

Mere Community Area Topic Paper - Cabinet version

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1. Introduction

Introduction

1.1 Wiltshire Council is preparing a Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan ('the Plan'), which is comprised of a settlement boundary review and housing site allocations. The Plan is supported by a number of documents including Community Area Topic Papers that form the evidence for the Plan. This paper summarises the outcomes of the settlement boundary review and site selection process in relation to the Mere Community Area.

Settlement boundary review

1.2 The Council did not review the extent of the boundaries to inform the Wiltshire Core Strategy ('WCS') and relied upon the former district local plans. They would instead be reviewed as a part of preparing the Plan⁽¹⁾.

1.3 Consequently, the Council has undertaken a comprehensive review of the boundaries to ensure they are up-to-date and adequately reflect changes which have happened since they were first established. The Plan amends settlement boundaries where necessary. It is also the prerogative of local communities to review them through the preparation of neighbourhood plans.

Housing site allocations

1.4 The WCS refers to the role of this Plan, in combination with the Chippenham Site Allocations Plan, to help ensure a sufficient choice and supply of suitable sites throughout the Plan period in accordance with national policy and to compliment neighbourhood planning.

Topic paper structure

1.5 *Table 1.1* shows the layout of the Mere Community Area Topic Paper ('CATP'). The sections and appendices will differ between community areas depending upon how far they progress through the site selection process.

1.6 The following topic papers explain the methodologies used for the settlement boundary review and the site selection process and should be read alongside this CATP.

- Topic Paper 1: Settlement Boundary Review Methodology
- Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology

Table 1.1 Layout of the Mere Community Area Topic Paper

#	Section	Appendices
2	Community area	Planning policy context for the Mere Community Area, including an overview of the WCS and, where applicable, any neighbourhood plans that have been made or that are in progress within the community area.

¹ This Plan does not review the settlement boundary for Chippenham. This has been reviewed by the Chippenham Site Allocations Plan.

3	Settlement boundary review	Identifies those settlements where settlement boundaries have been reviewed by the Plan and those where they are considered to have been reviewed by a sufficiently advanced neighbourhood plan.	Appendix A contains maps of each settlement showing the revised settlement boundary proposals with tables explaining the changes.
4	Overview of the site selection process	Briefly outlines the stages of the site selection process, which is covered in more detail by <i>Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology</i> .	
5	Outcome of the site selection process for Mere	Summary of the site selection process for Mere (Stage 1). It outlines the methodology and identifies whether housing site allocations at Mere should be included in the Plan.	
6	Outcome of the Mere Community Area Remainder site selection process	Summary of the Mere Community Area Remainder site selection process (Stage 1). It outlines the methodology and identifies whether housing site allocations for the community area remainder should be included in the Plan.	
7	Conclusions	Summary of the process, listing the sites that have been identified as proposed allocations in the Plan and settlements where the boundaries have been reviewed.	

2. Mere Community area

Context

2.1 The WCS provides the context for the Plan in relation to the Mere Community Area. Core Policies 1 (Settlement Strategy) and 17 (Mere Area Strategy) set out:

- the settlement hierarchy for sustainable development in the Mere Community Area, and
- associated indicative housing requirements.

2.2 Core Policy 17 sets out that approximately 285 new homes will be provided, of which about 235 should occur at Mere and approximately 50 homes will be provided in the rest of the community area. This reflects the settlement strategy set out in Core Policy 1 and the role and function of settlements in the Mere Area Strategy. It indicates how much growth should be provided here to ensure the delivery of the overall housing requirement for the Housing Market Area ('HMA').

Settlement strategy

2.3 The settlements listed in *Table 2.1* below fall within the Mere Community Area.

Table 2.1 Settlement Strategy in the Mere Community Area

Local Service Centre	Mere
Small Villages	East Knoyle, Kilmington, Semley / Semley Station, Stourton and Zeals

Issues and considerations

2.4 Core Policy 17 and the supporting text (paragraph 5.90) of the WCS identify specific issues to be addressed in planning for the Mere Community Area, including:

- future growth needs to be balanced with a good mix of housing and employment, as there is a risk Mere will become a 'dormitory' type settlement.
- there is a need to address the shortage of affordable houses in the area by planning for some housing growth
- the area has a high quality natural and built environment and any future growth will be carefully managed in accordance with Core Strategy policies to ensure these assets are protected
- all developments within the community area will need to conserve the designated landscape of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB and its setting, and where possible enhance its locally distinctive characteristics.

2.5 The Wiltshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan ('the IDP')⁽²⁾ identifies specific essential infrastructure requirements that will need to be addressed in planning for the community area, including.

- extension of existing primary school in town to provide additional places

2 Wiltshire Council (December 2016). *Wiltshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan 3 2011-2026. Appendix 1: Mere Community Area.*

- extension of Gillingham secondary school to provide additional places for pupils from Mere
- provision of additional nursery school places
- support development of local primary care health facilities, as most practices at capacity

2.6 However, neither the WCS or the IDP identify insurmountable issues to the extent that they would restrict the delivery of the level of housing proposed over the Plan period.

Housing requirements

2.7 The housing requirements for the Mere Community Area are set out in *Table 2.2* below. The table shows the overall housing requirement for the community area over the Plan period 2006-2026. In addition, it shows the number of dwellings that have already been delivered and those that are planned. This leaves an 'indicative residual requirement' of homes yet to be delivered during the remainder of the Plan period.

Table 2.2 Housing requirements for the Mere Community Area at April 2017 ⁽³⁾

Area	Indicative requirement 2006-2026	Completions 2006-2017	Developable commitments 2017-2026	Indicative residual requirement
Mere	235	126	139	0
Mere CA Remainder	50	37	5	8
Mere total	285	163	144	8

Neighbourhood planning

2.8 Neighbourhood plans can also allocate sites for housing and review settlement boundaries. The progress of a neighbourhood plan and the level of housing it is proposing to allocate help determine which settlements to consider through the site selection process. Likewise, the settlement boundary review will not look at settlements that are considered to have had their settlement boundaries reviewed by a sufficiently advanced neighbourhood plan.

2.9 Mere Community Area has no neighbourhood plans in preparation. For a full explanation of the neighbourhood planning process and the latest position on individual plans, see the neighbourhood planning pages on the Council website⁽⁴⁾.

³ Wiltshire Council (June 2017). Topic Paper 3 Housing Land Supply

⁴ Wiltshire Council. (2017). Neighbourhood Planning Latest Progress. Available: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-neighbourhood-latest-news>. Last accessed April 2017.

3. Settlement boundary review

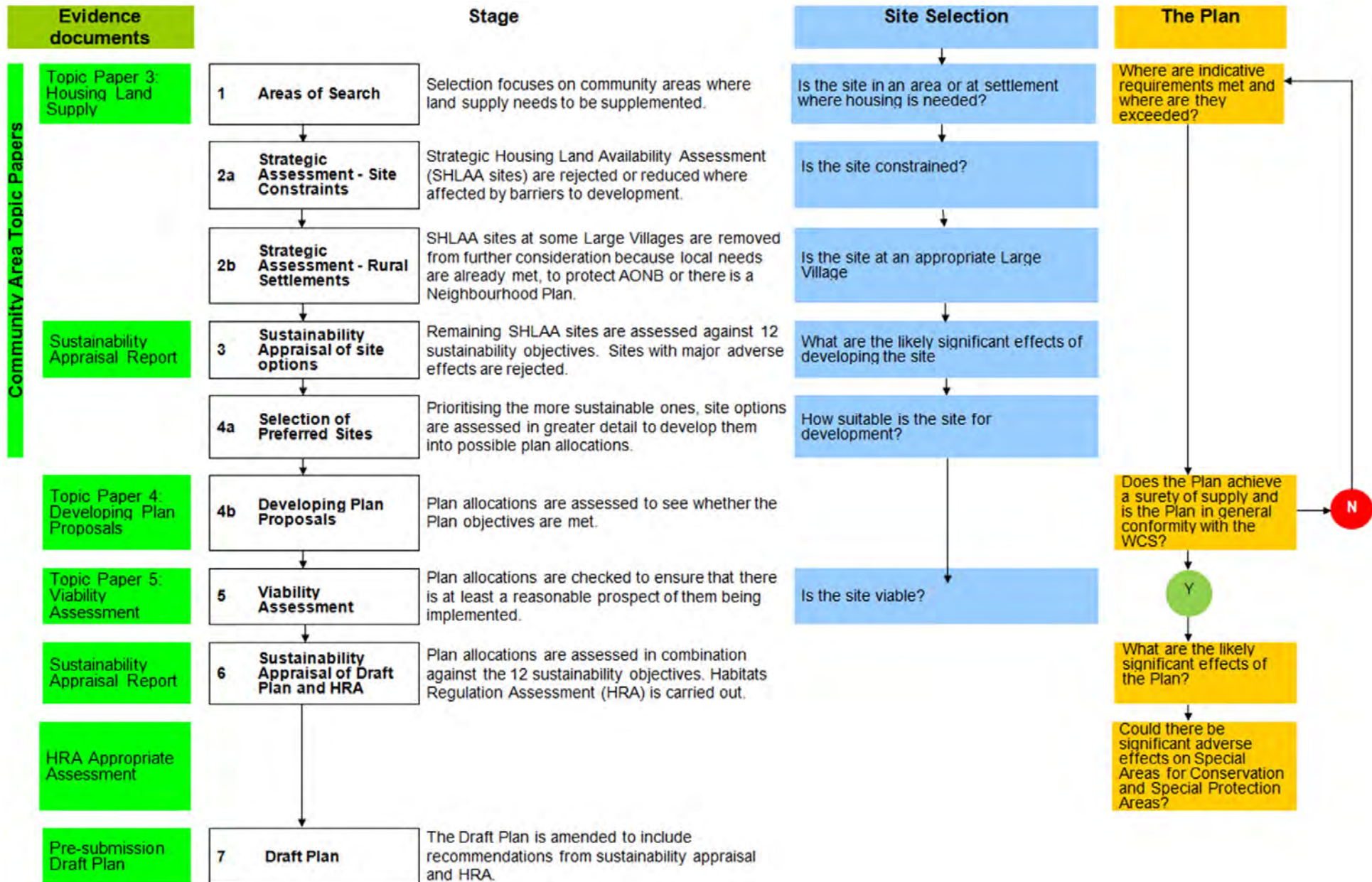
- 3.1 The Plan also proposes amendments to the settlement boundary, as defined in the WCS, of the following settlement within the Mere Community Area:
- Mere
- 3.2 **Appendix A** contains maps showing the proposed amendments to this settlement boundary and tables setting out the justification behind these amendments. The methodology used in the settlement boundary review is set out in *Topic Paper 1: Settlement Boundary Review Methodology*⁽⁵⁾.
- 3.3 No settlements in the Mere Community Area are considered to have had their settlement boundaries reviewed through a sufficiently advanced neighbourhood planning process. Therefore, all settlements with currently adopted settlement boundaries within this community area have been considered through the settlement boundary review.

5 Wiltshire Council (June 2017). *Topic Paper 1: Settlement Boundary Review Methodology*

4. Overview of the site selection process

- 4.1 *Figure 4.1 provides a simple overview of the site selection process, which is explained fully in Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology⁽⁶⁾.*

6 Wiltshire Council (June 2017). *Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology*



5. Outcome of the site selection process for Mere

Overview

- 5.1 This section summarises the outcome of the site selection process for the Local Service Centre of Mere. It follows the methodology outlined in Section Four and is covered in more detail by *Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology*⁽⁷⁾.
- 5.2 The decisions taken after each stage of the process for Mere, along with the reasons for these decisions, are summarised below.

Stage 1: Identifying broad 'areas of search'

- 5.3 The purpose of Stage 1 is to establish where housing site allocations may be needed during the rest of the Plan period. To do this, Stage 1 reviews the indicative residual requirement outstanding for Mere. Generally, the areas with an outstanding requirement to be met form the broad 'areas of search', which are then progressed for further assessment through Stage 2.
- 5.4 *Table 2.2* demonstrates that the indicative residual requirement for Mere to be delivered during the Plan period has been met.
- 5.5 Therefore, the Plan will not need to allocate additional land to help meet an indicative residual requirement. It is proposed that housing sites will not be identified for allocation at Mere and the site selection process ends after Stage 1.

7 Wiltshire Council (June 2017). *Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology*

6. Outcome of the Mere Community Area Remainder site selection process

Overview

- 6.1** This section summarises the outcome of the site selection process for the Mere Community Area Remainder. It follows the methodology outlined in Section Four and is covered in more detail by *Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology*⁽⁸⁾.
- 6.2** The decisions taken after each stage of the process for the Mere Community Area Remainder, along with the reasons for these decisions, are summarised below.

Stage 1: Identifying broad 'areas of search'

- 6.3** The purpose of Stage 1 is to establish where housing site allocations may be needed during the rest of the Plan period. To do this, Stage 1 reviews the indicative residual requirement outstanding for Mere Community Area. Generally, the areas with an outstanding requirement to be met form the broad 'areas of search', which are then progressed for further assessment through Stage 2.
- 6.4** *Table 2.2* demonstrates that there is an indicative residual requirement of 8 dwellings for the Mere Community Area Remainder to be delivered during the Plan period. However, the Community Area Remainder comprises five Small Villages, which are not subject to site allocations in the Plan in accordance with *Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology*⁽⁹⁾. In addition, the outstanding requirement is very low and is likely to be delivered through windfall development, so does not warrant further consideration.
- 6.5** Therefore, the Plan will not need to allocate additional land to help meet an indicative residual requirement. It is proposed that housing sites will not be identified for allocation within the Mere Community Area Remainder and the site selection process ends after Stage 1.

8 Wiltshire Council (June 2017). *Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology*

9 Wiltshire Council (June 2017). *Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology*

7. Conclusions

Mere town

- 7.1 The indicative residual requirement for the Local Service Centre of Mere to be delivered during the Plan period has been met. Therefore, the Plan will not need to allocate additional land to help meet an indicative residual requirement. It is proposed that housing sites will not be identified for allocation at Mere and the site selection process ends after Stage 1.

Mere Community Area Remainder

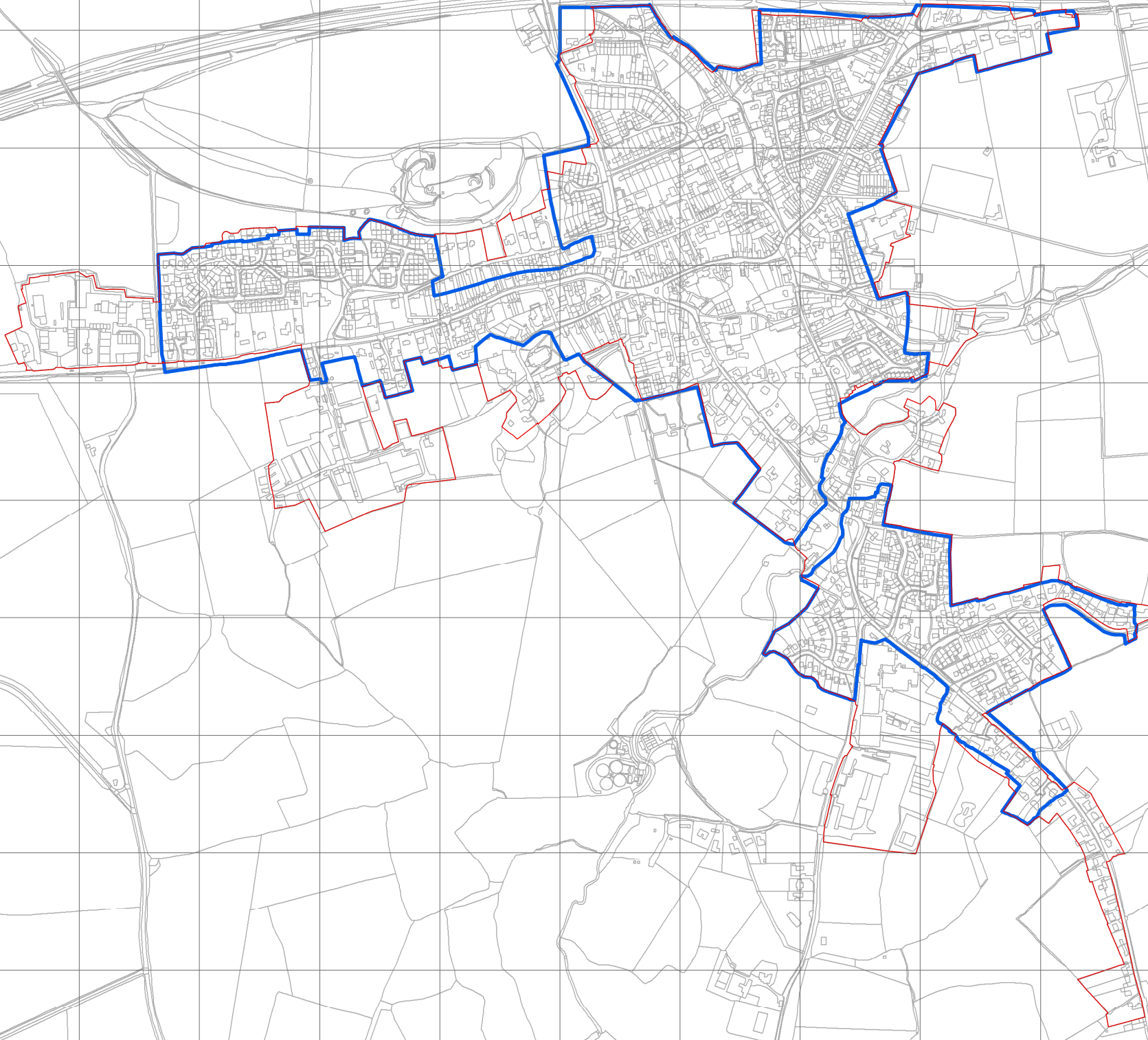
- 7.2 There is an indicative residual requirement of 8 dwellings for the Mere Community Area Remainder to be delivered during the Plan period. However, the Community Area Remainder comprises five Small Villages, which are not subject to site allocations in the Plan in accordance with Topic Paper 2: Site Selection Process Methodology Paper⁽¹⁰⁾ In addition, the outstanding requirement is very low and is likely to be delivered through windfall development so does not warrant further consideration. Therefore, the Plan will not need to allocate additional land to help meet an indicative residual requirement. It is proposed that housing sites will not be identified for allocation within Mere Community Area Remainder and the site selection process ends after Stage 1.

Settlement Boundary Review

- 7.3 The Plan has reviewed the settlement boundary of the following settlement within the Mere Community Area:
- Mere
- 7.4 No settlements in the Mere Community Area are considered to have had their settlement boundaries reviewed through a sufficiently advanced neighbourhood planning process. Therefore, all settlements with currently adopted settlement boundaries within this community area have been considered through the settlement boundary review.

Appendix A: Proposals for revised settlement boundaries

**Mere
Proposals for Revised Settlement Boundaries**



- SettlementBoundaryReview_PreSubmission
- Existing settlement boundary

Mere

A.1 The preceding map of Mere illustrates both the existing settlement boundary and the proposed revised settlement boundary. *Table A.1* below explains why each of the proposed amendments were made to the existing settlement boundary, in line with the settlement boundary review methodology⁽¹¹⁾. The grid reference numbers are those used on the map overleaf.

Table A.1 Proposed amendments to Mere Settlement Boundary

Map Grid Reference	Proposed Amendments
D6, E6	Amend boundary to include employment development that is physically related to the settlement.
E6, F6	Amendment to boundary to follow but not include clearly defined physical feature – the road.
F5	Amend boundary to include residential development that is physically related to the settlement.
F7, F8, G7, G8, H7	Amend boundary to include employment development that is physically related to the settlement.
H5, H6	Amend boundary to include built residential development and curtilages of properties that are physically related to the built form of the settlement.
H6, H7, I6, I7	Amend boundary to include residential and community facilities (i.e. church) development that is physically related to the settlement and the curtilage of the property that relates more to the built environment (e.g. a garden) and has limited capacity to extend the built form of the settlement.
K9, K10, L9, L10	Amend boundary to include employment development that is physically related to the settlement.
L10, M10	Amend boundary to include the curtilage of the property that relates more to the built environment (e.g. a garden) and has limited capacity to extend the built form of the settlement.
M10, M11, M12	Amend boundary to include built residential development and curtilages of properties physically related to the built form of the settlement.
L9, L10, M10	Amendment to boundary to follow but not include clearly defined physical feature – the road.
K7, K8, L7	Amend boundary to include residential development and curtilages of the properties that are physically related to the built form of the settlement.
M8, M9	Amend boundary to follow the settlement side of the road and to include curtilage of property physically related to the built settlement.
K6, L6	Amend boundary to include residential development and curtilages of the properties that are physically related to the built form of the settlement.

11 Wiltshire Council (June 2017). *Topic Paper 1: Settlement Boundary Review Methodology Paper*.

K5, K6	Amend boundary to include community facilities development (i.e. school) that is physically related to the settlement.
I3, I4	Amend boundary to remove recreational / amenity space at the edge of the settlement.
I4	Amendment to boundary to follow but not include clearly defined physical feature – the road.

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