement and asks that this forms part of the early community engagement with developers.

The BENP community will engage with the developers of the Kingsdown strategic allocation in order to ensure that:

- ✦ any area of non-coalescence or rural buffer is treated as a minimum standard (Policy 3 & Policy 5)***
- ✦ as many of the existing hedgerows and trees as possible are retained and to allow enhancement and replacement where retention is not possible. This is to ensure net biodiversity gain, landscape character and provision of a network of green infrastructure corridors (Policy 12);***
- ✦ the development provides key infrastructure, such as primary school, open space, pitches and a local centre;***
- ✦ local facilities are linked to existing or new rights of way to enable and encourage sustainable movement around the village by foot and bicycle;***
- ✦ traffic mitigation measures required e.g. traffic calming and measures to minimise rat running through Broad Blunsdon East are carried out as per SBCLP 2026 Policy NC5.***

COMMENT

There are two Policy 4s in the plan however as my modification of the plan requires deletion of one of them there is no requirement for renumbering.

Policy 4: Development on the Kingsdown NC5 site

Proposals for the development of the Kingsdown NC5 site should:

- *include a Design Code informed by the Village Design Statement. The development of the Design Code in consultation with the community is encouraged.*
- *demonstrate how policies 3 and 5 of the BENP have been taken into account in bringing forward proposals.*
- *retain as many of the existing hedgerows and trees as possible, with replacement and enhancement where retention is not possible to ensure net biodiversity gain, to protect landscape character and make provision for a network of green infrastructure corridors (Policy 12);*
- *include the provision of key infrastructure, such as primary school, open space, pitches and a local centre as required by the size and scale of the development;*
- *ensure that local facilities are linked to existing or new rights of way to enable and encourage sustainable movement around the village by foot and bicycle;*
- *include traffic mitigation measures including traffic calming and design measures to minimise the creation of “rat runs” through Broad Blunsdon East in accordance with the Development Plan.*

Policy 5: Preserving the design and character of Blunsdon East Village

All development within the BENP area, other than that within the Strategic Site NC5, is required to comply with the VDS.

Development proposals should demonstrate how they comply with the design principles contained within the VDS.

COMMENT

This policy is overly prescriptive. For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be modified as follows:

Policy 5: Preserving the character of Blunsdon East Village

To preserve the character of Blunsdon East Village development proposals should demonstrate how they comply with the design principles contained within the Village Design Statement.

Policy 6: Road Safety, traffic congestion and pollution

To maintain Blunsdon East as a ‘tranquil rural area’ developers should actively consider steps which will offset any adverse impacts on road safety or pollution caused by increased traffic flows through the village during the construction and thereafter as set out in the SBCLP 2026 Policies TR1 and TR2 and NPPF 2019 paras 108 and 109.

Developers, during pre-application consultation and within planning applications including any Statement of Community Involvement, should provide suggestions on how their contributions can be used to enhance or mitigate the effects of traffic flow, promote road safety and minimise air, light and noise pollution.

Traffic Congestion Proposals that accord with the policies in the BENP and result in improvements to the free flow of traffic in the village, promote road safety and minimise air, light and noise pollution will be supported.

Road safety, traffic congestion and pollution are a priority for Blunsdon East and developers are strongly encouraged to discuss the above traffic mitigation measures with the Parish Council at the earliest possible stage in the planning process.

COMMENT

Developer contributions cannot form part of planning policy. The second paragraph of this policy should be deleted. The contents could be included in the main body of the plan. For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be modified as follows:

Policy 6: Road Safety, traffic congestion and pollution

Road safety, traffic congestion and pollution are a priority for Blunsdon East and developers are strongly encouraged to discuss traffic mitigation measures with the Parish Council at the earliest possible stage in the planning process.

To maintain Blunsdon East as a ‘tranquil rural area’ proposals should include mitigation measures which will offset the adverse impacts on road safety and/or air quality caused by increased traffic flows through the village as set out in the NPPF 2019 paras 108 and 109 and the traffic and transport policies of the Development Plan .

Proposals which minimise traffic congestion, are in conformity with the other policies in the BENP and result in improvements to the free flow of traffic in the village, promoting road safety and minimising air, light and noise pollution will be supported.

Policy 7: Protection of Community facilities and locally important assets

Development proposals that will enhance the viability and value of community facilities will be supported. (ref SBCLP 2026 Policy CM4)

A non-exhaustive list of community facilities is set out below and any development is expected to conserve and enhance them and any other sites which may be considered as such assets:

St Leonards Church

The Cold Harbour Pub

The Village Hall

The Village shop

The Stubb’s Hill Anti-Aircraft Battery

The Heart in Hand Public House and Hall

The Rec ground pavilion

The Doctor's surgery

The Methodist Church

The Baptist Church

Proposals for new or extended community facilities for the BENP area, including within Kingsdown NC5, will be supported particularly where they will be accessible for all residents of the BENP area

COMMENT

This policy appears to include both community facilities and non-designated heritage assets. For Clarity the policy should be modified as follows:

Policy 7: Protection of Community facilities

Development proposals that will enhance the viability and value of community facilities will be supported in accordance with policies in the Development Plan.

A non-exhaustive list of community facilities is set out below and proposals that would result in the loss of these or other established community facilities will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- commercial facilities have been genuinely marketed for the established use for at least one year; and***
- the facility is no longer economically viable for the established use, or there is a suitable and sustainable alternative to that facility nearby, or the facility is no longer required.***

1. St Leonards Church

- 2. The Cold Harbour Pub**
- 3. The Village Hall**
- 4. The Village Shop**
- 5. The Heart in Hand Public House and Hall**
- 6. The Rec ground pavilion**
- 7. The Doctor's surgery**
- 8. The Methodist Church**
- 9. The Baptist Church**

Proposals for new or extended community facilities for the BENP area, including within Kingsdown NC5, will be supported particularly where they will be accessible for all residents of the BENP area

Policy 7a Locally important non-designated heritage assets.

Locally important non-designated heritage assets, including the Stubb's Hill Anti-Aircraft Battery are identified in the Village Design Statement and appendices D and E to this plan. Any proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets must be in compliance with the National Policy and Guidance, and policies in the Development plan.

Policy 8: Employment

The BENP encourages proposals that will enable homeworking, co-working or provide new local employment opportunities, subject to the policies contained within the BENP and SBCLP 2026 provided that:

✦ There are no harmful impacts on residential amenity through smell, dust, noise, pollution, increased traffic movements, transit of heavy goods or other interference with the quiet enjoyment of residents; and

✦ There are no harmful impacts on the natural and historic environment of the area or the built environment of the BENP area and proposals comply with other BENP policies; and

✦ *There is no unacceptable traffic impact within the BENP area. Where any proposal could generate heavy goods traffic, they must demonstrate with the assistance of a Transport Statement that the proposal will not have an unacceptable traffic impact.*

Proposals that comply with this policy will be supported

COMMENT

For consistency the reference to the SBCLP 2026 should be replaced with “policies within the Development Plan”

Policy 9: Infrastructure Requirements and Funding for Community Projects

Any financial contributions received through the Community Infrastructure Levy for direct local benefit agreed under Section 106 or otherwise generated by development within the boundary of the Parish and paid over to the Parish Council should be used to support projects listed below, but not exclusively.

Any developer contributions received by the Parish Council from the LPA on developments within the BENP area or from areas which affect it will be allocated to Community projects agreed at the time and may include Traffic mitigation projects.

A list of projects will be developed by the Parish Council. This list will be reviewed annually through discussion with members of the local community, users of Parish facilities and through the Annual Parish Meeting.

Projects listed to date which may merit use of external funding include:

✦ *Highways improvements and road safety measures;*

✦ *Enhancement to the conservation areas;*

- ✦ *Enhancements to the Blunsdon East Heritage Trail;*
 - ✦ *Rights of way and cycle network;*
 - ✦ *Provision for connection to efficient broadband services;*
 - ✦ *Provision of allotments;*
 - ✦ *Development and enhancement of Multi-Use Games Area;*
 - ✦ *Improvement to the existing sporting facilities associated with the Recreation Ground to encourage or extend the use of available facilities;*
 - ✦ *Enlargement of existing cemetery provisions for the local community.*
- Other projects that comply with policies and aspirations within this plan may also be supported.*

COMMENT

Policy 9 is a list of CIL priorities and not a land use planning policy used for the determination of planning applications. This policy should be deleted from the policy section of the plan but can be used in a community project/aspiration section or within the main text of the plan.

Policy 10: Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Sports Facilities

The Parish Council has a statutory duty to ensure net biodiversity gain and order to reflect the demands and aspirations of residents and preserve its' crucial role in the village, the Recreation Ground shown on FIG 9 is designated as a Local Green Space. Development on the Recreation Ground will only be permitted where it promotes and enhances the recreational use and visual attributes of open space.

Proposals to expand opportunities for sport and recreation within the BENP area will be supported where they are in compliance with other

policies in this plan.

Existing sports, recreational and allotment sites (as shown on the map below) are protected from development unless alternative provision can be made locally of equivalent or better size, quality and accessibility in accordance with SBCLP 2026 EN3;

In order to maximise opportunities for contributions towards green infrastructure and the Great Western Community Forest, where appropriate, development proposals should comply with SBCLP Policies EN1, EN2.

COMMENT

This policy mixes the designation of Local Green Space and Open Spaces and sports facilities and Green Infrastructure. The reference to Green Infrastructure relates to developer contributions and cannot form part of policy but could be included in the community section of the plan.

The NPPF states:

“99. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

100. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and

c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

101. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.”

I am satisfied that the area identified as the Recreation Ground does meet this requirement however it is not illustrated on Fig 9 but on Fig 11 which also illustrates 3 other sites:

1 Millennium Garden

2 Burytown Copse

4 Children’s playground & tennis courts

But there is no indication of why these areas are indicated on Fig 11 and no mention in the policy of wishing to designate these areas as Local Green Spaces and to avoid confusion they should be removed from Fig 11.

For clarity the policy should be split and modified as follows.

Policy 10: The Designation of Local Green Space

Due to its importance the village, the Recreation Ground shown on FIG 11 is designated as a Local Green Space. Development on the Recreation Ground will only be permitted in very special circumstances.

Policy 10a Open Space and Sports Facilities

Proposals to expand opportunities for sport and recreation within the BENP area will be supported where they are in compliance with other

policies in this plan.

Existing sports, recreational and allotment sites (as shown on the map below) are protected from development unless alternative provision can be made locally of equivalent or better size, quality and accessibility in accordance with policies within the Development Plan;

Policy 11: Preservation of views of local importance

Development proposals should conserve and enhance the key views and vistas identified by the LVSA and in the Conservation area appraisals.

Opportunities to avoid the use of overhead cables in the future and to remove or reroute cables to ground level should be taken where possible.

Where appropriate any proposals for developments should be accompanied by a detailed Landscape Statement to include impact on the specific views details listed in this plan.

COMMENT

This policy lacks clarity and could be difficult to apply in the determination of a planning application. For clarity the policy should be modified as follows:

Policy 11: Preservation of views of local importance

All new development should be of a height, mass and appearance that does not adversely affect key distinctive views (identified in Fig 14) into and out of the BENP area. Particular attention should be given to views surrounding listed buildings, the conservation areas and key landscape features.

Where appropriate and where proposals for development impact the

important views they should be accompanied by a detailed Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.

Opportunities to avoid the use of overhead cables in the future and to remove or reroute cables to ground level should be taken wherever possible.

Policy 12: Protection of Trees and Hedgerows

Development proposals must seek to retain trees and hedgerows of amenity value and biodiversity value whenever possible.

Development proposals affecting trees and hedgerows must be accompanied by an arboriculture survey which justifies any felling in terms of the health of trees or danger presented by any tree as a result of its condition or position.

Existing hedgerows and trees should be retained for visual and ecological importance such as biodiversity gain, landscape character and to secure networks of green infrastructure. If the removal of a hedgerow or tree is proposed, adequate justification must be provided and where appropriate, compensatory planting provided in the near vicinity. Replacement planting should be of sufficient value to compensate for the loss of amenity of mature trees hedgerows and the biodiversity they support.

Proposals should include information as to how trees and hedgerows that are to be retained, will be protected during construction.

COMMENT

This policy is confusing including some repetition. For clarity the policy should be modified as follows:

Policy 12: Protection of Trees and Hedgerows

Existing hedgerows and trees should be retained for visual and ecological importance including biodiversity gain, maintaining landscape character and to secure networks of green infrastructure whenever possible.

If the removal of a hedgerow or tree is proposed, adequate justification must be provided and where appropriate, compensatory planting provided in the near vicinity. Replacement planting should be of sufficient value to compensate for the loss of amenity of mature trees hedgerows and the biodiversity they support.

Proposals should include information as to how trees and hedgerows that are to be retained, will be protected during construction.

Policy 13: Dark Skies

Developments should be designed to reduce the occurrence of light pollution and are required to demonstrate how they will contribute towards minimising light pollution. Information on these measures must be submitted with applications.

Any lighting scheme that would normally require planning permission (e.g. floodlighting, lighting on poles etc.) or development that includes such a scheme would not be supported unless accompanied by a Lighting Assessment.

The Lighting Assessment should:

✦ Demonstrate that all available and feasible mitigation solutions would be implemented to reduce light pollution to a minimum so as to avoid loss of visual amenity to those residing within or visiting the BENP plan area and to reduce impact on nocturnal wildlife.

✦ Demonstrate that the proposed lighting scheme is unavoidable to ensure road and personal safety of the development and that the benefits significantly outweigh the negative impact including any impact

on nocturnal wildlife: and

✦ *Set out the operating hours of the light impact and demonstrate that these have been reduced to a minimum.*

COMMENT

Lighting schemes will not be relevant for all development proposals, for clarity the first sentence of the policy should be modified as follows:

Development proposals, where external lighting is required should be designed to reduce the occurrence of light pollution and are required to demonstrate how they will contribute towards minimising light pollution. Information on these measures should be submitted with applications.

SECTION 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

- 1. I find that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.*
- 2. The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with County matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure such as highways and railways or other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.*
- 3. The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to more than one Neighbourhood Area and there are no other Neighbourhood Plans in place within the Neighbourhood Area.*
- 4. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening meet the EU Obligation.*
- 5. The policies and plans in the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the recommended modifications would contribute to achieving sustainable development. They have regard to national policy and to guidance, and generally conform to the strategic policies of the Development Plan. The Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan Area is within the area covered by Swindon Borough Council. At the time of my examination, the development plan for the area was the Swindon Local Plan 2026 adopted on the 26th of March 2015.*
- 6. I therefore conclude that the Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan subject to the recommended modifications can proceed to Referendum.*

Deborah McCann BSc MRICS MRTPI Dip Arch Con Dip LD

Planning Consultant NPIERS Examiner CEDR accredited mediator

5th May 2020

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Appendix 3: Definition of the Basic Conditions

As defined by Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011):

“A draft order meets the basic conditions if—

(a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the order,

(b) having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, it is appropriate to make the order,

(c) having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any conservation area, it is appropriate to make the order,

(d) the making of the order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,

(e) the making of the order is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area),

(f) the making of the order does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations, and

(g) prescribed conditions are met in relation to the order and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order.”

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CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors David Renard (Chair), Brian Ford, Dale Heenan, Russell Holland, Cathy Martyn, Maureen Penny, Gary Sumner and Keith Williams

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Oliver Donachie and Mary Martin

Councillor Jim Grant attended the meeting in respect of Minutes 63, 64 and 65, Councillor Jane Milner-Barry attended in respect of Minutes 63 and 64, and Councillor Bob Wright in respect of Minute 63.

59. Declarations of Interest.

Councillor Dale Heenan declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Minute 69 (A sustainable future for the Community Meals Service) in that his sister worked in the service affected.

Councillor David Renard declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute 72 (Wichelstowe Joint Venture – NHBC Guarantee) in that he is a Council-appointed member of the Joint Venture Board.

Councillor Keith Williams declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in Minute 70 (Transfer of Parish Services to Parish Councils) in that he is chair of West Swindon Parish Council's Leisure and Amenities Committee.

60. Minutes.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

61. Public Question Time.

Mr Mark Smart, Chair, Reach Arts submitted a written question on proposed funding cuts to Reach Interactive Arts in the 2020/21 Budget, to which Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, provided a response that is published on the Council's website alongside the Minutes. Mr Smart asked a supplementary question on the same topic, to which Councillor Heenan responded at the meeting.

Mr Jacob Tyrell, a Trustee of Prime Theatre, submitted a written question on proposed funding cuts to Prime Theatre in the 2020/21 Budget, to which Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, provided a response that is published on the Council's website alongside the Minutes. Mr Tyrell asked a supplementary question on the same topic, to which Councillor Heenan responded at the meeting.

Ms Shahina Johnson MBE, CEO & Artistic Director, Create Studios, submitted a written question on proposed funding cuts to Create Studios in the 2020/21 Budget,

to which Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, provided a response that is published on the Council's website alongside the Minutes. Ms Johnson asked a supplementary question on the same topic to which Councillor Heenan responded at the meeting.

Mrs Karen Davison-Renouf, Old Town resident, submitted a written question about Council spending to support the Corn Exchange redevelopment, to which Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, provided a response that is published on the Council's website alongside the Minutes. Mrs Davison-Renouf asked a supplementary question on the same topic, to which Councillor Heenan undertook to provide a written response within 10 working days.

62. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public.

Resolved – That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the item listed below, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Item Nos.	Paragraph No.	Minute Nos.
16	3	73

63. Budget 2020/2021 and Beyond (Minute for Confirmation)

Councillor Russell Holland, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Education and Skills along with the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (Section 151 Officer) submitted joint report proposing a Budget for 2020/21 and setting out the financial context for 2021/22 and beyond. It was noted that, under the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet is required to recommend a budget to Council as part of its formal Council Tax Setting responsibilities.

Councillor Holland introduced his report setting out the implications of the delay in having government grants confirmed owing to the General Election, the continuing demographic pressures, and the desire to provide long-term support for arts groups that would be addressed in a proposed amendment to Appendix 3. He explained that the Council had received a grant of £60k, which had allowed officers to make new proposals to assist the arts groups that had previously expected an £80k cut. Councillor Holland also informed Cabinet of statutory changes imminent regarding the Dedicated Schools Budget. He reminded Members that the budget itself would not be determined until Council on 20th February 2020.

Councillors Dale Heenan, Jim Grant, Jane Milner-Barry, and Bob Wright asked a range of questions about the budget covering:

- Whether austerity is continuing for local government and the role of central government in funding the projected increased demand for adult social care,
- How the proposed budget changes might affect services for the vulnerable,
- Why Cabinet Members had not brought forward earlier the savings identified in this budget.
- How Cabinet might work with non-executive members to identify ways to

- support cultural groups and activities.
- The use of borrowing to support council and public sector schemes.
- The proposed support for the literature festival.
- What alternative proposals had been submitted during the three months since Cabinet approved the consultation budget.

Councillor Holland responded at the meeting.

Resolved –

- 1) That the medium term financial context and impact on Swindon of the draft Local Government Finance settlement be noted;
- 2) That the projected out-turn for 2019/20 be noted;
- 3) That Members note the consultation feedback summarised in Appendix 2,
- 4) That the detailed Dedicated Schools budget for 2020/21, based on a provisional funding envelope of £198.28m be noted;
- 5) That, in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets' confirmation of the robustness of the estimates underlying the recommended Budget and adequacy of reserves in the context of the earmarked reserves and proposed budget risk contingency be noted.
- 6) That the medium term financial strategy, set out in Appendix 5 be endorsed;
- 7) That the specific reserves held in support of the 2020/21 Revenue Budget set out in Appendix 4 be agreed;
- 8) That it be agreed that the proposed Dedicated Schools Budget (DSG) budget deficit should be recovered from within DSG income;
- 9) That the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets be authorised to balance any changes between the provisional and final local government finance settlements by adjusting the Budget Risk Contingency;
- 10) That an updated Appendix 3 with adjusted funding for cultural groups be submitted to Full Council.

Minute for Confirmation by Full Council

- 11) That Council be recommended, subject to any changes resulting from the Government's announcement of the final local government finance settlement for 2020/21,
 - a. To set the 2020/21 Budget at £149.074m;
 - b. To increase the Council Tax by 3.99%, comprising 1.99% for the basic amount of Council Tax and a specific adult social care precept of 2%, and;
 - c. To determine that the proposed increase in the basic amount of Council Tax for 2020/21 is not excessive in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Localism Act 2011 and therefore does not trigger the requirement for a referendum.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

64. Capital Programme 2020/2021 (Minute for Confirmation)

Councillor Russell Holland, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Education, and Skills along with the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets, submitted joint report to provide an update to the Capital Strategy and report new capital investment requirements through to 2024/25.

Councillor Holland introduced the joint report and proposed the following additional recommendations and amendments:

- Add: 2.1.4 To approve a £4.8m virement from the budget allocated to the proposed Swindon Museum and Art Gallery to Junction 15 M4 from the 2019/20 capital programme.
 - Add: 2.5 Subject to 2.1.4 above being approved at Full Council, to authorise the CEO in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning to agree terms with SWLEP and Highways England and then for the Chief Legal Officer to enter into appropriate agreements.
 - In recommendation 2.3, replace Thamesdown Avenue with Thames Avenue”
- Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, spoke in support of the additional recommendations regarding the money for work at Junction 15, which was necessary to address traffic flow issues now. Councillor Maureen Penny, Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment, asked that it be noted that she would be bringing a proposal to install automatic number plate recognition in car parks, which would cost approximately £500K, to Cabinet in March 2020 for consideration.

Councillors Jim Grant and Jane Milner-Barry asked a series of questions about the plans for a new museum and art gallery along with how £400k allocated for improvements to the current building would be ring-fenced and what those works might be. Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member of the Town Centre, responded at the meeting.

Resolved – (1) That Council be recommend to (Minute for Confirmation):

- (a) approve the additions to the Capital Programme and funding sources for the schemes set out at Appendix 1 to the main report;
 - (b) approve that further updates to the Capital Programme can be approved by Cabinet within the approved capital financing revenue budget and prudential indicators; and
 - (c) approve the Capital Strategy attached at Appendix 2 to the main report; and
 - (d) approve a £4.8m virement from the budget allocated to the proposed Swindon Museum and Art Gallery to Junction 15, M4.
- (2) That Cabinet noted the impact on long-term borrowing of the approvals sought in this paper as set out at paragraph 3.9 of the main report;
- (3) That a budget for £24,922 in 2019/20 funded from S106 contributions for speed reduction measures on Thames Avenue as set out at paragraph 3.6 of the main report be approved;
- (4) That it be approved that the schools capital funding is distributed as detailed in paragraph 3.17 of the main report.
- (5) That, subject to 2.1.4 above being approved at Full Council, the Chief Executive be authorised in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning to agree terms with Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Highways England and then for the Chief Legal Officer to enter into appropriate agreements.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

65. Treasury Strategy Statement 2020/21 (Minute for Confirmation)

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Education, and Skills along with the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets submitted a joint report Treasury Management

Strategy for 2020/21, including Prudential Indicators up to 2024/25, the Annual Investment Strategy, and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement.

Councillor Holland introduced the joint report, setting out its importance in underpinning valid revenue and capital budgets. Councillor Jim Grant asked about the level of reserves and their adequacy, to which the Councillor Holland and the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets responded at the meeting.

Resolved – That Cabinet recommends Full Council approves the Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Prudential Indicators, as set out in Appendix 1 to the joint report.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

66. Housing Revenue Account - Rents and Charges 2020/21

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety along with the Corporate Director, Communities and Housing submitted a joint report setting out the proposed rents, service charges, support charges for 2020/21 and proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2020/21.

Councillor Martyn introduced the joint report and summarised the different channels the Council had used to promote the consultation among tenants. However, she drew Cabinet's attention to the low response rate and the lack of a majority view for either option hence the report was recommending a rent increase. Councillor Martyn informed colleagues about the continued repayment of the HRA debt, the relocation of staff from Waterside to Hillmead, the ongoing consequences of the Government's decision to impose year-on-year reductions in the levels of rent and how this has affected the volume of repairs and acquisitions undertaken.

Resolved – (1) That Cabinet recommends that Full Council approves the proposed average social rent for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings for 2020/21 of £81.25 per week (52 week basis), which is an increase of 2.7%, be approved. This will be an average increase of £2.14 per week (on a 52 week basis). The range of increases are shown in paragraph 3.8 of the joint report.

(2) That the Director of Housing be authorised to seek authority from the Secretary of State to extend permission to provide a budget of £200k within the HRA for payments to Council's tenants under the Discretionary Housing Payments scheme in 2020/21 as detailed at paragraphs 3.23 of the joint report.

(3) That the housing related support charges for 2020/21 and service charges for 2020/21 as outlined in Appendix 2 be approved.

(4) That the leaseholder service charges are set for 2020/21 as shown in Appendix 3 be approved.

(5) That based on the proposals within this report, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) proposed budget 2020/21, shown in Appendix 4, be approved and that the HRA Capital Budget and Funding as shown in Appendix 5 be approved.

(6) That the draft 3 year capital projects and planned maintenance programme be approved at an indicative funding level of £15.5m (2019/20 prices) for 2020/21 Appendix 6.

(7) That the Director of Housing be authorised to undertake a new acquisition programme and approve the acquisition programme budget of £4m for 2020/21 in

accordance with paragraph 3.19 of the joint report, to include the purchase of 1-4 bedroom properties to help meet priority housing needs arising from homelessness and clients supported by Adult Social Care..

(8) That it be approved that rents charged on General Fund properties be increased in line with the Government's Direction on the Rent Standard 2019 also applied to Housing Revenue Account rents. This allows for rent increases of up to the CPI for the September of the preceding financial year, plus 1%. Increases for 2020/21 will therefore be capped at 2.7%. Service charges for General Fund properties, as shown in Appendix 7.

(9) That the charges for Private Sector Leased (PSL) accommodation for those accepted as homeless once published by the Government and as set out in Appendix 7 be approved.

(10) That it be agreed that any underspend or overspend on the 2019/20 Housing Revenue Account be managed through the general revenue reserves.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

67. School Admission Arrangements 2021-22 and Home to School Transport Policy

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Commissioner Education Place Planning and Admissions submitted a joint report seeking Cabinet's agreement to approve for all admissions in Swindon from September 2021:

- a) The co-ordinated scheme of admission arrangements for the normal point of entry for all primary schools and secondary schools.
- b) The co-ordinated In Year admission arrangements for all primary schools and secondary schools.
- c) The admission numbers and arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for all admissions from September 2021.

This report also seeks Cabinet's agreement to approve the Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy for 2021-22.

As the Councillor Mary Martin was unable to present, Councillor Russell Holland, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Education, and Skills introduced the joint report, noting that these policies were statutory requirements. Councillor Holland drew Members' attention to the council's high success rate in placing children at one of their most preferred schools.

Resolved - (1) That the co-ordinated scheme of admission arrangements (Appendix 1a and 1b) for the normal point of entry (Reception Year, Year 3 and Year 7) for all primary schools and secondary schools in Swindon for all admissions be approved and be implemented from September 2021 for all applicants;

(2) That the co-ordinated In Year admission arrangements (set out at Appendix 4), for all primary schools and secondary schools in Swindon for all admissions be approved and be implemented from September 2021 for all applicants;

(3) That the admission numbers and arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools (Appendix 2) for all admissions be approved and be implemented from September 2021 for all applicants and that it be noted that no opposition from Schools was received;

(4) That the Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy (Appendix 5) for all admissions be approved and be implemented for all applicants for 2021-22.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

68. Swindon Pay Policy Statement (Minute for Confirmation)

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Organisational Excellence along with the Director Human Resources & Organisational Development submitted a report as the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to agree and publish a Pay Policy Statement by 1st April each year. The joint report sets out the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2020 / 2021 for consideration by Cabinet, prior to referral to Full Council for approval.

Councillor Williams introduced the joint report, reminding Members that this was a statutory requirement. Councillor Williams drew attention to the detailed information in the appendix about staff, ethnicity, grades, and pay. Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, and Skills, spoke in support of the recommendations noting that report refutes misconceptions about the number of staff and levels of pay.

Resolved – (1) That the review of Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2020 / 2021, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

(2) (Minute for Confirmation) That the Pay Policy Statement be recommended to Council for approval, and, if approved, that the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development be authorised to update the salary information on 1st April 2020 prior to publication.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

69. Transfer of the Community Meals Service to AGE UK Wiltshire

The Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment along with the Head of Streetsmart submitted a joint making a recommendation to secure a sustainable future for the Community Meals service, which is currently provided by the Council. The report provides Cabinet with an update from a proposal contained within the February 2019 Cabinet Budget report 'Community Meals – Preferred option to transfer operation to new provider currently running similar services elsewhere in the country' (Cabinet Minute 56 2018/19) refers.

Councillor Penny introduced the joint report noting how the Council had come to be responsible for the service when the initial provider was unable to make it viable. She added that while the service was valuable, the Council was also unable to cover its costs, hence it sought alternative provision. Councillor Brian Ford, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, spoke in favour of the recommendations noting that officers in his portfolio area were consulted and supported the proposals.

Resolved – (1) That the business transfer of the Council's community meals service to Age UK Wiltshire (AGUKW) be approved.

(2) That the Corporate, Director Communities and Housing in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) and the Corporate Director of Finance and

Assets (s.151 Officer) be authorised to proceed with the next steps to appoint Age UK Wiltshire and to enter into a Business Transfer Agreement.

(3) That the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) in consultation with the Corporate Director Communities and Housing and the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (s.151 Officer) be authorised to complete all necessary documentation to transfer the operation including staff by means of a Business Transfer Agreement on such terms as she considers appropriate to protect the Council's interests

(4) That the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development be authorised to plan and undertake a TUPE consultation exercise with all relevant staff, recognising that under the proposals staff engaged on those services will transfer to the new operator.

(5) That it be authorised that £50k of one-off resources to be earmarked to fund the costs of any necessary legal, property and other transaction costs to support the conclusion of the negotiations and completion of the relevant contractual documentation.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

(Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, left the room for the discussion of this item having declared a personal but not prejudicial interest.)

70. Transfer of Parish Services to Parish Councils

The Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment along with the Head of Streetsmart submitted a joint report recommending that Swindon Borough Council (SBC) begin a process to terminate the Service Level Agreements with four Parish Councils, which provide for SBC to deliver certain StreetSmart Services to those Councils. In addition, it seeks authority to enter into agreements with those Parish Councils to TUPE transfer the SBC staff to the respective Parish Councils.

Councillor Penny introduced the joint report and summarised how there had been consultation with the parish councils affected. Councillor Penny stated that it was no longer possible to achieve economies of scale with the current delivery model.

Councillor Keith Williams, Corporate Services and Operational Excellence, declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in the report in that he was chair of West Swindon parish council's Leisure and Amenities Committee; however, he elected to remain in the meeting.

The Leader of the Council invited Mr Chris Watts, Chair of Central Swindon South Parish Council to speak. Mr Watts expressed the parish's support for taking responsibility for the staff but noted that the title did not accurately reflect the fact that Borough had already devolved the responsibility for the work.

At the request of the Chief Executive, the Leader requested that the recommendations be amended to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets, to which Members gave their consent.

Resolved – (1) That the Cabinet Member for Finance, Education, and Skills and the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment, in consultation with the

Corporate Director for Finance and Assets to be authorised confirm the cost implications of the future pension and redundancy costs set out in the body of the report and then trigger the four-month notice termination clause within the SLAs.

(2) That the Corporate Director for Finance and Assets be authorised in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment along with Cabinet Member for Finance, Skills and Education:

- (a) subject to 2 above, to terminate the service level agreements with Central Swindon South Parish, Central Swindon North Parish, West Parish and St. Andrews Parish Councils and
- (b) Subject to (a) above, to commence the TUPE transfer process for all affected SBC staff to the respective Parish Councils in order for the Parish Councils to self-deliver these services.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

71. References from Other Council Bodies - Health and Wellbeing Board

The Cabinet Member for Adults and Health along with the Chief Legal Office submitted a joint report asking Cabinet to note the Swindon findings from the Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon, and Wiltshire (BSW) report considered Health and Wellbeing Board held on 9th October 2019, endorse the recommendations and adopt the BSW Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Strategy 2019 -2023.

Councillor Brian Ford introduced the joint report and drew Members' attention to the wide range of actions being proposed that would help to reduce the incidence of suicide further. Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre welcomed the training that was being provided to Cabinet Members to promote awareness. Councillor Ford gave an undertaking that this was available to all Members and at one of the scheduled Member Training Sessions, which he hoped would be supported by the political Party Groups.

Resolved –That Cabinet note the Swindon findings, endorse the Health and Wellbeing Board's recommendations of 9th October 2019, and adopt the BSW Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Strategy 2019 -2023.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

72. Wichelstowe Joint Venture - NHBC Guarantee

In the Leader's absence for this item, Councillor Holland, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Education, and Skills, took the chair.

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and the Corporate Director of Communities and Housing submitted a joint report setting out the benefits and risks of the Council of providing an indemnity to the National House Building Council (NHBC) in relation to housebuilding and sales activity undertaken by Wichelstowe LLP (JV).

Councillor Gary Sumner advised Cabinet that approving the recommendation would

help to avoid higher costs from the development.

Resolved – That the Chief Legal Officer be authorised, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Communities and Housing and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning to complete the necessary contractual arrangements with the JV and the NHBC on the terms as set out in the body of the report

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

(The Leader of the Council declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a Council-appointed member of the JV Board and left the meeting for the duration of this item. The Chief Executive and the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets as fellow appointees to the JV Board also left the meeting.)

73. Land in Central Swindon

The Leader of the Council resumed the chair.

The Cabinet Member for the Town Centre and the Head of Town Centre development submitted a joint report seeking authority to acquire land in Swindon Town Centre as identified in the main body of the report.

Councillor Dale Heenan drew Members' attention to the updated information that he had tabled at the meeting.

Resolved – (1) That, subject to approval of capital programme by Council in February 2020, the Council be authorised to acquire land set out in Appendix 2 to the main report from the party, and for the consideration, identified at Appendix 1 to the main report, and that the purchase is to be funded through borrowing, on terms agreed by the Head of Property Assets in consultation with the Head of Town Centre Development.

(2) That the Council be authorised to enter into a Funding Agreement to secure up to £5m of capital grant for up front infrastructure delivery to service land on terms agreed by the Head of Town Centre Development and the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets, in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer and the Cabinet Member for Town Centre, as detailed at paragraphs 3.15 to 3.18.

(3) Subject to approval of capital programme by Council in February 2020 that the Corporate Director of Finance and Asset be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Town Centre, to approve 'top up' capital funding, paid for through authorised borrowing, to complement the grant funding at recommendation (2) above.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 22 APRIL 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors David Renard (Chair), Oliver Donachie, Brian Ford, Dale Heenan, Russell Holland, Mary Martin, Cathy Martyn, Maureen Penny, Gary Sumner and Keith Williams

74. Declarations of Interest.

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

75. Minutes

Resolved – That, with the amendment of “would be” to “was being” in Minute 71, the minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

76. Public Question Time

Mr Gerry Hannon, on behalf of Friends of the Health Hydro submitted a question about how additional funds would be found to pay for repairs at the Health Hydro. Councillor Keith Williams, Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Organisational Excellence, read out the question and responded at the meeting.

Mr Dick Millard on behalf of Swindon Cycle Campaign submitted a question regarding the planned Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan in relation to the Town Centre Movement Strategy. Councillor Maureen Penny, Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment, read out the question and responded at the meeting.

77. Budget Management Update (March)

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Education and Skills along with the Corporate Director for Finance and Assets submitted a joint report setting out the 2019/20 revenue budget forecast out-turn.

Councillor Holland advised Cabinet that there would be additional financial costs from responding to the virus that would be brought to Members later. While welcoming the £1.6bn of additional funding from central government, he also advised Cabinet that Swindon’s allocation of this had not been determined.

Resolved - That the 2019/20 revenue budget forecast out-turn for each service area set out in Table 1 and Appendix 1 be noted.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

78. Capital Programme Monitoring 3rd Quarter 2019/20

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Education, and Skills along with the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets submitted a joint report presenting the third quarter monitoring position for the Council's capital programme and some proposed changes to the programme.

Councillor Holland introduced the report as tabled and, in response to a question from Councillor Ford, confirmed that the Council had signed the agreement to receive government funding for the M4 Junction 15 works. Councillor Penny responded to a question from Councillor Williams confirming that while work on Mead Way had continued, it was taking longer in order to permit social distancing to protect the workers, therefore the anticipated underspend would be less than was forecast.

Resolved – (1) That the forecast capital expenditure set out in Table 1 & 2 of the main report and Appendices 1 and 2 be noted;
(2) That the variances detailed at paragraph 3.2 be noted;
(3) That the changes detailed at paragraph 3.3 be approved; and
(4) That the new reporting requirements regarding the 2019-20 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) publishing requirements detailed at paragraph 3.4 of the main report and the contents of Appendix 3 be noted.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

79. Affordable Housing Programme

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety along with the Director of Housing submitted a joint report setting out the current position of the Affordable Housing Development Programme and emerging projects. The joint report also sought approval for the Director of Housing to be authorised to use Housing Revenue Account resources to develop sites set out in the report.

Councillor Cathy Martyn informed Cabinet how the report set out the Council's ambition to provide a range of affordable housing options, within the funding available. Councillor Martyn responded at the meeting to questions submitted in advance by Councillor Bob Wright about the use of brownfield sites and the balance of social as opposed to affordable rented properties. Councillor Martyn also confirmed to Councillor Brian Ford that if the projects needed to use their contingency budgets then there would be a report to Cabinet showing the details.

Resolved – (1) That the Director of Housing be authorised to design and carry out a consultation to complete the construction of 64 units at Windmill Hill site at an estimated cost of £15.1 million,
(2) That the Director of Housing be authorised to complete the construction of the Queens Drive Regeneration at a cost of £34 million,
(3) That the Director of Housing be authorised to design and carry out a consultation on a development on land at Bromley Close.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

80.**Town Centre Movement Strategy**

The Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment along with the Service Manager Transport Planning, Development and Street Works Management submitted a joint report setting out the Town Centre Movement Strategy (TCMS), which if adopted would be a package of interventions (schemes) that between them would deliver improvements to movement into and within the Town Centre. The joint report sought Cabinet approval of the revised draft document following Consultation and authorisation to finalise the documents for adoption.

Councillor Maureen Penny introduced the joint report and emphasised that it was intended to provide a 20-year vision to secure funding rather than detailed specific proposals. Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre spoke in favour of the report and advised colleagues that addressing how shoppers and visitors moved between the Outlet Village and the town centre would be an important part of the Borough's economic recovery after the Covid-19 virus.

Councillors Stan Pajak and Bob Wright submitted questions before the meeting along with Councillors Oliver Donachie and Brian Ford at Cabinet, covering:

- The response rate to the consultation,
- The range of cycling options including the need to connect fully the cycle routes through or around the town centre,
- The Strategy's relationship with and effect on, the Air Quality Action plan,
- The effect of the proposed interventions on the Heritage Action Zone as well as some alternative suggestions for these proposals, and
- The contribution towards making the Borough carbon-neutral as well as the need to revise the statement in the covering report that suggested this strategy would not contribute to this.

Councillor Penny responded at the meeting and gave an undertaking to ask officers to review the statement about climate change implications in the covering report.

Resolved – (1) That the responses to the consultation as summarised in the body of the text and attached at Appendix 1, along with the significant amendments to the proposed strategy as a consequence of that consultation, be noted.

(2) That the form and content of the Town Centre Movement Strategy as attached at Appendix 2 be agreed and adopted as a strategy.

(3) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to make any minor or typographical changes as may be necessary prior to publication.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

81.**Swindon Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan 2020/21**

The Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment along with the Head of Highways and Transport submitted a joint report seeking approval for the adoption of the Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan for 2020/21 and for the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme budget apportionment for 2020/21.

Councillor Maureen Penny explained to Cabinet that this report set out the allocation of funding that Council had agreed as part of the Annual Budget. Councillor Penny added that she was working with officers to streamline the process

by which Ward Members could request funding to address minor repairs.

Resolved –

- (1). That the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Implementation Plan for 2020/21 be approved.
- (2). That the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme budget categories and total spend of £4.104 million for 2020/21, as detailed in Tables 1 to 7 of the Implementation Plan attached as Appendix 3 be approved.
- (3). That the Head of Highways and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment be authorised to:
 - a. Prioritise schemes in accordance with Vision for Swindon priorities,
 - b. Approve scheme progression in accordance with the updated Protocol (attached as Appendix 2 and originally approved by the Cabinet in July 2010),
 - c. Amend the Protocol to reflect changing job titles, organisational restructuring and improved input from and visibility to members
 - d. Vary allocations between different budget categories,
 - e. Approve variations in scheme costs,
 - f. Add/substitute schemes, provided expenditure is contained within the approved total budget,
 - g. Add additional schemes to the 2020/21 programme subject to receipt of the Pothole Action Fund allocation for 2020/21, and
 - h. Progress delivery of the Local Highways Maintenance Challenge Fund schemes as set out in paragraph 3.18 of the joint report, including match funding of up to £0.97m of existing approvals within the capital programme, subject to a satisfactory review of the grant Terms & Conditions which have not yet been received by the Council.
- (4). That the Head of Highways and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment, be authorised to develop and submit a bid / bids during 2020/21 for relevant funding opportunities launched by Government, or other funding agencies, for transport schemes that will benefit Swindon and which are in accordance with Vision for Swindon priorities.
- (5). That it be agreed to continue with the Highways and Transport Minor Works Requests process set out in Appendix 4.
- (6). That the progress on the review and refresh of the Local Transport Plan 3 document be noted.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

82. Heritage Action Zone

The Cabinet Members for the Town Centre, Strategic Planning, and Corporate Services and Operational Excellence along with Head of Property Assets and the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services, and Heritage, submitted a joint report providing an update on the progress being made on two of the key Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) projects: the Health Hydro and the Mechanics' Institute. The report also provided recommendations as to how the Council could maximise the benefits arising from the HAZ.

Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, introduced the joint report stating that it offered an opportunity for a sustainable future for the

Mechanics' Institute as well as options to support the Grade 2* listed Health Hydro.

Councillors Oliver Donachie, Cathy Martyn, Gary Sumner and Keith Williams asked questions or made comments covering:

- The need to address the appearance of the Mechanics' as part of the "golden triangle" of the town centre's economy,
- The hard work of the Council's Officers across a number of departments to develop these proposals, and
- The ongoing engagement with social housing tenants in the Railway Village.

Councillor Heenan responded to these at the meeting.

Resolved – (1) That the long-term vision for the Health Hydro outlined in paragraphs 3.16 and 3.17 of the joint report be agreed, and that officers be authorised to identify further opportunities to secure additional funding to deliver the long term vision;

(2) That the proposed way forward to secure a viable new use, and restoration of the Mechanics' Institute as set out in paragraphs 3.30 to 3.33 of the joint report, including preparation for a possible Compulsory Purchase Order be agreed;

(3) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to negotiate S106 development contributions from new residential development coming forward in the Town Centre on the basis of the principles set out in paras 3.48 and 3.49 of the joint report; and

(4) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to allocate the Swindon Heritage Action Zone grant funding in accordance with the Table at Appendix 1 to the joint report.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

83. Reference from the Health and Wellbeing Board - Homeless Prevention and Reduction Strategy (Minute for Confirmation)

Councillor Cathy Martyn, the Cabinet for Housing and Public Safety and the Chief Legal Officer submitted a joint report asking Cabinet to adopt the draft Homeless Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2020-2024 that had been approved subject to amendments at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 11th March 2020. In accordance with the Board's terms of reference, the Minute of that meeting has been submitted to Cabinet.

Resolved – (1) That the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety, be authorised to make the amendments to the draft Homeless Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2020-2024 as discussed at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 11th March 2020.

Minute for Confirmation

(2) That Cabinet recommends that Council, subject to the completion of the amendments in (1) above, agree the recommendation of the Health and Wellbeing Board at its meeting on 11th March 2020: "that Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet adopt the Homeless Prevention and Reduction Strategy 2020-2024."

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

84. Amendments to the Constitution and Delegated Decision-making

The Leader of the Council and the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) set out a joint report seeking Cabinet's support for changes to the Council's Constitution, which includes necessary changes as a result of the ongoing global coronavirus Covid-19 situation to be recommended to Council for approval. The report also sought support for the Council to renew and update its constitution on an annual basis. The changes proposed seek to augment the Members and Officers' ability to make decisions in a timely manner that can adjust to any external needs, especially the current response to the Covid-19 virus.

The Leader introduced the joint report, which set out both changes to Annual Council that had been reviewed by the Corporate Governance Review Working Group as well as revised delegate decision powers to make the Council more resilient. He also noted that if Cabinet agreed, these proposals would be passed to Special Committee for confirmation. Councillor Renard tabled two amendments:

- 1) To delete the existing recommendation 2.4 and insert
"2.4 That the Chief Legal Officer be authorised:
2.4.1 In consultation with the Corporate Governance Review Working Group, to vary the wording and layout of the Constitution and its associated documentation to reflect legislative and procedural changes should this prove necessary for the efficient discharge of Council business during the course of the Municipal Year.
2.4.2 In an emergency situation - when the "Gold Command" has been activated - in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the leaders of the other political party groups and the Chief Executive - to add to or vary the Constitution and its associated documentation to reflect legislative and procedural changes should this prove necessary for the efficient discharge of Council business. In addition, the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) shall submit a report to the next Full Council setting out how the additional powers added to the Constitution have been used and to invite Council to recommend that the Corporate Governance Review Working Group review any such additions at the next meeting."
- 2) To amend Paragraph 302 (Appendix Two, Scheme of Delegations).
"To name new streets, subject to consultation with other appropriate officers as necessary, the Royal Mail, relevant ward councillors, and with Parish Councils where applicable." Members agreed to accept these.

- Resolved (1) That Cabinet recommends to Council that (Minute for Confirmation):
- (a) Council adopts the proposed changes to the Annual Council meeting to ensure that it is a civic occasion (see Appendix One to the main report).
 - (b) Council authorises the Chief Executive to undertake any delegation that Members have previously authorised at Annual Council on 17th May 2019 (Council Minute 11 2019/20 refers) and at Council on 20th February 2020 or reallocate these to other officers in order to ensure the efficient dispatch of the Council's business.
 - (c) Council adopts the updated the Scheme of Delegations to reflect current post titles and reporting lines along with updated delegation numbers (see Appendix Two to the main report).
 - (d) Council authorise the Chief Legal Officer to:
 - (i) In consultation with the Corporate Governance Review Working Group, to vary the wording and layout of the Constitution and its associated documentation to reflect legislative and procedural changes should this prove necessary for the efficient discharge of Council business during the course of the Municipal Year.
 - (ii) In an emergency situation - when the "Gold Command" has been activated - in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the leaders of the other political party

groups and the Chief Executive - to add to or vary the Constitution and its associated documentation to reflect legislative and procedural changes should this prove necessary for the efficient discharge of Council business. In addition, the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) shall submit a report to the next Full Council setting out how the additional powers added to the Constitution have been used and to invite Council to recommend that the Corporate Governance Review Working Group review any such additions at the next meeting

(e) With the addition of the amendment to paragraph 302 to include consultation with Ward Members over street names, Council adopts the updated the Scheme of Delegations to reflect current post titles and reporting lines along with updated delegation numbers (see Appendix Two to the main report).

(f) Council approves the changes to delegated decision-making as set out in the report below (attached at Appendix Three to the main report).

(i) That the augmented the wording of Article 14.06 to allow Officers to act once the Chief Executive has activated the “Gold command”/strategic response to an incident be adopted.

(ii) That the scope of who may make key or strategic decisions in line with legislation be revised.

(iii) That delegated decisions that are neither high profile nor contentious and which would otherwise have been made and publicised through the Council’s website using Cabinet Member Briefing Notes to be made, recorded, and made public via the Officer Decision Note process be permitted.

(g) That the Chief Legal Officer be authorised on behalf of Council to grant a leave of absence for reasons relating to Coronavirus Covid-19 to any Councillor who may apply.

(2) That the use of electronic signatures from councillors’ registered email addresses to sign or provide consent for the exercise of Cabinet Members’ and Officers’ delegated powers be approved.

(3) That it be noted the Leader of the Council can act in respect of any executive powers and responsibilities as set out in legislation.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

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CABINET

THURSDAY, 7 MAY 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors David Renard (Chair), Oliver Donachie, Brian Ford, Dale Heenan, Russell Holland, Mary Martin, Cathy Martyn, Maureen Penny, Gary Sumner and Keith Williams

85. Declarations of Interest.

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

86. Public Question Time.

The Chair informed the meeting that a question had been received from Mr Gee concerning Wellington Street and that Councillor Penny would provide a written response within ten working days.

87. Minutes.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd April 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

88. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public.

Resolved – That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the item listed below, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Item Nos.	Paragraph No.	Minute Nos.
6	3	89

89. Kimmerfields Office Purchase

The Leader of the Council along with the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Education and Skills, the Cabinet Member for Economy and Growth and the Cabinet Member introduced the joint report.

Councillor Holland invited Members to note the reasons why the item was urgent and required as set out in the body of the report. The Leader, along with Councillors Oliver Donachie and Dale Heenan spoke in favour of the proposal. Councillor Brian Ford and Mary Martin asked questions about the potential impact of this proposal on the Council's other services and other financial effects, to which Councillor Holland and the Head of Property Assets responded at the meeting.

Resolved – (1) That it be agreed that the report and its recommendations are urgent

in accordance with the relevant legislation for the reasons set out in the body of the report.

(2) That the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets in consultation with the Head of Property Assets be authorised to vary the purchase price cap of the office building to be constructed and occupied by an existing local employer, as set out in Para 3.4 in the main body of the report.

(3) That the Head of Property Assets, in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer, be authorised to agree detailed terms of any relevant legal documentation required to reflect the increased purchase price and the change covered in Para 3.9 in the main body of the report.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Blunsdon and Highworth

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Alan Bishop, ward councillor - No Comment received
Councillor Maureen Penny, ward councillor – “This has been discussed at Highworth Town Council and they have no problem with this box being removed. As such I have no problems either.”
Councillor Steve Weisinger, ward councillor - No Comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 16th January 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00 Thursday 23rd January 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Alice Bates tel: 01793 466513, email: abates@swindon.gov.uk. or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

The Decision Note (report) sets out the background to, and reasons for, the decisions referred to in the Notice above. Details of the alternative options put forward for consideration (if any) are also recorded in the Decision Note (report). Any alternative options considered that did not appear in the initial report will be recorded as part of the above Notice of Decisions. The Decision Note is available via the following link on the Council’s website =

<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=652&RP=285>

Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Chiseldon and Lawn

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Jenny Jefferies, ward member - No Comment received
Councillor Brian Mattock, ward member - No Comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 16th January 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00 Thursday 23rd January 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Covingham and Dorcan

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Dale Heenan, ward member – No issue.
Councillor Barbara Parry, ward member– No objection.
Councillor Kevin Parry, ward member – No objection.

Date of Publication: Thursday 16th January 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00 Thursday 23rd January 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Haydon Wick

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Oliver Donachie, ward member – Supports the removal.
Councillor Gary Perkins, ward member – No comment received.
Councillor David Renard, ward member – No comment received.

Date of Publication: Thursday 16th January 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00 Thursday 23rd January 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Lydiard and Freshbrook

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Matthew Courtliff, ward member – No Comment received
Councillor Timothy Swinyard, ward member – No Comment received
Councillor Caryl Sydney-Smith, ward member - No Comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 16th January 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00 Thursday 23rd January 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Mannington and Western

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Stephanie Exell, ward member – No Comment received
Councillor Jim Robbins, ward member- No Comment received
Councillor Kevin Small, ward member - No Comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 16th January 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00 Thursday 23rd January 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Penhill and Upper Stratton

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Claire Crilly, ward member – “I am very please to see that the recommendation is to keep the two currently used phone boxes at Grafton Road and Braydon Court Penhill, for the reasons given, high calls and social housing area, plus the phone box at Grafton Road is near the very busy Cricklade road, and is useful if there are any road traffic accidents.”
Councillor Mark Dempsey, ward member – No Comment received.
Councillor Oladapo Ibitoye, ward member – “I would like to confirm that I am in support of your recommendation as set out under section. 3.6.3”

Date of Publication: Thursday 16th January 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00 Thursday 23rd January 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact:
Alice Bates tel: 01793 466513, email: abates@swindon.gov.uk.or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Ridgeway

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Gary Sumner, ward member – “I’m 100% supportive of the retention of the Hinton Parva box so delighted to support.”

Date of Publication: Thursday 16th January 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Rodbourne Cheney

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Jam Grant, ward member – No Comment received
Councillor Peter Watts, ward member - No Comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 16th January 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Shaw

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Mary Martin, ward member – No Comment received
Councillor Nick Martin, ward member – No Comment received
Councillor Keith Williams, ward member – “Please can we not proceed on the removal of the Shaw Village Centre phone box as I understand the low call usage is down to the fact that the phone was vandalised some time ago (the handset was removed) and BT have never repaired it. Before making a decision we need to see usage figures from a year when the box was in operation and being maintained.”

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – St Margaret and South Marston

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Russell Holland, ward member – “ I don't object - I have put a post up on our facebook page to check but I can't see this being an issue.”
Councillor Robert Jandy, ward member – No Comment received.
Councillor Roger Smith, ward member - No Comment received.

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Walcot and Park North

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward, be approved and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- No Comment received
Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received
Councillor Steve Allsop, ward member – “Content with recommendation”
Councillor Abdul Amin, ward member – “ Please go ahead as recommended.”
Councillor Emma Bushell, ward member – “ Also content.”

Date of Publication: Thursday 16th January 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00 Thursday 23rd January 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Makers Councillor Maureen Penny, Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment

Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Consideration of objections – Mill Lane Prohibition of Driving

Decision(s): (1) That the objections received in respect of the advertised Public Notice to introduce a prohibition of driving restriction on a section of Mill Lane dated 10th May 2019 be noted.

(2) That the Head of Highways & Transport be authorised to implement the advertised traffic regulation order for the prohibition of driving on Mill Lane on a permanent basis as advertised.

(2) That the Head of Highways & Transport be authorised to notify the objectors of the Cabinet Member's decision on this matter.

Consultation: Councillor Nadine Watts - Considering all the points that officers raise in appendix G, I agree with their recommendation not to proceed with this alternative proposal regarding a rising bollard. In particular, due to the legal complexity, installation & maintenance costs and time involved. Although I am sympathetic towards the residents' request, their access is not being cut off entirely. I understand that officers also checked with other authorities. I note that there were a lot of people who responded to the consultation who were in favour of keeping Mill Lane open. However, residents that lived nearer raised safety concerns. The proposal to close Mill Lane was in the original planning consent for Wichelstowe back in 2005. Although, I am not sure that the time has come to close Mill Lane, I will defer to officers' knowledge on this matter and as long as there are no restrictions on Redpost Drive and Peglars Way.

Councillor Jane Milner-Barry – I support the decision by SBC to close Mill Lane to vehicular traffic as this was a planning condition for the Wichelstowe development and the road which is in places steep, winding, narrow and wet would not be able safely to cope with the increase in traffic which will result from the building out of Middle Wichel. I support the officers' recommendation not to proceed with a rising bollard scheme.

Councillor Nick Burns-Howell – I understand that a number of options have been considered to keep Mill Lane fully or partially open, however this has not been possible due to ongoing safety concerns, especially as the volume of traffic is set to increase. I'm glad to see that this route will be kept open for pedestrian and bicycle access. I feel that the Borough needs to quickly consider implementing parking restrictions on Mill Lane, especially as the new development is progressed.

Councillor Brian Ford – As you know from past dealings I successfully fought to keep this route open many years ago however time moves on. I cannot object to this closure as long as the present route that goes to Wootton Bassett Road is kept open to ALL traffic.

Councillor Cathy Martyn – On the basis that this prohibition to vehicles is required to keep people safe, I support the proposal. I am pleased that a route on Mill Lane will remain open & maintained for pedestrians & cyclists which will enable sustainable travel to continue. There are few routes in & out of Swindon from the south, so I agree with Cllr Ford that the route out of Redposts Drive onto Wootton Bassett Road should remain open without restriction.

Councillor Andy Spry – no comment received.

Councillor Stan Pajak – I fully support the closure. Mill Lane has always been a route used by both walkers and cyclists since my childhood. It has now become a busy route and obviously would become increasingly so with further development which explains why the closure was set as Council policy. I support the closure.

Councillor Steve Allsopp – I fully support the closure order for the reasons set out in the report.

Date of Publication: Thursday 30th January 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00 Thursday 6th February 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Suzanne Coles, Direct Dial Telephone Number 07748158497, scoles@swindon.gov.uk or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre

Subject: Property in Old Town – Termination of Development Agreement

Decision(s): (1) That the Head of Property Assets, in consultation with Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) be authorised to issue a termination notice to parties named in the main body of the report.

(2) That the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with the Head of Property Assets, be authorised to complete all necessary legal documentation considered necessary to protect the Council's interests.

Consultation: Councillor Nick Burns-Howell – Comment: Good to see the Council taking proactive action to protect one of our most important heritage assets. Deadline after deadline has been missed so we must now find a positive way forward. I hope that the current owner comes forward with sensible plans for the local community to help shape, but if they are unable to do this I feel the Borough should be prepared to take further direct action to ensure the Corn Exchange is protected for generations to come.

Councillor Jane Milner-Barry – Comment: I note and request that the proposed action be reconsidered. I request that a further extension of time should be given to the developer as the plans both architectural and financial have reached such an advanced stage, the dangers to the building of another indeterminate period of neglect are so great and the cost of renovating the shell of the building must at some point become insupportable under any proposed scheme. I am also very concerned about the application for permitted development of the HSBC building adjoining the Corn Exchange, as if the HSBC building were not available to be included in the plan for the development of the Corn Exchange I cannot see how any plan for the Corn Exchange on its own could be financially viable. The applicant also has no plans to alter the facade of the building which is both dominant and ugly. I hope SBC will reconsider the proposed termination.

Councillor Nadine Watts – Comment: I am really disappointed with this outcome. I know that the Corn Exchange redevelopment was not progressing as quickly as we would have liked, but I was impressed with the designs that were being worked on and revised with feedback from the design review panel. I think this is the closest we have ever been to proceeding with this scheme and getting an acceptable planning application submitted. With all the work that has been done to date, I can't see that giving this developer a further time extension to submit a planning application, when we have waited years, would make much difference. We wouldn't get anyone else to proceed any quicker. In the meantime the site would only fall further into disrepair. I think it is important with a site with so much heritage attached to it, it should be dealt with as a whole. I am concerned that the permission for the Forum building granted on 15 January to be converted from offices to flats without any changes to the external façade will have a detrimental effect for future plans of this important site in Old Town. I don't think all possibilities have yet been exhausted with the current developer and that the plans

discussed at the design review panel meetings does show progress. I would like to see one final time extension granted for a planning application to be submitted. I do not support the proposal to serve notice to terminate the development agreement for this scheme.

Councillor Stan Pajak –Comment: Happy to support the recommendation albeit it brings to an end the perhaps forlorn hope of bringing back to life this historic building and the boost it would have given to both Old Town and Swindon.

Date of Publication: Thursday 30th January 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00, Thursday 6th February 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Emma Gee 07970 205707, egee@swindon.gov.uk or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, Education, and Skills

Subject: Loan Agreement

Decision(s): That the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (Section 151 Officer) be authorised to enter into an agreement with the organisation named in the body of the private and confidential report for the purposes of providing a loan of up to £70,000 on such terms to be agreed.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Bob Wright (Opposition Group) – supported the proposals for the reasons set out in the private and confidential report

Councillor Stan Pajak (Minority Group Leader) – supported the proposals for the reasons set out in the private and confidential report.

Date of Publication: Thursday 5th March 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00, Thursday 12th March 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Andy Stevens Direct Dial (01793) 464607, Astevens3@swindon.gov.uk or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Covingham and Dorcan

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward be approved, and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- 'Happy to agree with them all.'

Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received

Councillor Dale Heenan, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor Barbara Parry, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor Kevin Parry, ward member - No Comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 12th March 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00, Thursday 19th March 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Gorsehill and Pinehurst

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward be approved, and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- 'Happy to agree with them all.'

Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received

Councillor John Ballman, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor Ray Ballman, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor Carol Shelley, ward member - No Comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 12th March 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Haydon Wick

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward be approved, and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- 'Happy to agree with them all.'

Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received

Councillor Oliver Donachie, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor Gerry Perkins, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor David Renard, ward member – 'I support the removal'

Date of Publication: Thursday 12th March 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00, Thursday 19th March 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Liden, Eldene and Park South

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward be approved, and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- 'Happy to agree with them all.'

Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received

Councillor Fay Howard, ward member – 'Note and support the proposed action – Yes this phone box is clearly still being used'.

Councillor Janine Howarth, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor Bazil Solomon, ward member – 'Thanks and please go ahead Alice'

Date of Publication: Thursday 12th March 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00, Thursday 19th March 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Walcot and Park North

Decision(s): (1) That the recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of each of the call-boxes in this ward be approved, and
(2) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to undertake consultation on this decision in accordance with Ofcom regulations.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- 'Happy to agree with them all.'

Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – No Comment received

Councillor Steve Allsopp, ward member – No comment received

Councillor Abdul Amin, ward member - No comment received

Councillor Emma Bushell, ward member – No comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 12th March 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, Education, and Skills

Subject: Freehold Sale of site

Decision(s): That the Head of Property Assets be authorised to:

(1) submit for consideration a Development Brief for the site as set out in the Cabinet Member Decision Note in consultation with the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage to the Council's Planning Committee to confirm the form of development and potential uses of the land that would be acceptable in planning terms and subject to its adoption, and

(2) in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer, to market and sell the freehold interest of the site as set out in the Cabinet Member Decision Note for uses and forms of development which are in accordance with the adopted Development Brief and on such other terms and conditions as are deemed necessary to protect the Council's interests.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Grant provided the following comments on this proposal:

"I should like to register my disappointment that the Council has chosen to ignore the views of local residents on this matter. One is tempted to ask what is the point of consulting with residents when the decision made, of all the options before them, is the one residents least favoured. In light of this can I ask for long it is intended to keep this matter "private and confidential "? This land currently belongs to the people of Swindon surely they have a right to know as soon as possible that sometime in the near future they will no longer own it."

Councillor Pajak provided the following comments on this proposal: "I am supportive of marketing the site which never achieved its hoped for usage levels. This is similar to another site, which was due to selecting a poor location not selected for how it would perform but rather availability and costing. The ideal site never happened due to economics and timings. My only concern with the site is the highways implications of this amazingly busy junction which must be agreed before the development.

Councillor Crilly provided comments on this proposal: Concerns regarding Traffic/Access to the Site

I am concerned about the increased traffic going directly on to the main road from this site. The preferred option would be of traffic going into and out of the site would be wholly or partially via a different route.

If traffic is to access the site via the main road, then there would need to be lights at the entrance in otherwise it will be difficult and dangerous.

The different options

Feedback from residents in the area have mainly expressed disappointment that of the site is not going to re-open, especially considering the ongoing problems with large amounts of traffic and delays along the main road. Other feedback I have received indicates that a Drive-through coffee or MacDonald's wouldn't be particular popular with residents.

Councillor Dempsey - No Comment received

Councillor Ibitoye provided the following comments on the proposal: Whilst I understand that the site was underused, I do think that any future proposed development must offer commensurate benefits to the local community. We need either local jobs for local people or a mix of well-designed, low carbon housing (or a combination of both). I will reserve further judgement for any ensuing planning application and will seek resident's specific views as and when an application is submitted.

Date of Publication: Thursday 23rd April 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 17:00, Thursday 30th April 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Kathy Sherratt, 07789651922, ksherratt@swindon.gov.uk or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=652&RP=285>

The draft proposals for redevelopment of the site, less any commercially sensitive information, will form part of a subsequent report to the Planning Committee.

Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Cathy Martyn, Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety

Subject: Land at Queens Drive

Decision(s): That: (1) the Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety notes the objection to the proposed appropriation of public open space, which was received and detailed in the body of this report along with Officers' responses (Appendix One).

(2) The Director of Housing be authorised to proceed with the appropriation of public open space for development purposes at Queens Drive in accordance with the scheme agreed at Cabinet (Cabinet Minute 87, 2017/18 refers).

(3) The Director of Housing be authorised to write to the objector informing that person of the Council's decision to proceed along with the reasons for so doing.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Emma Bushell – ward councillor and Opposition spokesperson– did not comment

Councillor Steve Allsopp – did not comment

Councillor Abdul Amin – did not comment

Councillor Stan Pajak – Opposition spokesperson did not comment

Date of Publication: Thursday 7th May 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Friday 15th May 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Nick Kemmett, Direct Dial Telephone Number 464402, nkemmett@swindon.gov.uk. or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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The draft proposals for redevelopment of the site, less any commercially sensitive information, will form part of a subsequent report to the Planning Committee.

Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Covingham and Dorcan

Decision(s): (1) That the final recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of the call-boxes in this ward as specified in the Decision note be approved

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- 'I'm supportive of the Council response in all cases.'

Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – 'Happy with the recommendation that reflects both the rise of mobile telephones and the much reduced use of public telephones'

Councillor Dale Heenan, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor Barbara Parry, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor Kevin Parry, ward member - No Comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 7th May 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Friday 15th May 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Alice Bates, 01793 466513, abates@swindon.gov.uk or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Gorsehill and Pinehurst

Decision(s): That the final recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of the call-boxes in this ward as specified in the Decision Note be approved.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- 'I'm supportive of the Council response in all cases.'

Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – 'Happy with the recommendation that reflects both the rise of mobile telephones and the much reduced use of public telephones'

Councillor John Ballman, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor Ray Ballman, ward member - No Comment received

Councillor Carol Shelley, ward member – 'I agree that this Telephone box should be retained as 149 calls were made in a 12 month period. While this is a small number, the ageing population in the area, and the proximity to social housing make it of importance to the community.'

Date of Publication: Thursday 7th May 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Friday 15th May 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Haydon Wick

Decision(s): That the final recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of the call-boxes in this ward as specified in the Decision Note be approved.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- 'I'm supportive of the Council response in all cases.'

Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – 'Happy with the recommendation that reflects both the rise of mobile telephones and the much reduced use of public telephones'

Councillor Oliver Donachie, ward member - No comment received

Councillor Gary Perkins, ward member - No comment received

Councillor David Renard, ward member – No comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 7th May 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Friday 15th May 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Liden, Eldene and Park South

Decision(s): That the final recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of the call-boxes in this ward as specified in the Decision Note be approved.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- 'I'm supportive of the Council response in all cases.'

Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – 'Happy with the recommendation that reflects both the rise of mobile telephones and the much reduced use of public telephones'

Councillor Fay Howard, ward member - No comment received

Councillor Janine Howarth, ward member - No comment received

Councillor Basil Solomon, ward member – 'Please go ahead.'

Date of Publication: Thursday 7th May 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Friday 15th May 2020

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning

Subject: Proposed BT Phone box removals – Walcot and Park North

Decision(s): That the final recommendation for removal, adoption or retention of the call-boxes in this ward as specified in the Decision Note be approved.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jim Robbins, Opposition Group spokesperson- 'I'm supportive of the Council response in all cases.'

Councillor Stan Pajak, Minority Group spokesperson – 'Happy with the recommendation that reflects both the rise of mobile telephones and the much reduced use of public telephones'

Councillor Steve Allsopp, ward member – 'I see no reason to challenge the recommendation to object'

Councillor Abdul Amin, ward member - No comment received

Councillor Emma Bushell, ward member – No comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 7th May 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Friday 15th May 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Alice Bates, 01793 466513, abates@swindon.gov.uk or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Maureen Penny, Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment

Subject: Transfer of Parish Services to Idverde working on behalf of Central Swindon North Parish Council

Decision(s): (1) That the commencement of the TUPE transfer process for all affected staff directly to Idverde working on behalf of Central Swindon North Parish Council for the delivery of Streetsmart services be authorised.

(2) That the extension of the termination date of the Service Level Agreement with Central Swindon North Parish Council from the 30th June 2020 to the 31st July 2020 if required in order to provide sufficient time for the completion of the TUPE process be authorised.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Jane Milner-Barry - Approved with no comments

Councillor Stan Pajak – Approved with no comments

Date of Publication: Friday 22nd May 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Monday 1st June 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Ian James, Head of StreetSmart, Direct Dial Telephone 07717 801 000, email ijames@swindon.gov.uk or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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The draft proposals for redevelopment of the site, less any commercially sensitive information, will form part of a subsequent report to the Planning Committee.

Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Russell Holland, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Education and Skills

Subject: Covid-19 Response - Council Tax Support Hardship 2020/21

Decision(s): That the Head of Revenues and Benefits be authorised to grant each council tax support working age claimant an additional £150 council tax support for 2020/21 only. If their council tax liability is below £150 then the award will be the amount that they are liable to pay for the year.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor Robert Wright 22/5/20

I think it is best that SBC handles the payment as if it is not one in isolation or limited to £150. 4.5 of the decision note shows at this time it is not possible to predict the take up. It seems to me there is little choice but to treat each claimant one at a time assessing their needs and also to monitor the government funding usage. The £150 cannot be avoided as it's specific use is prescribed by government.

The Budget included a £500 million 'hardship fund' for local authorities in England to help them support vulnerable people during the outbreak. The government has expectations on how this funding is to be used and SBC has already established their own approach, the "Swindon Emergency Assistance Fund". This is expected to use remaining grant to assist those in need," which might include further council tax relief or additional support through Local Welfare or similar schemes.

The emergency fund is crucial to supporting local needs and I think we have to use the previous average and current demand to provide data for a further budget claim to the government.

Later in the year if things settle down (lets hope) further top up may be possible. As long there is an incremental use of the money further use prediction will be possible. The elephant in the room is after "lock down" will there be jobs/work to return too? We have to for instance consider the impact of the Honda closure and its affect on the local economy.

At this time I support the £150 allocation as prescribed by government however my fears are we will exceed the current government funding and we have to produce a case for more government funding.

Councillor Stan Pajak – No Comment received

Date of Publication: Thursday 27th May 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Friday 5th June 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact Andy Stevens on telephone 01793 464607 or via email Astevens3@swindon.gov.uk. Or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Subject: Hop Skip and Jump Foundation Limited (in administration) Service provision decision

Decision(s): (1) That the Cabinet Member for Children's Services authorises the Corporate Director of Children's Services to undertake a RFQ to source a new provider to provide Short Break services to Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Learning Disabilities. The service will be required to be provided at the premises from which Hop, Skip and Jump previously occupied: Upper Shaw Farm Community Centre, Swindon which is owned by Swindon Borough Council.

(2) That the Head of Property Assets in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer and the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (S151 Officer), will exercise his delegated authority (Paragraph 43 of the Council's Scheme of Delegations, Part 8 of the Constitution) to grant a new lease of the Upper Shaw Farm community centre to the new provider. The lease will be on such terms and conditions as are required by the Head of Property Assets and the Chief Legal Officer in order to protect the Council's interests.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below:

Councillor - Carol Shelley

Following the initial consultation Councillor Shelley's comments have been discussed with Councillor Martin and the Disabled Childrens Service Manager, Mark Green and the issues raised have been addressed. However the timeline is still a concern and Councillor Shelley's stressed that every effort should be made to support vulnerable children with alternative provision where they are unable to access the service. Councillor Shelley confirms she is in support of the recommended approach

Date of Publication: Thursday 28th May 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Thursday 4th June 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Mark Green, Integrated Service Manager, Direct Dial Telephone Number: 01793 46 4061, mark.green@swindon.gov.uk or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor Cathy Martyn, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities

Subject: Housing Change Programme – Repairs and Voids

Decision(s):

- (1) That the Director of Housing is authorised to amend the Housing Allocation Policy in relation to property condition as set out in this report.
- (2) That the Director of Housing is authorised to change the definition of emergency and urgent repairs to same day repairs.
- (3) That the Director of Housing is authorised to amend the list of repairs that tenants are responsible for undertaking.
- (4) That the Cabinet Member notes the change to the process around minor repair works.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below.

Councillor Emma Bushell - by email 27.4.20 - "Note and support".

Councillor Stan Pajak – by email 21.4.20 – "Just a note to say I am happy with the contents of the report".

Date of Publication: Thursday 4th June 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Thursday 11th June 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Arlene Griffin, Housing Business Development Manager, 01793 464387 agriffin@swindon.gov.uk or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker: Councillor David Renard, Leader of the Council,

Councillor Russell Holland, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills,

Councillor Maureen Penny, Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance and Waste Services

Subject: Re-opening the High Street Safely Grant

Decisions: (1) That the Director of Operations, the Head of Streetsmart, the Head of Strategic Growth and Place, and the Head of Highways and Transport, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets, are authorised to fund from existing budgets the measures recommended as part of the Reopening of the High Street Safely work until funding agreements are finalised with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

(2) That the Head of Highways and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance and Waste Services, is authorised to implement traffic orders as identified by Members and highways colleagues.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below.

Councillor Bob Wright - "I support the intention of changes to movements due to the Corona virus, addressing all forms of movements. I have the following observations:

How will the use of existing funding affect planned works and more to the point what funding is available as we understand there is an overall budget shortfall and there has been some overspend in some areas.

It is a matter of record the council was told to spend what it takes in tackling the virus and the council will be provided by government funds. Recent cabinet statements seem to be rolling back on this promise and could leave the council with a huge debt. How will this government funding be protected and not subsumed into the wider debt? I can summarise this as a problem with confidence in promises being met.

The pressure on the council is palpable and the short time frame may mean the acceptance that good intentions may lead to unintended consequences. Can you ensure the funding has the capacity to adapt and change if required.

I have seen no specific details to comment on the actual design but could you please ensure there are numerous opportunities for drop offs and parking for the disabled and those who struggle to walk long distances. This might mean providing opportunities similar to bus stop bays but not parking for 3 hours due to a disabled badge."

Councillor Jim Grant – "Councillor Wright has covered all the aspects of this issue that i would want to raise. Can you accept his submission on behalf of both of us."

Councillor Stan Pajak – “Just a note to say I very much support this initiative and the provided paper. Speed is critical in the push towards normality and reopening of our High streets to shoppers”

Date of Publication: Friday 5th June 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: 16:00, Friday 12th June 2020

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: Philippa Venables on telephone 07824 550469 or via email pvenables@swindon.gov.uk. or Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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Notice (a) of Decisions Made and (b) of Exemption from call-in on grounds of urgency

Decision Maker: Councillor David Renard, Leader of the Council

Subject: Covid-19 Response – Urgent Decision - Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund

Decisions: (1) The Head of Strategic Growth and Place is authorised to adopt and publicise the Swindon Scheme for eligibility as set out in the body of the report.

(2) The Head of Strategic Growth and Place is authorised to assess applications against the eligibility criteria and to determine the amount of grant to each applicant based on the criteria as adjusted to ensure that the total grant paid by the council does not exceed the total grant of £1,815,750 set out in the body of the report.

(3) The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets is authorised to pay the various grants from the Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund up to a total sum of £1,815,750.

Consultation: The following Opposition Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the recommendations of the report and their responses are summarised below.

Councillor Grant – “It is patently absurd for opposition councillors to be able to give a considered response to such an important proposal when they have been given less than 3 hours to do so, Had the administration taken up the offer of a cross party working group to cover all aspects Swindon’s recovery from the coronavirus pandemic things may have been different. So much for the Leader’s commitment to the “usual democratic process”. The report carries no analysis of how companies in receipt of this grant might benefit the long term future of the Swindon economy. Nor does it appear to prioritise those companies who have shown a commitment to Swindon in the past. Had it done so the Swindon Scheme would be prioritising those companies which 1) recognise trade unions 2) are committed to paying the real living wage and 3) have a proven track record in seeking to recuse carbon emissions. I would ask that these 3 items are added to our local criteria”

Councillor Pajak - “Very happy to support this help to small businesses”

Date of Publication: Friday 5th June 2020

Date for receipt of requests for call-in: In accordance with Paragraph 16(h) of Rules of Procedure and Terms of Reference Overview and Scrutiny Committees (Part 4 of the Constitution) Call-in Procedure, His Worship the Mayor Councillor Perkins has agreed that this issue be treated as urgent as any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council’s or the public interests by impeding the Council’s ability to assist the businesses that meet the criteria. Therefore, the call-in will not apply.

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note please contact: or Paul Smith on telephone 07500 884176 or via email psmith2@swindon.gov.uk. Douglas Campbell, Committee Services, Mobile: 07779 413886 or Email committeeservices@swindon.gov.uk.

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