

# **Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan Examination in Public**

## **Statement of Common Ground**

**between**

**Wiltshire Council**

**and**

**Historic England**

**April 2019**

## Introduction

1. Wiltshire Council ('the Council') and Historic England have worked constructively, actively and on an on-going basis throughout the production of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan ('the Plan'). This has been through ongoing regular dialogue and formal consultations.
2. This statement is structured to provide a summary of the areas of agreement between the Council and Historic England, and how that agreement was reached, in relation to the Plan.

## Purpose of Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan ('the Plan')

3. The Plan is being prepared to support the delivery of the Spatial Strategy set out within the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted January 2015). The Plan will, once adopted, form part of the Development Plan for Wiltshire
4. The purpose of the Plan is twofold:
  - Allocate sites for housing to ensure the delivery of homes across the plan period in order to help maintain a five-year land supply in each of Wiltshire's three Housing Market Area's (HMAs) over the period to 2026; and
  - Review and, where necessary, revise settlement boundaries in relation to the Principal Settlements of Salisbury and Trowbridge, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages.

## Historic England

5. Historic England is a Prescribed Body as defined in defined in part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. They are a public body "that helps people care for enjoy and celebrate England's spectacular historic environment".

## Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan Pre-submission consultation (Summer 2017)

6. The Council published the draft Plan, along with accompanying evidence, for a formal consultation from 14<sup>th</sup> July to the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2017.
7. In their response to this formal consultation Historic England reiterated the advice in national planning policy<sup>1</sup> on how local plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, and that special regard should be had to the desirability of preserving or enhancing designated heritage assets<sup>2</sup>.
8. Historic England referred to ensuring that there is adequate evidence to support the proposed allocations to enable the Council to determine the level of effect (harm) on the significance of affected heritage assets and their setting. Great weight must be applied to the conservation of the affected heritage assets<sup>3</sup>.
9. They also stated that Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that considerable importance and great weight (special regard) is given to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings.

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<sup>1</sup> NPPF (2012 version)

<sup>2</sup> NPPF (2012 version) paragraph 126 and 132 and Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

<sup>3</sup> NPPF (2012 version) paragraph 132

10. They advised that the Council must provide sufficient evidence to establish the level of impact and harm and if harm is unavoidable then the justification for that should be given.
11. They took this position further by suggesting that the Council undertake further heritage work and produce a specific statement that makes the case for the allocations from a heritage perspective. They then provided comments on six proposed allocations that have specific heritage sensitivities.

#### Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan Heritage Impact Assessment

12. In collaboration with Historic England the Council therefore commissioned Land Use Consultants (LUC) to carry out a heritage impact assessment (HIA) for the six proposed allocations that were identified as having specific heritage sensitivities. These proposed allocations were:

<b>Draft allocation</b>	<b>Site name and location</b>
H.2.2	Land off the A368 at White Horse Business Park, Trowbridge
H2.3	Elizabeth Way, Trowbridge
H2.4	Church Lane, Trowbridge
H2.6	Southwick Court, Trowbridge
H2.7	East of the Dene, Warminster
H3.3	North of Netherhampton Road, Salisbury

13. The assessment was prepared to accord with the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). For clarity the language of the NPPF has been used in the assessment to ensure it is clear how the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by their setting have been considered and the impact of any potential allocation on that significance including the degree of any harm to that significance.
14. In response to the pre-submission representations made by Historic England and the findings of the Heritage Impact Assessment the Council made a number of proposed changes to the draft Plan. These are set out in the Schedule of Proposed Changes to the Plan<sup>4</sup> that were submitted alongside the Plan in July 2018.

#### Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan – Focussed consultation on the Schedule of Proposed Changes and associated evidence documents

15. In July 2018, the Council submitted the Plan, along with a Schedule of Proposed Changes and supporting evidence, to the Secretary of State, for independent examination. Further rounds of focussed consultation on the Council's Schedule of Proposed Changes were then undertaken.
16. In responding to the focussed consultation on the Schedule of Proposed Changes Historic England had unresolved comments on five of the proposed allocations. These are set out in the following paragraphs along with the agreed position where this has been possible.
17. Proposed housing allocation H2.2 Land off the A363 at White Horse Business Park, Trowbridge and Proposed Change (PC) 61.
  - a. *Issue raised:*  
The cemetery that is adjacent to the site due to the change in site boundary identified in PC 59 is in a poor condition and 'at risk' and Historic England

<sup>4</sup> WHSAP03.01 Schedule of Proposed Changes July 2018 Part 1 of 21

questions whether the proposed development could incorporate a positive strategy for it.

*Agreed position:*

This matter could be positively addressed through further proposed changes to the Plan as follows. Additionally, in the light of PC59 a further change is needed to reflect the position of the Baptist cemetery to the site.

Amend PC61 after second sentence as follows:

“...An area of the site is also adjacent to ~~includes~~ a Baptist cemetery with an ornamental gateway structure (Grade II listed) and curtilage listed perimeter walls. The archaeological potential of the site is likely to be high. A comprehensive approach to development will need to be undertaken that makes a positive contribution towards conserving and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.

At the planning application stage, the layout and design of the site ~~would need to~~ must give great weight to conserving the significance of these heritage assets and their settings in order to minimise harm. The Baptist burial ground and gateway is in poor condition and in ensuring that a comprehensive approach is to taken to the development of the site a positive contribution will also be required towards conserving and enhancing the significance of this heritage asset and it's setting. It will be expected that the developer of the site will work with the Church to ensure that a positive strategy is in place to protect and enhance the Baptist burial ground and gateway.”

b. *Issue raised:*

Historic England ask whether the Plan makes clear how archaeological significance should be addressed.

*Agreed position:*

In response to this, the following proposed change has also been suggested to be added to end of PC61:

“Given the potential for heritage assets with archaeological interest to be present within the site field evaluation will need to be carried out and taken into account in developing proposals to minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal”

18. Proposed housing allocation H2.4 Church Lane, Trowbridge and PC68

a. *Issue raised:*

The Plan could be more specific on the need to avoid the redevelopment of the paddock adjacent to Church Lane and the rear of the listed buildings fronting Frome Road.

*Agreed position:*

The following proposed change has been suggested:

Add new 4<sup>th</sup> sentence to PC68:

“A comprehensive approach to development will need to be undertaken that makes a positive contribution towards conserving and enhancing the significance of heritage assets that avoids the paddock adjacent to Church Lane and the rear of listed buildings that front Frome Road. The layout and design of the site would need to give great weight...”

b. *Issue raised:*

Historic England ask if the Plan makes clear how archaeological significance should be addressed.

*Agreed position:*

The following proposed change has been suggested to be added to the end of PC68:

**“The site has the potential for heritage assets with archaeological interest to be present within the site. Field evaluation will need to be carried out and taken into account in developing proposals in order to minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal”**

19. Proposed housing allocation H2.6 Southwick Court, Trowbridge and PC72.

a. *Issue raised:*

To avoid undue harm to the significance of Southwick Court, the design of any future road across the site and junction off the A361 (Frome Road) requires a very sensitive bespoke approach; a rural/parkland/ country estate typology with discreet low level lighting and unobtrusive signage to minimise harmful intrusion within this historic landscape. It will be important for the Plan to clearly set out such expectations.

*Agreed position:*

As a result of ongoing dialogue with Historic England and revised design and masterplanning work from the promoter of the site the following additional changes are proposed to ensure that the detailed design of development on the Southwick Court site allocation gives great weight to Southwick Court and its setting in an agrarian landscape:

The following proposed changes has been agreed to add to the end of PC72:

**“The road across the site and junction off the A361 (Frome Road) will be designed and built in a manner that acknowledges the need to minimise intrusion within the historic landscape. Signage will be kept to a minimum and particular attention given to reducing any adverse impacts of lighting.”**

20. Proposed housing allocation H2.7 East of the Dene, Warminster.

a. *Issue raised:*

Historic England stated that it could not be demonstrated with any degree of confidence that a residential scheme could come forward to accord with the objectives of the Plan and its specific conditions for the site; legislation, national policy and guidance in respect of the great weight that needs to be afforded the conservation of affected heritage assets and their setting. At present Historic England consider the site allocation is inappropriate.

*Agreed position:*

The Plan is supported by evidence that appropriately identifies the heritage assets that would be affected by development and assesses their significance, including the contribution made by their setting. The Plan together with Proposed Changes (PC) 76, 77 and 78, gives great weight to heritage and appropriately sets out requirements that would need to be delivered to ensure development is capable of proceeding. Based on these factors, the Council therefore considers the site as being suitable for development in principle.

A meeting has been held between Historic England, Wiltshire Council and the promoters of the site. Certain matters in respect of heritage are agreed by all parties, including: the location of assets (designated and non-designated); their significance; the relationship between assets; the contribution made by their setting; and the scale of harm to designated and non-designated assets and their setting. The site promoter had indicated at the meeting an intention to provide further information/revisions to initial Masterplanning work. To date These have not been forthcoming and as consequence Historic England maintains its concern that it has not been demonstrated that a development of 100+ new homes on the site (even with the focussed changes PC 76, 77, 78), could be delivered without causing significant harm. However, the Council acknowledges that scale, layout, design and access arrangements need further rationalisation in order to be acceptable in heritage terms. Further dialogue on these matters will be undertaken with all parties before the commencement of the hearing sessions.

## 21. Proposed housing allocation H3.3 North of Netherhampton Road, Salisbury.

### a. *Issue raised:*

This is an important site in relation to the integrity of historic Salisbury, its Cathedral and the wider landscape setting. There is some doubt that a scheme could accord with the objectives of the Plan, the site specific conditions, national policy and guidance in respect of the great weight that needs to be afforded to the conservation of affected heritage assets and their setting, primarily in this respect, Salisbury Cathedral.

However, at recent meetings with the local authority and site promoter it has been agreed that further evidence might be prepared and submitted to provide a degree of reasonable confidence that a scheme could be forthcoming that delivers a satisfactory housing development in accordance with the above expectations. Historic England awaits the outcome of such further work before the proposed allocation can be considered appropriate.

### *Agreed position:*

There has been ongoing dialogue with Historic England and the promoters of the site. Revised design and masterplanning work from the promoter of the site has increased understanding of the potential impact on the setting of Salisbury Cathedral. Collaborative work is ongoing between Historic England, Wiltshire Council and the promoters of the site to further explore design solutions that ensure that the setting of Salisbury Cathedral is conserved and enhanced.

Further amendments to PC104 will be promoted by the Council through the hearings to cover matters agreed between Historic England, the Council and the site promoters. Further dialogue on these matters is occurring with all parties before the commencement of the hearing sessions. Historic England appreciates the site promoters efforts to limit the impact of potential future development on the setting of the Cathedral and Conservation Area. However, to date this has not been able to adequately demonstrate that considerable harm would be avoided and as a consequence Historic England maintains its objection to the allocation.

### b. *Issue raised:*

The Plan should also make clear how this area of archaeological sensitivity should be addressed.

### *Agreed position:*

The following proposed change has been suggested to be added to the end of PC 104 :

**“The archaeological potential of the site is demonstrably high. At the planning application stage, the layout and design of the site will need to give great weight to conserving heritage assets and their setting in a manner proportionate to their significance. The site has been subject to archaeological assessment, geophysical survey and evaluation trenching, with archaeological interest shown to be present across the site.”**

- c. It is also recommended that the above proposed change at paragraph 21b be added to the supporting text in the Plan for H3.1 Netherhampton Road, Salisbury.
22. It is agreed that in the light of the comments raised above regarding archaeology that a further change should be proposed and the following text added to section 5 of the Plan after ‘heritage assessment’ PC37:
- a. “As appropriate, additional evidence will need to be prepared at a level of detail to support a planning application. Such new evidence can be used as a material consideration when considering a specific planning application. In many cases, particularly important items are referred to for each allocation. Such evidence may include, but is not limited to a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, **site specific** Heritage Impact Assessment, Archaeological Mitigation Strategy, Biodiversity Report, Surface Water Management Plan (**incorporating a site wide, comprehensive drainage strategy**), Flood Risk Assessment (**incorporating an assessment of the predicted effects of climate change**), and Transport Statement”

#### Conclusion

23. Historic England and Wiltshire Council agree that the historic environment evidence base supporting the Plan, including the Heritage Impact Assessment, provides relevant guidance for the Plan. Agreement has been reached on all outstanding issues identified in response to the focussed consultation apart from the proposed site allocations H2.7 and H3.3 and whether they can meet the objectives of the Plan. These allocations will be discussed during the Examination and dialogue will continue in advance of the hearing sessions to seek agreement.

Signed:



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Date: 02/04/2019

Signed:

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