

## Sherborne St. John Parish Council

**MINUTES of the  
SHERBORNE ST. JOHN PARISH COUNCIL  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
Wednesday, 29 November 2023 at 7:15pm.  
The Chute Pavilion, Vyne Road, RG24 9HX**

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Councillors present: Richard Morgan (RM) - Chair, Linda Agnew (LA) – Vice-Chair, Jane Bechelet (JB), Carl Davies (CD)

Other councillors present: Cllr Rhyddian Vaughan, Hampshire County Council

Plus: Six members of the public.

### **MINUTES**

**117/23** Open Forum & Parish Matters

Period of time designated for Public Participation in accordance with the Standing Orders.

Members of the public raised concerns regarding the safety of the footpath near the pond at Manor Farm. A question was posed whether the Parish Council would consider undertaking repairs and re-charging the relevant local authority. Concerns were expressed regarding the safety for children and that no action had been taken by Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council or Hampshire County Council for 7-months. Members expressed regret at the situation but advised that the council cannot accept responsibility for areas outside its scope and when those repairs are likely to be considerable cost. Members advised that the best course of action was to apply continual pressure to HCC and BDBC. RV advised he had received an update from HCC who had visited the site, had currently deemed it safe but the work required had been added to their prioritised works scheme and they would be revisiting the site to monitor water levels to determine when work can be commenced safely.

A member of the public raised the issue of limited parking at The Chute, which was currently exacerbated by two caravans on site trespassing. Members advised that the council had submitted a grant application to obtain funding for some clearing of hedging and laying surface. It is hoped, if successful, this will result in an extra 8-10 spaces. Further works to the car park are also firmly in the council's thinking.

**118/23** Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr James Rowley.

**RESOLVED: THAT, apologies were received and accepted from Cllr James Rowley.**

**119/23** Declarations of interest

None were received.

**120/23** Minutes

i) The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2023 were presented.

**RESOLVED: THAT, the minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record and are to be signed by the Chair.**

**121/23** **To receive a report from Councillor Rhydian Vaughan (HCC)**

Cllr Vaughan advised the meeting of the financial situation at Hampshire County Council. Given the level of funding from central government, increasing costs, local services would need to be prioritised and non-statutory services may be reduced or cease altogether. His paper report had been circulated to councillors before the meeting. RV also raised that a 'Warm Hub' is being explored in Sherborne St John, and the Chair advised him to speak with Paul Temple at the Village Hall, where they have a similar initiative. RV also enquired about jobs for the lengthsman in the village and whether a regular scheme of work exists. A footpath has recently been cut back, which for a while had been inaccessible and if lengthsman could assist with these tasks it would help keep on top of such issues.

**122/12** **To receive a reports from Basingstoke & Deane Borough Councillors.**

None in attendance.

**123/23** **Planning**

i) To consider applications received and resolve on recommendations to be made to BDBC Planning Authority

**23/02622/OUT:** Land at Aldermaston Road, Sherborne St John, Basingstoke, Hampshire

Proposal: Outline planning application for up to 220 homes, with vehicular access from Aldermaston Road (A340), and the provision of cycle and pedestrian accesses, open space, landscaping, SuDs and other associated infrastructure. All matters reserved except for access.

Observation Date: 13 November 2023 – extension requested and granted

Decision: **RESOLVED THAT, the material objection prepared by the council's planning agent, ET Planning, is approved and that council objects to this application. Full objection set out in Appendix A to these minutes.**

**23/02628/FUL:** Land at Aldermaston Road, Sherborne St John, Basingstoke, Hampshire

Proposal: New roundabout junction connecting to the A340 Aldermaston Road to create new access and associated highway improvements, including new footway provision and 2no bus stops

Observation Date: 14 November 2023 – extension requested and granted

Decision: **RESOLVED THAT, the material objection prepared by the council's planning agent, ET Planning, is approved and that council objects to this application. Full objection set out in Appendix A to these minutes.**

**23/02824/HSE:** 5 Paice Gardens, Sherborne St John, Basingstoke, RG24 9NX

Proposal: Loft conversion with front and rear dormers

Observation Date: 8 December 2023

Decision: **RESOLVED THAT, there is no objection.**

**TREWORKS**

**T/00496/23/TCA:** Kingfishers, Vyne Road, Sherborne St. John

Proposal: T1, T2, T3 Ash: fell; T4, T5 Poplar silver leaf: prune; T6 Poplar: prune; T7, T8 Ash: remove dead branches

Observation Date: 22 November 2023

Decision: **RESOLVED THAT, there is no objection.**

**124/23 Neighbourhood Development Plan and other planning issues**

i) Neighbourhood Development Plan update

RM provided an update on the progress of the neighbourhood plan. On 6 November the statutory Regulation 14 consultation concluded. The comments received have been considered by the working group and the council's planning agents. The plans have been reviewed and finalised prior to formal submission to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council.

ii) Neighbourhood Development Plan – submission documents to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council for the Regulation 16 Consultation

Following the conclusion of the Regulation 14 statutory consultation, the council received the finalised documents for formal submission to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council in order to commence the next formal stage of the NDP review – that being the Regulation 16 consultation.

The documents being:

- Modified Neighbourhood Plan
- Basic Conditions Statement
- Consultation Statement, including EQIA
- Modification Report
- BDBC SEA/HRA Scoping Report
- BDBC SEA/HRA Decision Notice

Evidence base:

- Scarp Local Gap
- Scarp Key Views
- Forum Heritage Report
- SSJ Ecology/wildlife report
- SSJ LGS report
- AECOM Design Code

**RESOLVED: THAT, the Parish Council approves the above listed documents and formally submits the Neighbourhood Development Plan to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council to commence and progress the next formal stage of the plan's adoption.**

**125/23 Finance**

i) Cashflow Report

The Cashflow Report was presented.

**RESOLVED: THAT, the Cashflow Report is noted and approved, with payments ratified – See Appendix B.**

ii) Draft Budget 2024/25

No additional comments. It was noted that the council would have a further opportunity to consider the budget at its 13 December meeting. CD requested a discussion regarding hiring fees and terms of existing Chute hirers.

iii) Pride in Place Grant

DF advised the council that as per the discussions from the October meeting, an application had been submitted to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council for £15,555 for a scheme to extend the car park at The Chute by 8-10 spaces. DF advised that owing to time constraints and the cycle of meetings, the decision required ratification. DF advised that the Parish Council should receive an outcome of BDBC's decision prior to the next council meeting, where it can formally agree to accept the grant monies and commence with the project.

**RESOLVED: THAT, the application for £15,555 to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council's Pride in Place is approved.**

iv) Asset register

DF advised that he and MC had been working on the asset register with a view to ensuring it is as accurate as possible. Members provided information and queried certain items. DF asked that if nothing major was missing from the asset he was seeking authorisation to renew the insurance premium. DF advised that further work was necessary on the asset register and this would be undertaken prior to year-end.

**RESOLVED: THAT, the asset is register approved and the Clerk is authorised to renew the insurance premium.**

v) SLCC Membership – Dan Faulkner

**RESOLVED: THAT, payment of the Clerk's £189 annual membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks is approved.**

vi) 13<sup>th</sup> Edition of Charles Arnold-Baker Local Council Administration and other textbook resources

**RESOLVED: THAT, the Clerk is authorised to purchase the 13<sup>th</sup> Edition of Charles Arnold-Baker Local Council Administration for £137 and Town and Parish Council VAT guide at £29.50.**

vii) Legal fees for Land Registry of The Chute

RM advised that it has recently come to the attention of the Chair and Clerk, following matters of trespass on the recreation ground, that the land at The Chute had not been registered with the Land Registry in the name of the Parish Council since being gifted the land in 1949. The Clerk had received one quote for £2,500 + VAT, as a first registration required additional work and statements confirming the history of The Chute. The matter was deferred and the Clerk along with the Chair agreed to look for the original deeds, contacting former councillors and the National Trust. Following those searches registration of the land can be revisited.

viii) Appointment of internal auditor

The Clerk advised deferring this item to a further meeting to seek additional quotes.

ix) Post box at The Village Hall

RM advised that the Village Hall were willing to allow the Parish Council to position a post box on the exterior of the building and act as the fixed mailing address for the council. RM believed a suitable post box, with Parish Council customising, could be purchased for approx. £60.

**RESOLVED: THAT, the Parish Council purchases a post box and arranges for fixing**

**to the Village Hall. THAT the Village Hall will act the Parish Council's fixed address.**

- x) Professional services in relation to Cranesfield 26 homes planning appeal  
RM advised that the developer had appealed the decision against Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council to deny planning permission of 26 homes at Land at Cransefield (26/00049/REF). The appeal may go to a hearing stage. RM advised the council should consider engaging ET Planning and experts to provide professional services or representation at any hearing on behalf of the Parish Council. An estimate provided was £2k.

**RESOLVED: THAT, the council agrees to professional services provided through ET Planning of up to £2,500, with any excess requiring further consideration by the Parish Council.**

- xi) Mobile phone contract  
CD advised that before renewing any contract, there may be mobile related services included as part of the BT phone/internet service at The Chute. Deferred pending further investigation.

**126/23 Date of next meeting**

The date of next **Sherborne St. John Parish Council Meeting** will be held on **Wednesday, 13 December 2023** in **The Chute Pavillion, Vyne Road, at 7:15pm.**

**127/23 Exclusion of the Public**

**RESOLVED: THAT, the public are to withdraw under s1(2) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.**

**128/23 Legal matters**

The Chair provided a brief update on issues of trespass at The Chute and advised that through the insurance policy the council was in receipt of legal advice and assistance with legal papers in the process of serving an injunction/re-possession order to the occupants of two caravans at The Chute.

**RESOLVED: THAT, the council notes the legal advice received and approves the legal actions to remove the trespassers from the site.**

There being no further business, Cllr Richard Morgan closed the meeting at 8.35pm.

**DRAFT MINUTES TO BE SIGNED AT THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

FAO Case Officer  
Nicola Williams  
Basingstoke and Deane Borough  
Council  
Civic Offices,  
RG21 4AH

Our Reference: ETP230697  
Your Reference: 23/02622/OUT  
Date: 21 November 23

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Application reference: 23/02622/OUT – Outline planning application for up to 220 homes, with vehicular access from Aldermaston Road (A340), and the provision of; cycle and pedestrian accesses, open space, landscaping, SuDs and other associated infrastructure. All matters reserved except for access.**

I am pleased to enclose a response from Sherborne St John Parish Council who are a statutory consultee in relation to application reference 23/02622/OUT at Weybrook Golf Course (Land at Aldermaston Road, Sherborne St John):

*"Outline planning application for up to 220 homes, with vehicular access from Aldermaston Road (A340), and the provision of; cycle and pedestrian accesses, open space, landscaping, SuDs and other associated infrastructure. All matters reserved except for access"*

It is noted that a decision on whether to grant planning permission relates to an assessment of whether the scheme is in accordance with the relevant policies in the development plan, unless there are material considerations which indicate otherwise.

The conclusion of this letter is that the proposed development is harmful for a multitude of reasons, as well as undermining the emerging Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan processes, and therefore must be refused without delay.

Sherborne St John Parish Council object to the proposed development for the following reasons, which will be explored in detail in this letter:

- Principle of development in the countryside
- Landscape impact
- Strategic Gap
- Important views
- Rural Character
- Infrastructure
- Loss of facility
- Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation
- Heritage Impact
- Highways, Transport and Infrastructure
- Implications of the National Planning Policy Framework changes and Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

It should be noted that the planning application is located within the Sherborne St John Parish administrative boundary, and will therefore have an impact upon both the parish and village of Sherborne St John. It is noted that after only two weeks into the process, there have already been over 50 letters of representation received which oppose this site. It is also noted that a number of key statutory consultees have also objected.

The Parish Council are aware that a separate planning application has been submitted for a new roundabout junction connecting to the A340 Aldermaston Road to create new access and associated highways improvements, including new footway provision and 2 no bus stops

(23/02628/FUL). The Parish Council will also submit a separate objection letter for this.

### **Planning Policy context**

We will firstly explore the policy context and why the proposed development is flagrantly circumventing the plan-led process.

Paragraph 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires the planning system to be plan-led, whereby plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area, a framework for addressing housing needs and other priorities.

It is important to note that the development plan policies (which are not related to housing delivery) should still be afforded full weight, as per paragraph 11 d) of the National Planning Policy Framework, despite the Local Plan being over 5 years old.

Policy SS5 (Neighbourhood Planning) of the Local Plan is supportive of neighbourhood planning and for parishes to take ownership of the housing requirements. As part of the spatial strategy, a number of parishes were given housing figures for the relevant parishes. The Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan (SSJ NP) forms part of the Development Plan, alongside the adopted Local Plan. It was adopted in May 2017 and allocated a site for 18 dwellings at Cranes Road (policy SSJ3). Subsequently the NP qualified for the additional protection given to neighbourhood plans as per paragraph 14 of the NPPF. This additional protection ended on 5 May 2019. The SSJ NP site allocation (16/04110/OUT) has now been completed with new residents now living within these homes in Sireburne Close.

The Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan is currently under review. A Regulation 14 (pre-submission) Neighbourhood Plan Consultation took

place on the emerging Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan<sup>1</sup> took between September – November 2023, whereby the policies for this Neighbourhood Plan have been published and the Neighbourhood Plan is advancing quicker than the emerging Local Plan Update. It is anticipated that the Neighbourhood Plan modification could form part of the Development Plan from Spring 2024. At this point, they would supersede the policies in the made Neighbourhood Plan, adopted in 2017.

### **Emerging Local Plan and Emerging Neighbourhood Plan**

The current Local Plan for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) was adopted in May 2016. Subsequently, the Local Plan is now over five years old. BDBC have undertaken a review of their adopted Local Plan 2011-2029, to determine whether it is still relevant, and have now commenced work on their Local Plan Update (LPU).

A non-statutory Issues and Options consultation exercise was undertaken in late 2019. The LPU has subsequently been delayed due to issues with local housing need. The current Local Development Scheme (LDS) which was updated in October 2022 states that consultation on the draft Plan (Regulation 18) Local Plan is expected to take place in January 2024, with the adoption of the new LPU expected in Winter 2025/26.

Whilst there is no requirement in law for a neighbourhood plan to be reviewed, the Parish Council, as qualifying body, have commenced a review of the SSJ NP. A Regulation 14 (pre-submission) Neighbourhood Plan Consultation took place on the emerging Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan<sup>2</sup> took between September – November 2023, whereby its ten planning policies can be reviewed. The Neighbourhood Plan is advancing quicker than the emerging Local Plan Update. Where relevant, emerging and current Neighbourhood Plan policies have been referenced within this objection

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ssj-np.co.uk/consultation-documents/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ssj-np.co.uk/consultation-documents/>

letter. It is anticipated that the NP update will be adopted in 2024 and therefore prior to the LPU. It is therefore important that the neighbourhood plan process is not undermined via the approval of a significant windfall sites within the parish which do not meet the policies contained within the development plan.

The development proposal was proposed to be included as a site allocation within the emerging Regulation 18 Local Plan Update, however as explained later this can be afforded no weight as the Regulation 18 consultation was never formally launched and could further change in response to the proposed NPPF changes.

### **Site Allocations for the Local Plan Update**

As earlier outlined, the Council's Regulation 18 Local Plan Update has been delayed and is expected to be consulted upon in January 2024. A full consultation draft of the Regulation 18 Plan has not been published or consulted upon, therefore at present, the drafts that have been to Economic, Planning and Housing (EPH) Committee can be afforded no weight.

The site was proposed to be included as an allocation in the emerging spatial strategy that went to EPH members in September 2022. However, this spatial strategy was not approved by members due to the housing number for the borough being considered too high and too much development being proposed in the borough. This meant the members refused to support any sites that were proposed to be included within the spatial strategy.

### **Local Plan Update Evidence Base**

The Council have published some of their evidence base for the Local Plan Update<sup>3</sup>. This section will summarise the outputs of three key evidence base documents:

*Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment*

The site is contained within the Council's Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), the most recent of which was published in December 2022. The relevant reference for this site within the SHELAA is SSJ011. The proforma for the site states the following '*The site is adjacent to but outside of the Basingstoke settlement policy boundary, in a countryside location where new housing is generally only permitted as an exception, in line with current adopted Local Plan Policy SS6 (New Housing in the Countryside). The general principle of development in this location is therefore not supported by the council's current planning framework. The site also lies within the Strategic Gap separating Basingstoke and Sherborne St John (Policy EM2). Furthermore, the principle of the loss of part of the golf course is potentially contrary to Policy CN8, subject to whether the proposal would comply with the exceptions set out within the policy whereby such a loss may be permissible as an exception. The site is located within the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Area. The Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' in May 2017 and its policies apply to this site.*'

The SHELAA proforma concludes that '*The site is soon to become available and may be achievable, however, due to its location in the countryside its development would not be in line with the borough's current planning framework.*'

Site selection report- shortlisting draft for EPH Committee – September 2021

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/local-plan-update-evidence>

- The site selection report in relation the site in summary notes that the site is part of a golf course and the development would result in the removal of 4 holes.
- The main concerns regarding highways impacts, the impact on landscape and settlement character, as well as the potential coalescence with Sherborne St John. The site is at low risk of flooding. The site can be brought forward quickly and does not require large-scale infrastructure, making it a suitable option for meeting short-term housing needs. However, there may be a need to reduce the amount of development proposed and consider landscape issues and visual coalescence.
- In relation to the adjacent site (R0001), it was noted that this would need to be masterplanned and integrated at an early stage for the overall development to work.

#### Integrated Impact Assessment (second report)

A key evidence base document is the Integrated Impact Assessment (incorporating Sustainability Appraisal). Weybrook Park Golf Course (approximately 220 homes) site reference: SSJ011

- The site has been assessed against the sustainability objectives. In relation to a number of the objectives the sites scores between a number of ranges in terms of impact between strongly positive to negative. The site scores particularly poorly (negatively) in relation to highways, where it is noted that it is not possible to conclude that the additional traffic generated by this proposal would not have a severe impact upon the existing transport networks. The site also scored negatively in relation to noise pollution, (lack of) re-use of previously developed land, water quality, relationship to the existing settlement and coalescence of existing settlements.

The site has been submitted ahead of the Local Plan Update, and does not include the adjacent site allocation (R0001) which should be masterplanned together. Furthermore, given that progress on the LPU has stalled and the

planning application has come ahead of this process, it should be assessed independently, and should not be permitted due to the harmful impacts of development.

### **Principle of development in the countryside**

Whilst the council's current lack of five-year housing supply is noted, it is helpful to set out the context regarding the most relevant policies related to housing delivery if the policy were to be fully engaged.

As outlined, the Local Plan Update is not expected to be in place until at least 2025, therefore the policies in the current Local Plan form part of the development plan.

Policy SS1 sets out the spatial strategy for the borough and defines the borough's Settlement Policy Boundaries (SPBs), it notes that any land which is located outside of the defined SPB is considered to be located in the countryside.

Policy SSJ1 (Settlement Boundaries and Building in the Countryside) of emerging Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals within the settlement policy boundary will be supported if they conform to the Development Plan and Sherborne St John Design Code. However, development outside of this boundary, particularly residential development, is discouraged unless there are specific provisions in the plan allowing for it.

Policy SS6 of the ALP (new housing the countryside) is linked to the council's spatial strategy (as set out in policy SS1) and sets out the exceptional circumstances in which residential development would be allowed in the countryside. The only relevant criterion for this site would be criterion d), which permits small scale residential proposals that meet a locally agreed need provided the relevant criterion within the policy are

met. However, this proposal exceeds the threshold which the policy defines as small-scale development (being for four dwellings or fewer (net)), furthermore, no evidence of locally agreed need has been submitted and therefore the proposal would fail to meet the requirements of the policy and therefore be in conflict with the development plan.

In addition, the local authority aims to prioritise the use of brownfield sites for development, in accordance with the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This means that brownfield sites, which are previously developed land, should be given preference over greenfield sites, which are undeveloped or agricultural land. However, in this case, it is noted that the development site is not a brownfield site. As a result, the development of the site does not follow the principles of the NPPF that support brownfield first.

### **Landscape impact**

The proposal contravenes policy SS6 which makes clear that development should respect the local landscape and be sympathetic to its character and visual quality, together with respecting the character, form and appearance of surrounding development and respect the amenities of the residents of neighbouring properties.

In addition, Policy EM1 (Landscape) requires development in the area must be in line with the character and visual quality of the area. This includes considering the landscape, settlement settings, local architecture, natural features, historic landscapes, and rivers. The sense of place and tranquillity of the landscape are important, as well as preventing the merging of settlements. Any development must have a comprehensive landscaping scheme to integrate with the surroundings. Development proposals in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will also be determined according to national planning policy and the AONB Management Plan.



*Fig 1: Site area assessed within the Landscape Sensitivity Study (2021)*

The Council have commissioned various pieces of evidence base documents to inform their site selection process. This includes a Landscape Sensitivity Study in April 2021 which was undertaken by Hankinson Duckett Associates (HDA), the SHELAA site was assessed as part of this work and found to have a medium landscape sensitivity. The SSJ011 overall sensitivity judgement notes: *'The total guide score for this site is 54. Taking into account the guide score and a final review of the landscape and visual susceptibility and value of the site, the site is judged to have medium landscape sensitivity. The site is inconsistent with the settlement pattern, being located to the north of Rooksdown Lane which forms a robust settlement edge, and is part of the separation to Sherborne St John. **Overall, the site is therefore unsuitable for housing development from a landscape perspective**'.*

From the assessment of the site, it scored highly on settlement pattern and identity with the assessment noting that *'the site is near recent development at the northern edge of Basingstoke, but is beyond Rooksdown Lane and its avenue of trees, which forms a consistent robust edge to settlement, including the recent development. The site, along with*

*land to the north-east of the A340, forms separation between Sherborne St John and the expanding northern edge of Basingstoke, and helps maintain the separate identities of the two settlements’.*

*It also scored highly on recreational value, it notes ‘no formal public access within the site, but there are public rights of way along two sides of the site, and golf usage within the site’.*

*Lastly it scored highly on nature conservation value, as it was noted that there were ‘a significant number of trees, shrubs and rough grass within the site have habitat value, and the majority of site vegetation has connectivity to a considerable network of vegetation including trees and understory along Rooksdown Lane’*



View from adjacent to public right of way along western edge of the site, looking south-east across the site.

*Fig 2: Extract from the Landscape Sensitivity Study (2021)*

In summary, the proposed development will have a detrimental impact on the landscape. Sites have already been selected for the Parish to meet their housing need through the made Neighbourhood Plan process, in locations where there is less landscape harm.

In addition, an LVIA has been submitted by the applicant, this appears to provide a simplistic approach to landscape particularly regarding the designation of the strategic gap, providing an oversimplistic approach to noting that it is considered separate from the wider landscape as it is a Golf Course, rather than understanding how this contributes to the landscape. It fails to identify the specifics of the proposals which would be harmful to

the landscape by reason of the quantum, scale, design and location of the proposed development as a minimum.

The outcomes within the applicants LVIA are contradictory to those which have been undertaken for the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan, which can be viewed on the Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 evidence base webpage<sup>4</sup>, these are the Key Views Study and Local Gap study.

The development is therefore contrary to Local Plan Policies EM1, Neighbourhood Plan Policy SSJ2, emerging Neighbourhood Plan policies SSJ6 and SSJ8 and section 12 & 15 of the NPPF.

### **Strategic and Local Gaps**

The development proposal is located within the existing Strategic Gap area between Basingstoke and Sherborne St John as per Policy EM2 (Strategic Gaps). These were introduced to prevent coalescence of built-up areas and to maintain the separate identity of settlements. The strategic gaps are defined as generally open and undeveloped in nature.

Policy EM2 does allow three exceptions to when development can be approved within the Strategic Gap, the proposal must meet a) and then either b) or c). The criterion relates to diminishing the physical and/or visual separation (a); and it would not compromise the integrity of the gap either individually or cumulative with other existing or proposed development (b); it is proposed through a neighbourhood plan (c). It is considered that the development would not meet any of the criteria above and therefore could not be considered to be policy compliant.

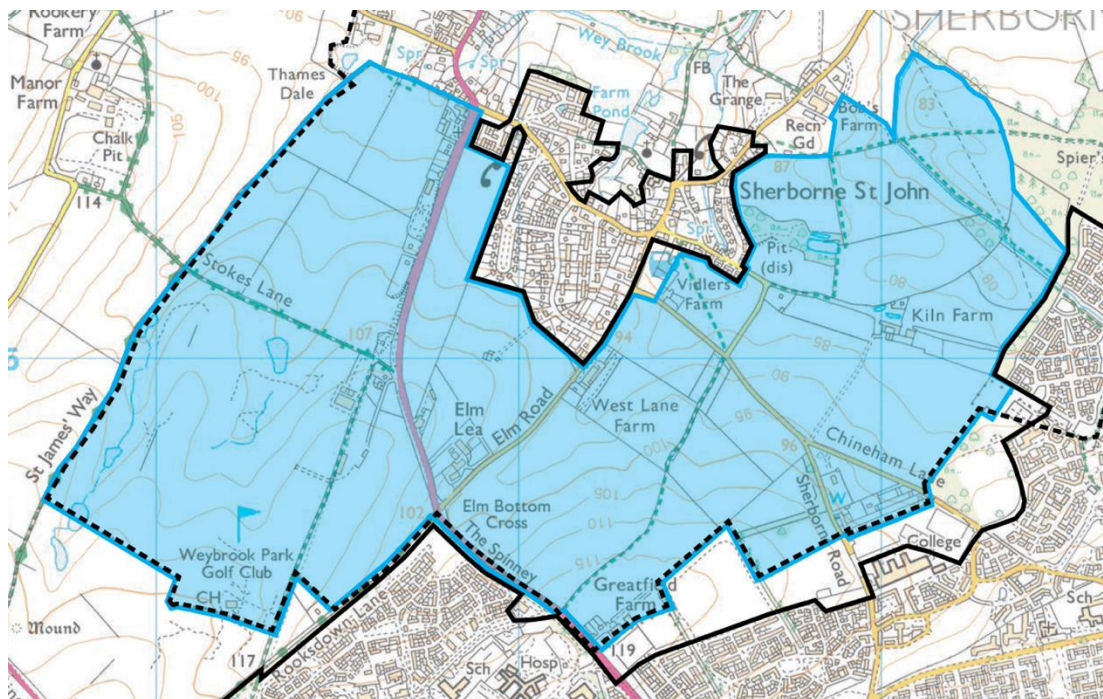
Paragraph 6.16 of the Local Plan Review supporting text notes that '*Small scale development that is in keeping with the rural nature of the gaps will*

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<sup>4</sup> <https://ssj-np.co.uk/consultation-documents/>

*not be prevented, provided that it is appropriately sited and designed to minimise the impact on the openness of the gap and subject to other policies of this plan.'* it is noted that the proposed development is not small scale and would not meet this requirement of the policy either.

In addition, the principle of strategic gaps are proposed to be retained through the Local Plan Review, although it should be noted that the evidence base for this work has not yet been published. It is expected that this will be published with the Regulation 18 Consultation in January 2024.



*Fig 3: Local Gap as per the emerging Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan – the site is located within the Local Gap*

Furthermore, as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Review, evidence has been published (by Scarp Landscape<sup>5</sup>) which evidences the need to designate a Local Gap within the Parish, as per Policy SSJ6 of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Policy SSJ6 of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect the separate identity and landscape of Sherborne St John

<sup>5</sup> <https://ssj-np.co.uk/consultation-documents/>

by keeping the land in the Local Gap between Sherborne St John and Basingstoke open and undeveloped. Any proposed development within this area must not harm the separation between settlements, the physical and visual separation of Sherborne St John from Basingstoke, the landscape setting of the village, or the integrity of the Local Gap. Additionally, the Local Gap should continue to provide opportunities for green infrastructure provision.

This site would be located within the proposed Local Gap as per Policy SSJ6 of the Local Plan, whereby 100% of residents in the engagement survey supported the inclusion of a local gap. The inclusion of the local gap and its respective policy was also strongly supported within the Regulation 14 Modification Neighbourhood Plan consultation. This application therefore circumvents the NP process.

It is therefore considered that the development proposal would not meet any of the exceptions in policy EM2 and is therefore not in compliance with Policy EM2 of the Local Plan and would potentially prejudice the emerging NP process and in particular policy SSJ6 of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Important Views**

Linked to the previous chapter on landscape harm and strategic gaps, the proposed development is not considered to respect visual amenity by protecting important views out of the village. This is particularly true of views from the village towards Basingstoke, a number of which go across the proposed development site.

Policy EM1 of the Local Plan requires proposals must respect, enhance and not be detrimental to the character or visual amenity of the landscape likely to be affected, paying particular regard to the setting of a settlement, including important views to, across, within and out of settlements

(criterion c). Policy SSJ2 of the SSJ Neighbourhood Plan requires that development should respect visual amenity by protecting important views out of the village or towards the village, as identified within map 5 of the NP.

Policy SSJ8: landscape and key views of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan identifies 17 views in the policy. The views should be respected and protected in terms of visual impact and amenity. Development proposals that would significantly negatively affect these key views will not be supported. Factors that may be considered when assessing visual impact include the landscape, the relationship between the village and the surrounding countryside, and the valued characteristics of the view. Views both from the village to the countryside and from the countryside to the village should be taken into account.

These key views have been identified and reviewed via an independent landscape consultancy, Scarp<sup>6</sup>. They have produced a report which provides more detail on the identified these key views. This report and associated policy includes key view 15 which is the view looking south from public footpath heading west from Dixon's Corner (as shown below, with its scope shown). The evidence base for the key views within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan has been produced by Scarp Landscape Architects notes: *This view demonstrates how open agricultural fields on the western side of the village contribute to a strong rural character and landscape setting for the settlement. It also demonstrates how a ridge of high land and tree belts along the northern side of Basingstoke contribute to a strong sense of separation between Basingstoke and the village.*

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<sup>6</sup> <https://ssj-np.co.uk/consultation-documents/>

View 15: View looking south from public footpath heading west from Dixon's Corner

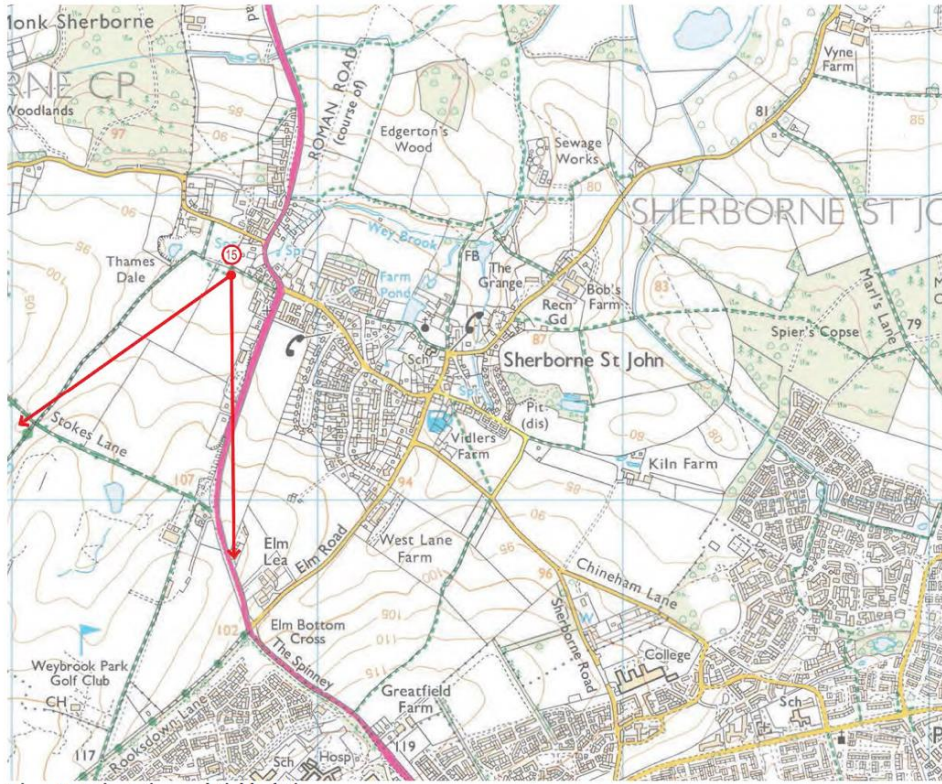


Fig 4: View as per Scarp Key Views Document, which forms part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan

It is considered that the development proposal is a contravention of Local Plan policy EM1 and EM10 and SSJ Neighbourhood Plan policy SSJ2 and emerging Neighbourhood Plan SSJ6, due to the proposed development being detrimental to the visual amenity of views out of the settlement, based on the latest evidence base.

## Pollution

Policy EM12: Pollution of the Local Plan requires that development will only be allowed if it does not cause pollution that is harmful to the quality of life or poses risks to health or the environment. If there is unavoidable pollution, measures must be taken to mitigate its effects. Development that is sensitive to pollution will only be allowed if it does not negatively impact quality of life or pose risks to health or the environment, or if adequate

measures can be implemented to address these concerns. All relevant policies will be considered when evaluating proposals. In addition, Policy SSJ2 of the Neighbourhood Plan requires development minimises pollution.

Currently there is minimal light pollution in Sherborne St John, with limited street lighting. There are concerns regarding potential light and noise pollution associated with the development. These concerns will need to be taken into account during the planning process.

Due to the close proximity of the A340 which is located to the east of the site, there would be significant road noise (for new and existing residents). From the submitted parameter plan, limited buffers have been provided. No impact assessments appear to have been undertaken which may identify any potential negative effects on the natural environment and nearby residents.

The development proposal is therefore considered to conflict with policy EM12 of the adopted Local Plan and SSJ2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Infrastructure**

Policy CN6: Infrastructure of the Local Plan requires that new developments must provide additional services, facilities, and infrastructure to meet the needs of the development. Infrastructure should be provided on-site as part of the development, and off-site measures should only be used if necessary. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is the primary mechanism for securing the necessary financial contribution from development. Infrastructure should be provided before the development is occupied. The council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and Supplementary Planning Documents outline the requirements for infrastructure. Appendix 4 provides a summary of green space, sport, and recreation standards applied to development.

Within the supporting text of the policy, infrastructure matters include health provision, social care, sports facilities, green space, green infrastructure, among other matters. Through the documents submitted through the application it has not been proven that there is sufficient health provision among other infrastructure to support the residential development. In addition, the highways infrastructure is not considered to have been resolved through the application.

In conclusion, the proposal is not considered to be in line with policy CN6 of the Local Plan.

### **Rural character**

When the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan was being formulated, the 'village feel' of Sherborne St John was identified as having a high level of importance amongst respondents during the course of the consultation process. This was incorporated in SSJ Policy 2: The Rural Character of the Parish. Factors which characterise the village feel include – the green spaces in and around the village which provide for a low density form of development that is green in character; the level of tranquillity afforded to the village and most of the Parish due to low levels of noise and light pollution; and the abundance of flora and fauna both within the village and throughout the rural area. The Sherborne St John Village Design Statement also cites a number of important views out from and back towards the village, which are referred to in Map 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan and given full weight in SSJ Policy 2.

Part 2 of the Council's Settlement Study notes that Sherborne St John has a population of 760 (SAPF, 2019) with approximately 353 dwellings. The additional 220 houses proposed on site would result in a significant increase in the total number of dwellings in the parish, having a considerable impact on the character of the village.

The proposal results in an unsustainable pattern of development by reason of the creation of a new unplanned large housing estate on a greenfield site in the countryside outside of settlement limits. The development is contrary to the spatial objectives of the development plan and policies.

The proposals are contrary to Local Plan policies EM1 and EM10, which require new development to respect the character and visual quality of the area concerned. It is also contrary to SSJ Neighbourhood Plan policy number SSJ2, in that the proposals are harmful to the rural character of the village and surrounding countryside and there is no justification for additional housing above that required by the made Neighbourhood Plan and emerging Local Plan.

## **Design**

The Design Code<sup>7</sup> for Sherborne St John, has been included as an appendix within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan policy SSJ4 and expects substantial landscape buffers to adequately screen any larger new developments. The Design Code forms part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan.

With regard to this site, which is located within character area 9 (CA9) edge of Basingstoke within the Design Code, this area comprises of predominantly rural fields and a few dispersed farms, there is also fringe development to the south of the character area. It also notes that there are limited footways in the area which is predominantly of narrow rural lanes. Unfortunately, it is unclear how well this requirement has been met in relation to the A340 frontage. Furthermore, the development edge adjoining the roundabout will be clearly visible and lacks any structural planting, which may negatively impact the aesthetic quality of the area.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://ssj-np.co.uk/consultation-documents/>

While the outline development layout provided suggests a simple block plan, it is difficult to make detailed comments on the design due to this lack of information. The spacing of the blocks, however, gives the impression that the development may have an urban nature, which may not be suitable for the surrounding rural context. Infilling the site with the proposed development would give it a built-up appearance with a permanent, localised change to the character and appearance of the area. It is also not clear on the density of development proposed, lower density housing should be provided to the east of the site to reflect the rural nature, however and mitigate the impact.

The site is therefore not considered to be in line with Policy SS1, SS6, EM1 and EM2 of the Adopted Local Plan and policy SSJ1 and SSJ4 of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation**

Policy EM4 of the Local Plan seeks to prevent harm to biodiversity and/or geodiversity resulting from development.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been submitted to support the application. The assessment includes a preliminary appraisal and further surveys of protected species. This notes that the site consists of various habitats including grassland, scrub, woodland, and hedgerows. Certain habitats are listed as of principal importance and recommendations have been made to protect them within the report. The report notes that retained trees will be protected, precautionary measures will be taken to avoid harm to mammals, and trees with low suitability for roosting bats will be safely felled. A lighting strategy sensitive to bats will also need to be implemented, and best practices for vegetation clearance and construction will be followed to protect bird nesting habitats. Surveys indicate the absence of dormouse, reptiles, and great crested newts on the site, so no further mitigation is necessary for these species.

Recommendations for enhancing the site's wildlife suitability have also been provided, with the report making a significant number of suggestions for mitigation. It is suggested the PEA is reviewed independently to ensure the recommendations are achievable and can be satisfactorily implemented to prevent damage to the natural environment. The development results in a substantial loss of green undeveloped land.

Furthermore, from the submitted documents it is not clear that a 10% biodiversity net gain will be achieved on site. This is therefore not considered to be in compliance with EM4 or the NPPF.

### **Loss of Facility**

The site is part of an actively used and managed Golf Course. It is understood that the development of the site would result in the loss of at least 4 holes. This would therefore result in the partial loss of a community facility.

Policy CN8 – Community, Leisure and Cultural Facilities states that development proposals will be permitted where they:

- Retain and maintain existing facilities which are valued by the community;
- Improve the quality and capacity of facilities valued by the community;
- Provide new facilities, in accordance with adopted council standards, where there is evidence of need that cannot be met by existing provision; and,
- Are delivered to prescribed timescales to meet the needs of the community that are being provided for.

It is considered that limited information has been submitted for the site in regard to the loss of part of the Golf Course, and therefore this is at present considered to be in conflict with Policy CN8 of the Local Plan.

## **Heritage impact**

The site has a known Iron Age settlement called a banjo enclosure. Given the presence of other archaeological sites on the surrounding ridge, such as on the golf course to the west and Greatfield Farm to the east, it is possible that there are further undiscovered archaeological sites in the area. Furthermore, the western boundary of the site is marked by the Roman road, which is significant in understanding the landscape.

It is also noted that no heritage statement has been submitted with the planning application. It is important to note that Hampshire County Council's Archaeologist, a statutory consultee, in his email on 6 February 2023 has noted that *'I raised a number of significant archaeological issues (these are reproduced below and are also publicly available on the planning authority's web site).*

*The key points raised were "The Roman road and the banjo enclosure are significant archaeological sites whose protection may need to be accommodated with the design and layout"; and "any planning application should be accompanied by a Heritage Statement that addresses archaeological issues".*

*There is no Heritage Statement submitted with this planning application, nor any discussion of archaeology within the Planning Statement or Design and Access Statement. It is also clear that the design and layout has not sought to accommodate the preservation of the Iron Age site (although whether this is an oversight or a strategy that acknowledges the need for archaeological mitigation is not stated).*

*I recommend that this planning application is not determined until a Heritage Statement that addresses archaeological matters has been submitted for the consideration of the planning authority in order for the planning authority to make an informed decision about the impact and possible mitigation actions in regard to archaeology at the site.'*

It is considered that the development is in conflict with Basingstoke Local Plan Policy EM11 and the NPPF, and Policy SSJ10 of the Emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Highways, Transport and Infrastructure**

Paragraph 113 of the NPPF states that *"...all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed."*

The addition of up to 220 dwellings will lead to a substantial increase in traffic movements and lead to a severe impact on the local highway network. Policy CN9 of the Local Plan requires developments proposals to be permitted that do not result in inappropriate traffic generation or compromise highway safety. It is not considered that this has been appropriately justified through the submitted Transport Assessment documents, which fail to demonstrate there would not be any cumulative impacts and fail to demonstrate the safety of new residents and potential impact upon the highway network.

Furthermore, the development proposal has not demonstrated that it will not lead to a detrimental impact on other local infrastructure, including in relation to doctors' surgeries and sewers etc.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development's principle and location would lead to an unacceptable rise in risk for users of the proposed access and public highway (A340), posing a threat to road safety. This goes against Policies EM10 and CN6 and CN9 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011-2029, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

In addition, the Parish Council will be submitting an additional objection letter for the planning application relating to highways on this site which will provide far more detailed review of the relevant submission documents.

### **Implications of the National Planning Policy Framework changes and Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill**

Central Government published its proposed changes to the NPPF Consultation in December 2022. A number of these proposed changes are likely to affect the Council.

It is noted that through the Council's Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) the Council have over-delivered against their housing number. Through the proposed NPPF changes this could impact upon the amount of housing that Basingstoke are required to deliver.

It is likely that the housing requirement for Basingstoke would decrease and therefore it is not clear whether the Council will continue to allocate the site or same quantum of development through the Local Plan Update.

Paragraph 48 of the NPPF requires that '*Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:*

- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);*
- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and*
- c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)'*

It is therefore considered that as per the NPPF no weight can be given to the status of the emerging Local Plan or the possible inclusion of the site within this.

## **Conclusion**

The application is for the erection of up to 220 dwellings and associated infrastructure (with access only for consideration, with all other details reserved) (23/02622/OUT) in Sherborne St John Parish.

This representation has considered the harm caused by the following proposed development in relation to a number of matters including the principal of development, and the current Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan as well as the emerging Local and Neighbourhood Plan and impact upon:

- Landscape impact
- Strategic Gap (and Local Gap)
- Important views
- Rural Character
- Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation
- Heritage Impact
- Design
- Highways, Transport and Infrastructure
- Loss of facility
- Implications of the National Planning Policy Framework changes and Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

For the reasons identified within these representations, the application is contrary to the development plan (with no material considerations which outweigh this) and this application should be refused without delay.

Yours sincerely,

Sherborne St John Parish Council

DRAFT

FAO Case Officer  
Nicola Williams  
Basingstoke and Deane Borough  
Council  
Civic Offices,  
RG21 4AH

Our Reference: ETP230697  
Your Reference: 23/02628/FUL  
Date: 21 November 23

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Application reference: 23/02628/FUL – New roundabout junction connecting to the A340 Aldermaston Road to create new access and associated highway improvements, including new footway provision and 2no bus stops.**

I am pleased to enclose a response from Sherborne St John Parish Council who are a statutory consultee in relation to application reference 23/02628/FUL at Weybrook Golf Course (Land at Aldermaston Road, Sherborne St John):

*"New roundabout junction connection to the A340 Aldermaston Road to create new access and associated highway improvements, including new footway provision and 2 no bus stops".*

It is noted that a decision on whether to grant planning permission relates to an assessment of whether the scheme is in accordance with the relevant policies in the development plan, unless there are material considerations which indicate otherwise.

The conclusion of this letter is that the proposed development is harmful for a multitude of reasons, notably highways where a significant and severe

impact would be demonstrated and therefore must be refused without delay.

Sherborne St John Parish Council object to the proposed development for the following reasons, which will be explored in detail in this letter:

- Highways impact
- Infrastructure
- Pollution
- Biodiversity
- Strategic Gap/Coalescence
- Landscape

It should be noted that the planning application is located within the Sherborne St John Parish administrative boundary, with an impact upon both the parish and village of Sherborne St John. It is noted that after only a few number of weeks into the process, there have already been a substantial number of letters of representation received which oppose this site for residential and for its associated highway infrastructure which is the subject of this planning application.

It should be noted that a separate planning application has been submitted for the new outline housing for up to 220 homes, with vehicular access from Aldermaston Road and the provision of cycle and pedestrian accesses, open space, landscaping, SuDs and other associated infrastructure (23/02622/OUT). The Parish Council will also submit a separate objection letter for this.

### **Planning Policy context**

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, specifically Section 38(6), states that planning applications must be decided based on the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In the case of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC), the current development plan includes the adopted Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Local Plan (2016) and the made Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan (2017). A number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are also a material consideration. These documents outline the guidelines and policies that should be followed when considering planning applications in BDBC.

Furthermore, the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and Planning Policy Guidance should also be considered as they provide additional material considerations for planning decisions. These resources offer guidance and recommendations that can influence the outcome of a planning application.

Paragraph 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires the planning system to be plan-led, whereby plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area, a framework for addressing housing needs and other priorities.

In terms of planning policy designations, the site is located within designated countryside as per policy SS1 and is also located within the strategic gap as per policy EM2. It is important to note that the development plan policies (which are not related to housing delivery) should still be afforded full weight, as per paragraph 11 d) of the National Planning Policy Framework, despite the Local Plan being over 5 years old.

### **Emerging Local Plan and Emerging Neighbourhood Plan**

The current Local Plan for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) was adopted in May 2016. Subsequently, the Local Plan is now over five years old. BDBC have undertaken a review of their adopted Local Plan 2011-2029, to determine whether it is still relevant, and have now commenced work on their Local Plan Update (LPU).

A non-statutory Issues and Options consultation exercise was undertaken in late 2019. The LPU has subsequently been delayed due to issues with local housing need. The current Local Development Scheme (LDS) which was updated in October 2022 states that consultation on the draft Plan (Regulation 18) Local Plan is expected to take place in January 2024, with the adoption of the new LPU expected in Winter 2025/26.

Whilst there is no requirement in law for a neighbourhood plan to be reviewed, the Parish Council, as qualifying body, have commenced a review of the SSJ NP. A Regulation 14 (pre-submission) Neighbourhood Plan Consultation took place on the emerging Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan<sup>1</sup> took between September – November 2023, and the Neighbourhood Plan is advancing quicker than the emerging Local Plan Update and it is anticipated that the modified NP could form part of the Development Plan from Spring 2024. Where relevant, emerging and current Neighbourhood Plan policies have been referenced within this objection letter. It is anticipated that the NP update will be adopted prior to the LPU and the policies within the emerging NP are afforded more weight as they go through the process. It is therefore important that the neighbourhood plan process is not undermined via the approval of a significant windfall sites within the parish which do not meet the policies contained within the development plan.

The development proposal was proposed to be included as a site allocation within the emerging Regulation 18 Local Plan Update, however as explained later this can be afforded no weight as the Regulation 18 consultation has not yet been formally launched and is likely to change in response to the proposed NPPF changes.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ssj-np.co.uk/consultation-documents/>

## **Local Plan Update Evidence Base**

The Council have published some of their evidence base for the Local Plan Update<sup>2</sup>. This section will summarise the outputs of key evidence base documents:

### Site selection report- shortlisting draft for EPH Committee – September 2021

- This in summary notes that the site is part of a golf course and the development would result in the removal of 4 holes. The main concerns regarding highways impacts are the impact on the transport network, including the A340 and Rooksdown Lane, and the impact of road noise on the new housing. There are also concerns about the impact on landscape and settlement character, as well as the potential coalescence with Sherborne St John. The site is at low risk of flooding. The site can be brought forward quickly and does not require large-scale infrastructure, making it a suitable option for meeting short-term housing needs. However, there may be a need to reduce the amount of development proposed and consider landscape issues and visual coalescence.
- In relation to the adjacent site, it was noted that this would need to be masterplanned and integrated at an early stage.

### Integrated Impact Assessment (second report)

Weybrook Park Golf Course (approximately 220 homes) site reference:  
SSJ011

- The site has been assessed against the sustainability objectives. In relation to a number of the objectives the sites scores between a number of ranges in terms of impact between strongly positive to negative. The site scores particularly poorly (negatively) in relation

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/local-plan-update-evidence>

to highways, where it is noted that it is not possible to conclude that the additional traffic generated by this proposal would not have a severe impact upon the existing transport networks. The site also scored negatively in relation to noise pollution, (lack of) re-use of previously developed land, water quality, relationship to the existing settlement and coalescence of existing settlements.

It is important to note that at present, no specific highways evidence base has been released for the Local Plan Update. It is expected that this will be released with the Regulation 18 Local Plan and future consultations.

### **Highways and Transport**

Policy CN9: Transport of the Local Plan outlines the council's objectives for transportation in the area. These objectives include improving strategic road and rail connections, promoting alternative modes of transportation, improving access to the town centre and rail station, managing congestion, and promoting safety and healthy lifestyles. Development proposals must integrate into existing transportation networks, provide safe and convenient access for all users, and not generate excessive traffic or compromise safety. Proposals that generate significant traffic must be supported by a Transport Statement or Assessment and may be required to provide a Travel Plan. Development should be designed and constructed sustainably, offering flexibility in travel modes and accessibility for all users. It should also mitigate impacts on local and strategic highways and provide necessary transport improvements. Additionally, it should protect and enhance public rights of way, provide appropriate parking and waste management facilities, and not hinder the future development of adjacent sites.

In addition, paragraph 104 of the NPPF requires that '*transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals*'. Paragraph 110 of the NPPF then requires that '*in assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific*

*applications for development, it should be ensured that: a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location; b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.’ (emphasis added).*

The site is bound by the A340 to the east. It is understood from the planning statement submitted for the application that a main vehicular access will be taken directly from the A340 Aldermaston Road to the north eastern boundary of the proposed residential development. The access will be in the form of a new roundabout junction, including a pedestrian crossing of the A340. The applicant notes that the design of the junction has been carefully planned and meets all relevant design standards. In addition, the applicant notes that a road safety audit has also been conducted with no safety concerns raised. Furthermore, they noted that the roundabout will be located to the south of an existing service road and residential access to properties. The applicant notes that the visibility for vehicles approaching the roundabout has been carefully considered, as well as the ability for all vehicle types to navigate the roundabout. Pedestrian improvements along the A340 Aldermaston Road are also planned. Some existing vegetation will need to be removed to allow for the roundabout, but compensatory planting is proposed.

Paragraph 113 of the NPPF states that “...all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport

*statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed."*

The A340 is strategic in nature linking Basingstoke to Tadley and is a fast road, with a number of vehicular users going above and beyond the speed limit. Within the location of the site, whereby the roundabout and entrance to the residential development is proposed, it is a 50 mph road. The proposed roundabout would be on the crest of a hill. Rooksdown Lane is narrow and constrained in nature. The TA does not fully take into account the A340 and Rooksdown Lane. A Transport Assessment has been undertaken in July 2023 and submitted with the planning application.

It is important to note that this planning application is strongly linked to the outline planning application for 220 new homes, which would result in the increase of 500 new residents who would be using the local highway, local infrastructure and public rights of way etc.

The access to the roundabout is a concern for the Parish Council because it is anticipated to create traffic congestion on the A340 going uphill from the south. The proposed roundabout is located on the brow of a hill, with multiple crashes which have not been reported to the police and hence not in the data in the Transport Assessment, which only details crashes which have been reported to specific authorities. Additionally, the access to the existing Gales Garage seems problematic off the access road leading to the roundabout in the southward direction.

The Transport Assessment fails to demonstrate how safe access to the local secondary school would be achieved. It notes that the current primary pedestrian facilities are located to the south (along the southern boundary with Rooksdown Lane). South of Rooksdown Lane lies "The Spinney," a woodland area owned and managed by the Land Trust. The Spinney is a prominent belt of mature beech, sycamore and lime trees planted in 1912

as a windbreak for the former Park Prewett Hospital estate, near Basingstoke, Hampshire. The applicant is discussing the possibility of creating new pedestrian and cycle routes through The Spinney to connect with Balata Way. At present, there are only informal paths and it is likely that the amount of walking proposed could be detrimental to The Spinney i.e increased lighting is likely to be needed for safety due to the increased nature of the users and this does not seem like a practical solution. There are differences between the walking access proposed in the emerging Local Plan.

It is understood that walking and cycling routes are not proposed via the primary access. Any development related to walking and cycling infrastructure should have its own primary access at the proposed roundabout. It is essential that alternative solutions be explored to ensure that the proposed development does not burden or hinder the existing access routes of Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital and Park Prewett. The provision of a dedicated primary access for the walking and cycling infrastructure would not only mitigate any adverse effects on the existing amenities but also enhance the overall safety and efficiency of the proposed development. Paragraph 112 of the NPPF requires *'within this context, application for development should: a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second -so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus and other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use'* (emphasis added)

The addition of up to 220 dwellings will lead to a substantial increase in traffic movements and lead to a severe impact on the local highway network. Policy CN9 of the Local Plan requires developments proposals to be permitted that do not result in inappropriate traffic generation or comprise highway safety. In addition, the trip journeys proposed in table

3.4 appear to be far fewer than would be in reality and this is considered an underestimate which does not take into account appropriate modelling/journeys. It is not considered that this has been appropriately justified through the submitted Transport Assessment documents, for instance the cumulative impact of other major developments have not been taken into account, including the nearby Manydown development (17/00818/OUT).

In addition, a number of other much smaller planning applications have been refused close to the site of the proposed roundabout on safety grounds. These planning applications were generating far fewer trip journeys than that which is being proposed through the application.

It is unclear how the existing access will be shared with the Golf Course and the three dwellings located near to the roundabout which will be accessed separately, this does not appear to be a safe or suitable access to the site. In addition, the access appears to be designed to be for only vehicular users and not taking a pedestrian first approach as required in paragraph 110 of the NPPF.

Introducing a roundabout on a major road to facilitate 220 dwellings in a rural parish is likely to lead to increased traffic congestion. Roundabouts are designed to slow down traffic and manage flow, making them less suitable for major roads with heavy traffic volumes. This could result in longer travel times and frustration for both local residents and commuters passing through the area.

Roundabouts can introduce safety hazards, especially on major roads. Higher traffic speeds and larger vehicles can lead to more significant accidents and potential injuries. Pedestrians and cyclists may also face increased risks when navigating roundabouts, particularly if they are not adequately incorporated into the design.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development's principle and location would lead to an unacceptable rise in risk for users of the proposed access and public highway (A340), posing a threat to road safety. This goes against Policies EM10 and CN6 and CN9 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011-2029, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

### **Infrastructure**

Policy CN6: Infrastructure of the Local Plan requires that new developments must provide additional services, facilities, and infrastructure to meet the needs of the development. Infrastructure should be provided on-site as part of the development, and off-site measures should only be used if necessary. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is the primary mechanism for securing the necessary financial contribution from development. Infrastructure should be provided before the development is occupied. The council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and Supplementary Planning Documents outline the requirements for infrastructure. Appendix 4 provides a summary of green space, sport, and recreation standards applied to development.

Within the supporting text of the policy, it is noted that transport is considered to be a key matter within the policy. Within the information submitted via the planning application it is not clear on the phasing of the highways infrastructure. The policy requires that an infrastructure first approach should be undertaken, at present it has not been clearly demonstrated that infrastructure can be provided and phased to support the residential development. In addition, it has not been proven that there is other sufficient infrastructure including health provision to support the residential development.

In conclusion, the proposal is not considered to be in line with policy CN6 of the Local Plan.

## **Pollution**

Policy EM12: Pollution of the Local Plan requires that development will only be allowed if it does not cause pollution that is harmful to the quality of life or poses risks to health or the environment. If there is unavoidable pollution, measures must be taken to mitigate its effects. Development that is sensitive to pollution will only be allowed if it does not negatively impact quality of life or pose risks to health or the environment, or if adequate measures can be implemented to address these concerns. All relevant policies will be considered when evaluating proposals.

Currently there is minimal light pollution in Sherborne St John, with limited street lighting. There are concerns regarding potential light and noise pollution associated with the development. These concerns will need to be taken into account during the planning process.

Due to the close proximity of the A340 which is located to the east of the site, there would be significant road noise (for new and existing residents), from the submitted parameter plan, limited buffers have been provided on site. In addition, no assessments with regard to noise and light pollution appear to have been undertaken which may identify any potential negative effects on the natural environment and nearby residents.

The development proposal is considered to conflict with policy EM12 of the adopted Local Plan and the policies within the SSJ2 in the current Neighbourhood Plan and the dark skies policy within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

## **Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation**

Policy EM4 states that development proposals within the borough must contribute to the creation, enhancement, and protection of green infrastructure. Green infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, woodlands, green corridors, and key habitats that provide a range of

environmental, social, and economic benefits. Development should incorporate green infrastructure where feasible, providing opportunities for recreation, biodiversity, and climate change mitigation. Proposals should also consider connectivity between green spaces and their accessibility to the community. The policy emphasises the importance of protecting and enhancing the natural environment and ensuring that it is integrated into the built environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

An Ecological Assessment has been submitted which was undertaken in August 2023 by Greenspace Ecological Solutions, this covers part of the site as per the location plan but is more focused on the residential impact, rather than focused on the highways application specifically. It is noted that to facilitate access a number of trees and vegetation would be lost. Given the highways application is a full planning application, it is not considered sufficient information has been provided for the decision maker to understand the impact upon biodiversity and habitats.

In conclusion, the proposal is not considered to be in line with policy EM4 of the Local Plan.

### **Strategic Gap and Landscape**

Policy EM2 (Strategic Gaps) focuses on protecting specific open and undeveloped gaps between settlements in the Basingstoke area. These gaps include one between Basingstoke - Sherborne St John. The policy allows for development in these gaps only if it does not compromise the physical and visual separation or the integrity of the gap. Development can also be permitted if it is proposed through a Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Policy EM1 (Landscape) states that any landscape development must be sympathetic to the character and visual quality of the area. Proposals must respect and enhance the landscape, taking into account qualities identified

in the council's landscape character assessment. Important factors to consider include visual amenity, the setting of settlements, local character of buildings and settlements, ecological networks, historic landscapes and features, and the borough's rivers and tributaries. The sense of place, tranquillity, and enjoyment of the landscape from public rights of way must also be respected. Proposals should maintain the integrity of existing settlements and prevent their coalescence. A comprehensive landscaping scheme may be required to integrate the development with the surroundings. Development in the North Wessex Downs AONB or its setting must also comply with national planning policy and criteria outlined in the AONB Management Plan.

It is anticipated that highways will have a negative impact upon the strategic gap. Constructing a roundabout is likely to have adverse environmental effects. By encouraging urban expansion in a rural area, valuable green spaces and wildlife habitats may be lost. Increased vehicle emissions and carbon footprint associated with additional traffic also conflicts with sustainability goals.

Sherborne St Joh is a rural village with a distinct character. Introducing a roundabout and a large number of dwellings may lead to the loss of this unique rural character, as the village could start to resemble a suburban or urban setting. This loss of identity may impact the sense of community and pride within the village and affect the rural setting of the village, whilst increased pollution as previously noted is also of relevance.

In conclusion, the proposal is not considered to be in line with policy EM1 or EM2 of the Local Plan.

## **Conclusion**

The application is for a new roundabout junction connection to the A340 Aldermaston Road to create new access and associated highway

improvements, including new footway provision and 2 no bus stops at Weybrook Golf Course which is located within Sherborne St John Parish. Sherborne St John Parish Council object to this planning application.

This representation has considered the harm caused by the following proposed development in relation to a number of matters including the principle of development, and the current Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan as well as the emerging Local and Neighbourhood Plan and the severe impact upon the highway network. It is considered that this proposal would lead to a severe impact on the highway network, and therefore not in line with the NPPF or the development plan.

For the reasons identified within these representations, the application is contrary to the development plan (with no material considerations which outweigh this) and this application should be refused without delay.

Yours sincerely,

Sherborne St John Parish Council

## SHERBORNE ST.JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

### CASH FLOW REPORT

Period: 29 Sept 2023 - 20 November 2023

#### BACS/Cheque payments already authorised

Date	Method	Payee	Details	Amount
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#### DDs/SOs/Cheques/BACS for authorisation

Date	Method	Payee	Details	Amount
02 October 2023	BACS	E Mango	Website hosting - annual charge	691.20
02 October 2023	BACS	Basingstoke Community Transport	Transport to Chineham Tesco	66.66
02 October 2023	BACS	R Morgan	Postage expenses	2.70
09 October 2023	BACS	SSI Village Hall	Coffee Morning	85.80
09 October 2023	BACS	Basingstoke Community Transport	Transport to Chineham Tesco	66.66
10 October 2023	BACS	L Wrightson	Chute Hire Deposit Return	125.00
10 October 2023	BACS	A Kenwood	Chute Hire Deposit Return	65.00
10 October 2023	BACS	M Zmuda	Chute Hire Deposit Return	125.00
10 October 2023	BACS	K Chewter	Chute Hire Deposit Return	125.00
10 October 2023	BACS	H Osborne	Chute Hire Deposit Return	65.00
12 October 2023	DD	West Mercia	Chute energy	62.59
12 October 2023	BACS	Boban Matthews	Chute hire fee return	282.50
13 October 2023	BACS	Basingstoke Community Transport	Transport to Chineham Tesco	66.66
16 October 2023	BACS	Dan Faulkner	Expenses - cable and postage	11.89
16 October 2023	DD	West Mercia	Chute energy	99.39
16 October 2023	DD	Castle Water	Water Supply	1,767.47
18 October 2023	DD	O2	Mobile phone	50.32
18 October 2023	BACS	Basingstoke Community Transport	Transport to Chineham Tesco	66.66
23 October 2023	BACS	R Morgan	Stationery supplies	51.18
23 October 2023	DD	Rokill	Pest Control	139.92
23 October 2023	BACS	ET Planning	NDP	4,050.00
23 October 2023	BACS	Dan Faulkner	Office supplies/printing/hard drive	20.10
26 October 2023	BACS	Terry Buller	Grounds Manager expenses	292.46
26 October 2023	BACS	Dan Faulkner	Expenses	10.50
26 October 2023	BACS	SLCC	Delivery of professional services - Sept	2,759.58
27 October 2023	BACS	BDBC	Premises Licence - annual fee	180.00
28 October 2023	BACS	Mr D Stewart	Salary - October	311.90
28 October 2023	BACS	Mr T Buller	Salary - October	692.44
28 October 2023	BACS	Mr D Faulkner	Salary - October	922.88
28 October 2023	BACS	HMRC	Tax - October	233.00
29 October 2023	BACS	Kimcell Ltd	Datacentre - email system/domain name	150.00
29 October 2023	DD	BT	Broadband Chute	51.59
31 October 2023	BACS	Dan Faulkner	Expenses - NDP letters	11.00
31 October 2023	BACS	SSI Village Hall	Coffee Morning	90.00
31 October 2023	BACS	ET Planning	Project management - NDP	522.00
10 November 2023	BACS	Sherborne PCC	Cemetery grass cutting contribution	405.00
10 November 2023	BACS	Starboard Systems Ltd t/a Scribe	Scribe Accounts	788.40
10 November 2023	BACS	Basingstoke Community Transport	Transport to Chineham Tesco	133.32
				<b>15,640.77</b>

#### Income Received

Date	Ref. No.	Sender	Details	Amount
02 October 2023		Chute Hire	Hire	198.50
02 October 2023		Summit Judo	Hire	205.95
04 October 2023		Yoga	Hire	318.00
20 October 2023		Chute Hire	Hire	230.00
20 October 2023		R Froggatt	Allotment rent - 16 Moss Hill	57.00
23 October 2023		D Dobbie	Allotment rent - 8b Moss Hill	57.00
26 October 2023		Chute Hire	Hire	42.00
26 October 2023		Piccolo	Hire	1,416.00
26 October 2023		Chute Hire	Hire	272.00
01 November 2023		Summit Judo	Hire	205.95
02 November 2023		Yoga	Hire	372.00
03 November 2023		Chute Hire	Hire	170.00
06 November 2023		Chute Hire	Hire	209.00
06 November 2023		Chute Hire	Hire	197.00
				<b>3,950.40</b>