

Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan

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Introductory Statement

The Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan is one of the most important documents ever produced on behalf of the Parish Council; if approved it will shape the future of the parish for the decade to come. The plan is a positive one with land use allocations and a list of projects that enable the delivery of the community's Vision of Mortimer and their aspirations for the parish's development and improvement over time.

The responses to the various consultations on the plan have shown how much people care about the future of their community. Naturally the views expressed in the consultations have been incorporated in the plan wherever possible.

Finally I would like to express my thanks to all those who have given their time and energy to producing this plan. Without this plan we would, I am sure, be a much poorer community.

Mike Dennett

Chairman of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

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Introduction

This Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) covers the whole of the parish of Stratfield Mortimer and contains policies that are in general conformance with West Berkshire Council's (WBC) Core Strategy. The period covered by the plan is from now until 2026.

Following an executive summary the plan outlines background facts and figures that influence life in Mortimer, before describing the process that has been followed to formulate this plan. Emphasis is especially given to the consultation that has taken place with the community to help formulate the policies contained in the plan.

The general vision which has driven the plan is described followed by a chapter on each of 15 policy areas. Each of these chapters contains the policies themselves along with the justification for each policy and how they will be delivered and monitored on the ground.

Finally there is a set of appendices which contain a great deal of supporting information for those who wish to delve deeper into the process and justification for the policies.

In general in this document the term *parish* is used when the whole area of the civil parish of Stratfield Mortimer is intended and the term *village* to indicate the largely built-up area within the Settlement Policy Boundary. *Village* can also mean the whole community or whole settlement; this usage is generally clear from the context.

Executive Summary

The Introduction to this plan has described the form of this document. This summary is intended to emphasise the major elements of the plan and, in particular, the core policies put forward for adoption.

The various sections at the start of the plan give a picture of Mortimer as seen through the eyes of the community. A number of positive and negative factors which have informed this Plan were identified by means of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis.

The overwhelming view is that Mortimer is a rural village with a distinctive identity and character, and a good community spirit. It is this view that people want to be able to keep going forward. This is not to say that they are opposed to change but rather that change should be managed sensitively in order to improve matters where possible and to mitigate any downsides to development.

This view was summarised and supported through the consultation process in the form of three principles. These are:-

- 1. The NDP must make it possible for people to live the whole of their lives in the parish if they so wish**
- 2. The NDP will ensure that new residential developments will be within or adjacent to the existing Settlement Policy Boundary and, ideally, close to the centre of the village (the centre is taken to be St John's Church)**
- 3. The NDP will allocate and reserve land to make provision for the future needs of the parish with respect to schools and health/welfare infrastructure**

These principles have been taken forward by way of policy statements that:

- Allocate land behind St John's Infant School for up to 110 homes that will have a mix of types and tenures
- Allocate part of this site for a new St John's Infant School and doctors' surgery

In order to protect the village feel of Mortimer, specific policies have been included to address design features of new development, for example:

- Propose relevant housing densities that retain the village feel
- Require new developments to be designed in sympathy with the village ethos
- Are not lit or only lit at a low level
- Have sensible parking standards that allow cars to be parked in garages
- Reduce the risk of flooding
- Produce net environmental gains by increasing biodiversity

All of these requirements will be developed for individual sites by way of Site Design Briefs that will have the full weight of the planning system behind them. As such Site Design Briefs and Development Applications, Proposals and Plans will conform to all the policies in the Plan in their totality.

There is a strong desire to ensure that Mortimer continues to be a thriving rural service centre. To this end policies encourage the retention of existing facilities, and the introduction of new facilities, where these will not damage the village/rural feel of the parish.

To assist with the retention of such services and to improve the lifestyle of the community it is proposed to encourage the provision of better telecommunications, drainage and parking.

There is also an emphasis on retaining and improving the biodiversity of the area by requiring new developments to provide green spaces and green routes along with other wildlife friendly features. The protection of existing green spaces by designating both the Fairground and the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field as local green spaces is also proposed.

Finally the rich heritage of Mortimer is recognised in a proposal to create a Heritage Trail which will take in many sites of historical interest.

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Background to Mortimer

History and Location

Once central on the west – east axis of the Royal County of Berkshire, Stratfield Mortimer now lies almost at the eastern extremity of West Berkshire Council district. To the south and west it has a boundary with Hampshire, to the north east with Wokingham Council district. Rail and road links mean that people naturally look to Reading and then Newbury or Basingstoke for employment and town-based facilities. Mortimer has a railway station on the Reading to Basingstoke line but it is about 1.5 miles from the centre of the village. Although in Wokingham parliamentary constituency since 1997, people in Stratfield Mortimer do not have an obvious connection with Wokingham.

An estimate based on the Domesday Book gives a population of about 350 in 1086. The early village was centred on the Foudry Brook, St. Mary's Church, St. Mary's School area; much of the best agricultural land being at that end of the parish. The village appears to have quietly flourished for many centuries,

The western end of the parish, Mortimer Common, was gravelly wasteland which was then enclosed in 1802, landowners of the parish being allotted plots according to their existing freeholds. As the land made poor farmland, most became conifer plantations and these still dominate the landscape to the northwest of the parish. Twenty acres were set aside for the annual fairs – this still forms the village's most valued open space, The Fairground.

Parts of Mortimer Common started to be developed as a residential area from about 1870; by 1911 the population for the parish had reached 1,423. The houses built during the Victorian and Edwardian eras, most of locally made bricks, still cluster around the nucleus of the village in Windmill Rd, King St., Victoria Rd, West End Rd, St. John's Rd. and St. Mary's Rd.

Further development came to the parish in the 1950s with the building of Stephens Road and Stephens Firs estates. Two large old houses were demolished in the early 1960s to build the Croft Road estate, and the Crescent development and the College Piece council estate were built on woodland about the same time. In 1961 the population was 2,267 and by 1991 3,498. More recently new estates have been built at Groves Lea and Strawberry Fields and significant infill building has taken place. By 2011 the population had reached 3,807.

The centre of the village is now in what was Mortimer Common, with Post Office, bank, shops, St. John's Infant School, village hall, and churches all close together. St. Mary's Junior School is located over a mile from the centre of the village, nearer the station. For secondary schooling, students usually attend Willink School in the neighbouring parish of Burghfield.

Housing for the elderly has been provided with Windmill Court, Glenapp Grange and Badgers Croft. The village has an active community life with many clubs and societies for all ages and several annual village events.

The northeast, east and southeast of the parish is still generally arable farmland with some pasture for cattle; some fields nearer to the centre of the village are used by livery stables. Coniferous woods remain to the north and west. There is a network of well-used footpaths

through the fields and woods. All roads coming into Stratfield Mortimer pass through either open farmland or woodland, thus all the approaches to the parish are rural.

Current Situation

As has been demonstrated in the previous section the parish has developed over time and the population is now approximately two and a half times that of 1950. Despite this the parish is still largely rural in nature with the overall population density of the parish being 3.94 persons per hectare. The village of Mortimer occupies the north-western corner of the parish and the rest is farmland, woods and scattered dwellings associated with the rural economy. This preponderance of rural activity is also true for the neighbouring parishes so that Mortimer is surrounded with farmland, woods or commons. This imparts a rural ambience to the village as well as the parish as a whole and is a feature much-treasured by the community.

Because Mortimer has a long history and an increasing population it has managed to retain most of its traditional facilities and to develop some new ones. As such it continues to act as a small rural centre for itself and other villages nearby. This role has been recognised in West Berkshire Council's Local Plan where Mortimer has been designated a rural service centre.

The age structure of the parish is slightly older than the average for West Berkshire and there are fewer persons in the 13 to 30 year age groups than would be found, on average in West Berkshire. However, there are slightly more children below the age of 13 than the average for the wider area. Of particular note is the age band of 25 to 30 where Stratfield Mortimer has only some 62% of the wider average.

The population is formed into households of, on average, 2.42 persons. This is the same as the West Berkshire figure. Owner occupation is average at 70.1% but social housing plays a slightly higher part, than for West Berkshire as a whole in the housing mix and private rented property plays a slightly lower part; the figures are 15.65% and 11.51% respectively.

As far as the health of the population is concerned there is a slightly greater percentage of people in Stratfield Mortimer reporting themselves to be in very good health, but more people than the West Berkshire average reporting themselves as being in bad or very bad health.

The level of qualifications for those over 16 in the parish is considerably higher than the average for West Berkshire with 38.61% being qualified to level 4 or higher compared to the average of 32.11%

The types of houses in Stratfield Mortimer, compared to West Berkshire, comprise 4% more detached and semi-detached, and consequently fewer terraced houses, and flats. The numbers of houses with particular numbers of bedrooms are remarkably close to the West Berkshire averages.

As may be expected in a rural community there are some differences between the travel-to-work patterns of the residents of Stratfield Mortimer and those of West Berkshire as a whole. More people work from home, travel by train and drive to work. Conversely less people travel by bus, are a car passenger, cycle or walk. It should also be noted that slightly more

people than average are not in employment. None of these facts are surprising bearing in mind the rural nature of the parish, its age make up and the fact it has a train station.

The statistics on which this section is based are from census data and may be found in Appendix B.

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SWOT analysis

The following SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) has been compiled following feedback via the various consultation exercises that have been carried out as part of the formulation of this plan. It indicates that Mortimer is a place which is thriving and a good place to live but that this very desirability may pose a future threat of a loss of its historical identity. It is seen that the NDP can be a catalyst to mitigate some of this threat while positively creating opportunities for benign development which will improve further the standard of life in the parish.

The SWOT is a useful tool to judge the policies of the plan against. As such each policy reflects points contained in the SWOT so as to deliver a better future for the parish. Further explanation of some of the points can be found in Appendix A.

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Vibrant community spirit ◦ Obvious village boundary ◦ Its history gives its distinctive identity • Rural setting & extensive footpath network • Generally thriving village amenities • Desirable state schools • Varied housing stock • Proximity to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ National rail & road network ◦ Heathrow & Gatwick ◦ Employment opportunities ◦ London • Developing an NDP 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village remote from railway station • Limited bus service • Village centre lacks some attractive features • Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Accelerating housing cost ◦ Lack of affordable housing to buy ◦ Lack of affordable housing to rent • Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Schools at capacity ◦ Drainage ◦ Lack of parking - both at the station and in the village ◦ Lack of cycle routes ◦ Restricted sewage capacity • Perceived dangerous walking/cycling route to St Mary's School and station • Shortage of 20-30 year olds living in parish
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The power of an approved, comprehensive NDP to influence and shape: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Future housing numbers ◦ Future development ◦ Housing mix ◦ Parking • Improvements to rail service • Site for new school/surgery • Manage growth to retain viability of services • Enhance village centre • Traffic management 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Proximity to employment, national rail & road networks leading to development pressure and increase in house prices • Over development leads to identity loss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Urbanisation e.g. loss of green space, light pollution ◦ Becomes a Reading suburb • Lack of investment leading to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Possible closure of Post Office ◦ Cuts to bus services ◦ No traffic management ◦ No solution to parking problems • National policy changes re NDPs • National housing shortage leading to imposition of too many new homes by WBC • Speculative planning applications for unallocated sites

Consultation Process

The Plan was prepared by the Steering Group in conjunction with the Parish Council, WBC planning officers and a team of volunteers. A recently retired planning consultant provided advice and guidance.

Key Events

Date	Event
March 2014	Parish council launched the NDP at a public meeting.
July 2014	Exhibition to advise the community on progress and to obtain opinions on a range of ideas structured into 9 themes
September – December 2014	Meetings with interested parties e.g. Mortimer schools, medical surgery, WBC officers (planners, education etc.) and owners of possible development sites or their agents
February/March 2015	Four week exhibition to inform the community on options that had been developed and to seek opinions. Six discussion groups were held. The exhibition was attended by over 280 households (see Where Do You Live Pin Map). 783 feedback cards were returned
24 April - 22 May 2015	A questionnaire was distributed to every household and business in the parish. Anyone 16 years of age and over and who lived in or worked in Mortimer were entitled to complete a questionnaire either on-line or in paper form. 1285 questionnaires were completed, representing approximately 40% of those on the electoral role for Stratfield Mortimer and approximately 36% of the total estimated number of eligible people. 1259 comments/opinions/suggestions were returned. Many of these addressed several different points in a single response.
June 2015	Draft policies were published on the NDP website for comment.
August 2015	First draft of NDP published on the NDP website for comment

A team of volunteers contributed to and scrutinised draft NDP options and policies before these were put before the public.

Communications

The Steering Group meetings, held in the Parish Office, were open to the public and the minutes were published. Throughout the development of the NDP progress was reported to the Parish Council at their regular meetings and, councillors were asked to ratify key proposals as they were developed. Progress reports were published in the quarterly parish council newsletter.


Advertising boards on the parish Fairground and in a local closed shop window, notices on the parish notice boards, the NDP and parish council websites and the NDP and Mortimer Village Partnership Facebook pages were used to keep the Mortimer community informed of progress and up-coming events. The community was able to ask questions or comment via email or in writing throughout the whole process.

The results of the exhibitions and the questionnaire were published on the NDP website and in paper form in the local library.

Vision and Strategy

Introduction

Mortimer has both a distinctive rural character stemming from its long history and its setting within woodland and agricultural land and a strong sense of community with a wide range of services and thriving small business economy. It is this vision of Mortimer, now and in the future, that forms the fundamental and distinctive focus for the Neighbourhood Development Plan. In order to deliver such a vision it is also necessary to have a strategy. After widespread consultation the following strategic statements have been derived which sum up this vision in a practical sense.



Keep it green, keep it a village. Do not join Mortimer up with surrounding villages.

Questionnaire comment

The Vision

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

The rural character and setting of the parish will remain with the minimum of intrusion on the existing surrounding green and agricultural space.

This vision picks up on the themes of:-

- Enhancing the range of housing to allow all types and ages of residents to be catered for
- Retaining the rural approaches to the parish
- Retaining open space between the Mortimer and other parishes
- Retaining the best landscape and architectural features of the parish
- Retaining easy access by non-motorised means within the parish and to the surrounding countryside
- Retaining and enhancing Mortimer's role as a rural service centre so that all the basic needs of the population can be met within the parish

Strategy

To deliver this vision, after widespread consultation, the following strategies have been developed:

- Provide a range of homes matching the needs of people in the various stages of their lives – starter homes, homes for rent, shared equity, family homes and smaller homes/bungalows for older people to downsize
- Provide new developments close to the centre of the village (near St John's church)
- Promote the infrastructure services of a modern and attractive parish – superfast broadband, schools, health and welfare services
- Encourage local employment opportunities and successful businesses
- Promote an attractive village centre to increase footfall to support the success of local shops
- Protect the existing Settlement Policy Boundary and disallow further ribbon-style developments, thereby maintaining a compact village
- Avoid creeping urbanisation

- Encourage/enable walking and cycling to the village and reduce the need for car usage
- Enable new school and surgery provision, as required, at the heart of the village
- Maintain the rural approaches to the parish
- Retain the gaps between Mortimer and adjacent settlements

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Delivery and Monitoring of the Neighbourhood Development Plan

The next pages of this document comprise the policies which have been developed to bring forth the Vision described in the previous section. Details of the design for the site allocated for development are given in Site Design Brief – Appendix C.

It is envisaged that the monitoring of the delivery of all policies and the Site Design Brief will be via an annual report to the Parish Council detailing progress on all aspects of this NDP. In addition WBC will be using their monitoring systems to check on the delivery of planning policies of which the NDP is a part.

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Residential Site Allocation

Objective

New residential developments will retain the existing compact nature of the village and minimise the expansion of the existing Settlement Boundary commensurate with providing up to 110 new homes and will, ideally, be close to the centre of the village (the centre of the village being taken as St. John' Church)

To do this Mortimer will accommodate its appropriate share of housing development but needs to maintain its distinctive rural character. Housing developments in Mortimer will also make efficient use of land while respecting the overall character and housing density of the area.

Policies

The policies to meet these objectives are:-

RS1 The Plan proposes a new Mortimer Settlement Boundary (MSB) to replace the existing Settlement Boundary for the period to 2026, as shown on maps 1, 2 and 3 below, for the purpose of:

- a) Providing housing, economic and community related development in the Parish to enhance its role as a resilient and sustainable community
- b) containing the spread of the village
- c) encouraging the re-use of brownfield sites

Note that only WBC has the power to designate a new Settlement Boundary

Proposals for housing development outside the MSB will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Any new dwelling required to serve the essential uses of agriculture, forestry of some other special need shall be sited within or immediately adjacent to an existing group of dwellings suitably located to serve the purpose, unless it can be shown that there are overriding reasons why it must be built elsewhere.

RS2 New residential developments will be allowed within the new MSB on sites that meet the policies of this Plan

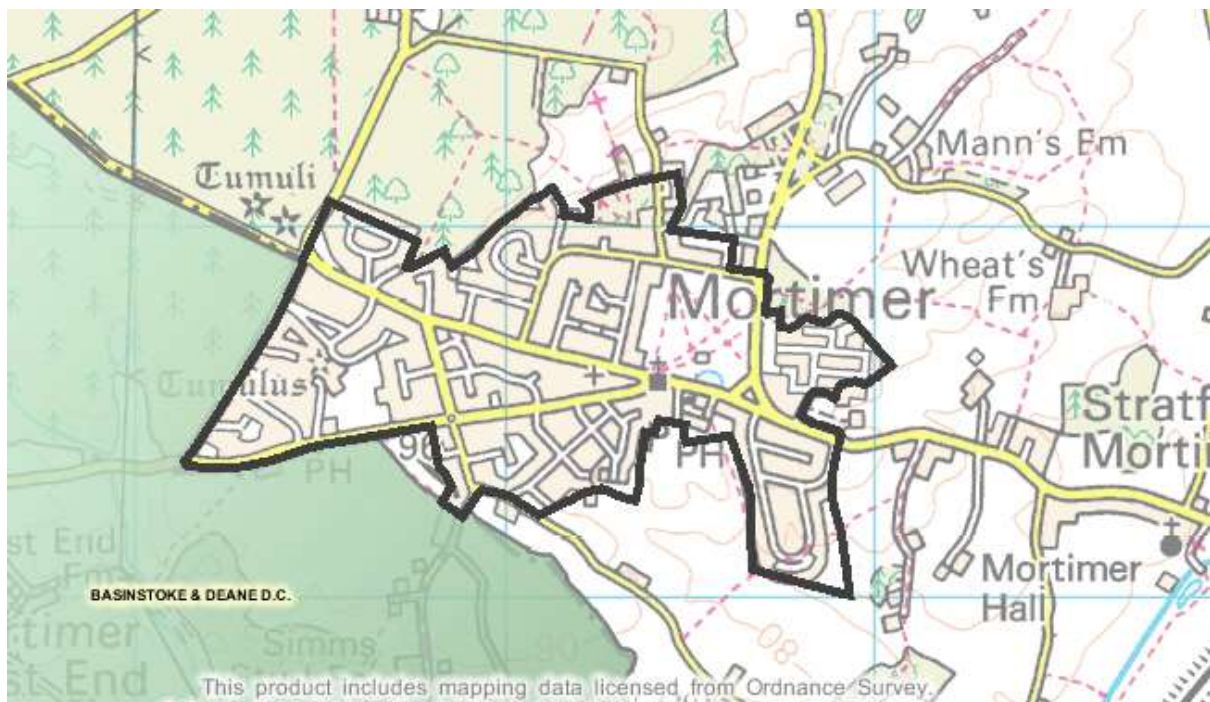
RS3 The rural edge of any such development will be carefully designed and landscaped to blend into the surrounding rural landscape rather than creating the effect of a hard edge

RS4 Housing development in the plan period will be enabled by utilising the Land to the South of St John's Church of England Infant School (shown on Map 3 below), WBC SHLAA site reference MOR006, henceforth in this Plan referred to as The Site for the provision of up to 110 homes.

RS5 Small residential developments on windfall sites within the MSB will be considered as long as they are well designed and meet all the relevant requirements set out in the totality of this Plan.

Context and Justification

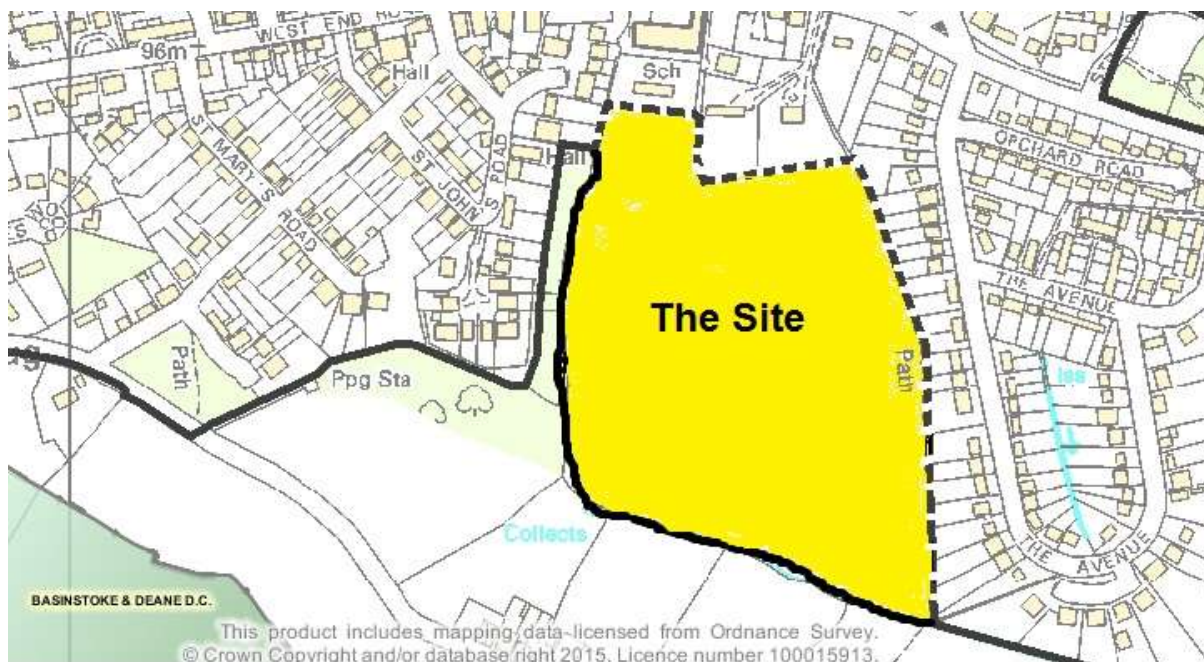
Policy RS1 establishes the key spatial priority for Mortimer, within which context all its other policies are based and defines a Mortimer Settlement Boundary (MSB). Essentially it directs all development in the plan period to minimise the extension of the existing Settlement Boundary of the village of Mortimer that lies at the heart of the Parish and serves the wider rural area which should remain open countryside. It defines the MSB as the furthest extent of development planned for the period to 2026. The extension of the present (2015) Settlement Policy Boundary to form the MSB has been drawn tightly into the allocated development for the provision of up to 110 new homes.



Map 1: The current Settlement Boundary for the village



Map 2: The current Settlement Boundary near the allocated site



Map 3: Showing The Site and the only new section of MSB (dotted line shows section of previous Settlement Boundary being replaced)

These policies have been derived to meet the expressed desire of the community that Mortimer should retain its village identity.

To retain the village feel it is felt that any extension of the Settlement Boundary should be restricted so as to retain, as far as possible, the existing size of the village. Any development should also be as close to the village centre as possible so as to aid sustainability and to promote/retain the village lifestyle of being able to easily walk to essential services such as Doctors, shops and Post Office. These concepts were supported by 879 or 73% of respondents.

A village identity is also formed, in part, by the approaches to the village. Not simply access by road but views of the village from adjoining land. It is therefore important to retain those views which help form this identity. This approach was supported by 1167 people or 94% of respondents. Where those views must change because of new development the edge of the development must be designed sympathetically so as to ameliorate any loss of view and where possible improve the aspect of the village.

The same argument applies with views from the village out into the wider rural landscape and hence the edge treatment of new development must take both aspects into consideration in equal measure.

It is therefore important that the edge of the MSB is drawn tightly to any agreed extension so that the edge can be specifically designed as part of that development and not left vulnerable to other unrelated development pressures.

Taking all the above criteria into account the preferred site allocation for new residential development is the Land to the South of St John's Church of England Infant School (WBC SHLAA site reference MOR006) ,henceforth in this Plan referred to as The Site. 670 people (or 55% of respondents) supported this site as the sole new

residential site while another 371 people (or 30% of respondents) supported this site together with infill sites within the village.

It is emphasised that the above policies are in general conformity with national planning policies, the West Berkshire Local Plan and with WBC's stated intent in their Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Preferred Options Consultation document that site(s) should be allocated for up to 110 homes.

Projects

None

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Services Site Allocation

Objective

To make provision for the future needs of the parish with respect to schools and health/welfare infrastructure.

To achieve this:

- Parish services will be concentrated as near as possible to the village centre.
- Space for a new infant school and doctor's surgery will be allocated and reserved in The Site to enable the provision of them (when approved and funded)

Policies

The policies to meet this objective are:-

SS1 Part of The Site will be allocated for a new larger St John's Infant School

SS2 Part of The Site will be allocated for a new Doctors' Surgery

SS3 Part of The Site will be allocated for shared parking for the new school and the Doctors' Surgery

SS4 Such land shall be allocated for a period of 5 years from the formal adoption date of this NDP. If no progress has been made at the end of that period in providing the facilities, a review of the allocation shall be carried out.

Context and Justification

St John's Infant School is under pressure as it does not have the required area for outside activities and has had to restrict its intake of pupils because of capacity restrictions. Because of the constrained site there is minimal scope to enlarge the school. At the same time an extra 110 homes will add to the pressure on the school. The logical way forward is to build a new school on the land behind the existing school.

Such an approach has the advantages that:-

- The infant school will remain close to the village centre
- It can be designed to meet the needs of the increased population
- It can be designed to meet the requirements for outdoor activities
- Parking can be taken away from the main road of the village

The same logic applies to the Doctors' surgery which is also on a very cramped site with insufficient off-street parking. In addition the existing surgery is not as close to the centre of the village as the proposed site. It is considered that dual-use parking would be beneficial to all and the co-location of the surgery and the new school would act as a beneficial focus for the village close to the existing centre.

Naturally the same arguments apply to St Mary's Junior School. However it is recognised that St Mary's can expand on its existing site and hence it is unlikely to be a priority, in funding terms, to move the school towards the centre of the village. For these reasons a policy for the move is not included in this plan but it remains a longer term aim and the examination of the option has been included as a specific project

When these proposals were put to the community as part of the questionnaire they were endorsed by a large majority. In particular 994 people (or 80% of respondents) wanted space reserved for a new St John's Infant School while 978 people (or 78% of respondents) wanted space reserved for a new Doctors' surgery. The further question about moving St Mary's Junior School closer to the village centre in the fullness of time was not so well supported with just 628 people (or 50% of respondents) agreeing or strongly agreeing while 288 people (or 23% of respondents) were against the idea.

These policies reserve the land for a new St. John's Infant School and for a possible new medical services facility. In doing so the Plan seeks to send a clear signal to education authorities and healthcare service providers and investors of the need and opportunity for the proposal and lowers planning risk by allocating suitable land for this purpose.

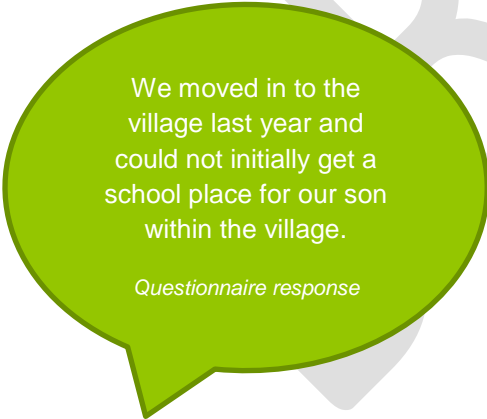
Specific Projects

To try and develop a plan to move St Mary's Junior School nearer to the centre of the village.

Delivery and Monitoring

The approximate size and location of the sites for the school and surgery are shown as part of the Site Design Brief for The Site in Appendix C.

However, it must be emphasised that all the plan and the Site Design Brief can do is to allocate land for such facilities, it cannot make them happen. The actual implementation is in the hand of others and is crucially dependent on sufficient funds, from whatever sources, being made available. In particular the Doctors' surgery has recently slightly extended the existing building. As such it may well be that there is no incentive to make the move, and to find the funds for it, in the short to medium term.



We moved in to the village last year and could not initially get a school place for our son within the village.

Questionnaire response

It is because of this uncertainty of delivery that policy SS4 has been included so that a reasoned judgement can be taken as to the appropriate way forward after a reasonable time has elapsed since the inception of this plan.

The above caveat it not seen as a back-tracking on the intent to provide these facilities as the Parish Council will be doing all in its power to deliver on these proposals.

Housing Mix and Density

Objectives

To provide the mix of types of homes and tenure that make it possible for people to live the whole of their lives in the parish if they so wish with a focus on the provision both starter homes and down-sizing homes as indicated in the consultation responses.

To have a pattern of housing on new residential sites that maintains the essential nature of the village and the immediate surrounding area.

To do this Mortimer will accommodate its appropriate share of housing development which must provide a mix of dwelling types suitable for residents at all stages in their life. In particular a range of housing types and tenures must be provided. The housing should include small and large homes and both open-market and all types of affordable housing.

New housing development will have a flexible approach to densities, using those which are appropriate for a rural village and are directed by the Vision statement, the current adjoining densities where they abut existing properties and avoiding a harsh transition between agricultural land and the outer edge of a new development

Policies

The policies to meet this objective are:-

HD1 Affordable housing will be provided on new residential developments in accordance with the policy requirements set out in West Berkshire's District Local Plan. Affordable homes will be integrated into developments in design, layout and location so as not to be distinguishable from other homes on the development

HD2 70% of affordable homes will be either on a shared equity basis or under the Starter Homes Scheme.

HD3 The density of homes on new developments abutting existing residential areas (2014) will be in keeping with the character, scale and grain of that existing development

HD4 The density will respect the semi-rural nature of the parish and will be designed to give an impression of spaciousness with uniform houses and plots being avoided.

HD5 The density of buildings will diminish as the development approaches the open countryside, blending in seamlessly.

Context and Justification

As part of fulfilling the objective to make it possible to live in the parish for the whole of one's life it is necessary to provide a range of housing to suit all types of people at all stages of their life cycle. In particular it is noticeable that the parish has a lower representation of people in the 20 to 30 age bracket and a higher representation in the over 65s, compared to the rest of West Berkshire or indeed the whole of South East England.

<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=6504207&c=mortimer&d=14&e=13&g=6397204&i=1001x1003x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1434365756752&enc=1&dsFamilyId=2474>

It is clear that there is a shortage of certain types of housing in the parish and that this shortage not only drives up prices but prevents people who would like to remain in the parish from staying. This price differential has been shown by the work undertaken by WBC to determine the correct level of CIL across the district. (The West Berkshire CIL Viability Study (January 2013).

In this regard the two types of housing which are most frequently mentioned are 'starter homes' and 'downsizing' homes. In this context the downsizing includes moving from relatively large houses to smaller, but not very small homes.

The role of the NDP, in this regard, is to start to redress the balance of the mix of properties available to purchase on the open market, and that are available as part of the wider definition of affordable homes.


The community also believes that social housing should be primarily for 'Mortimer people'. When asked to rank the allocation priority for affordable homes the results were as shown below with the percentage figures being those that were awarded the top three priorities.

- Living in the parish (1002 people or 89% of respondents)
- A member of a family living in the parish (770 people or 68% of respondents)
- Currently employed in the parish (522 people or 46% of respondents)
- Previously lived or worked in the parish but moved away because of lack of suitable housing (510 people or 45% of respondents)
- Working or wishing to work in the parish on a priority task such as teaching or firefighting (510 people or 45% of respondents)
- Resident of adjacent parish (57 people or 5% of respondents)
- Resident of West Berkshire
- Resident outside West Berkshire (22 people or 2% of respondents)

It is requested that WBC take into the account the wishes of the community in allocating affordable housing by using the following priority order:-

1. Living in the parish
2. A member of a family living in the parish
3. Currently employed in the parish
4. Previously lived or worked in the parish but moved away because of lack of suitable housing
5. Working or wishing to work in the parish on a priority task such as teaching or fire-fighting
6. Resident of adjacent parish
7. Resident of West Berkshire
8. Resident outside West Berkshire

The density of homes on new residential developments is a sensitive issue. The density of houses is an important feature that influences the nature of the parish and whether the evolution of the parish delivers Mortimer's Vision of retaining its distinctive rural character. The wholesale introduction of



"... importantly a non urbanised feel. Sadly many of the newer developments in the village have introduced some of the very things we don't want such as street lighting and dense housing"

Comment from Questionnaire

higher densities more appropriate to urban and semi-urban environments is to be avoided.

WBC's policy for density is

“Lower density developments below 30 dwellings per hectare will be appropriate in certain areas of the District. Some parts of the urban areas and some villages are particularly sensitive to the impact of intensification and redevelopment because of the prevailing character of the area, the sensitive nature of the surrounding countryside or built form, and/or the relative remoteness from public transport” (Policy CS4. Page 44 West Berkshire Local Plan, West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026)

The pattern of density in Mortimer is much lower density as the outer edges of the Settlement Boundary are approached and notably more so where it abuts farmland than in the heart of the village. All the potential sites identified in the West Berkshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in Mortimer and as part of the formulation of this NDP abut existing residential properties with low densities per hectare or back on to open agricultural land. To maintain the rural character of Mortimer and to achieve the vision of itself it is important to reflect the current pattern of housing density and specifically that of existing properties local to the proposed new development. It is also important that there is a gradual transition from a development to the adjoining agricultural land with lower density housing and larger gardens echoing the open spaces of farmland or nature of the adjacent woodland.

Projects

The Site Design Brief for each site will include:

- the mix of housing types and tenures which will be determined in accordance with these general policies.
- the housing density pattern.

Delivery and Monitoring

The delivery of these policies for The Site will be in part via the Site Design Brief in Appendix C and in part in consultation with WBC and housing associations. It should be emphasised that while this plan can state a preference for housing allocation it will, in reality, be in the hands of WBC whose overriding priority will be fulfilling housing need.

In addition to usual monitoring WBC will also report on the delivery of affordable housing.

Design

Objective

All new developments will have design solutions that reflect and enhance the rural character of Mortimer in their scale, siting, features, layout, materials, landscaping and design details as expressed by the community in this plan.

To have a set of policies that governs the design and delivery of new developments. These policies together will maintain and enhance the rural character set out in [The Vision](#) of Mortimer.

Policies


D1 All developments on allocated and windfall sites will conform to the following policies:

- **DS1, DS2, DS3, DS4 and DS5**- Site Design
- **DB1, DB2 and DB3** - Building Design
- **DL1 and DL2** - Street Lighting
- **DP1, DP2 and DP3**- Parking
- **DF1** - Flood Management

D2 New developments on allocated and windfall sites will be designed to deliver the Building for Life 12 principles

Context and Justification

Despite residential expansion and urban influences which have continued since Victorian times, the village retains a distinctive rural identity. It is recognised that though development in the parish is inevitable, the people of Mortimer value their environment and landscape, and wish to ensure that its rural character will be retained. There is a significant, general and widely held unease that new developments have been and will be detrimental and that without care will lead to further urbanisation of the parish. These concerns find their expression in how new developments will sit in the broader rural landscape, how they will relate to the rest of the parish, the loss of green spaces, the design of the site, whether and how it is lit.



People *need* places to live in and also have aspirations about the kind of place in which they would *like* to live. Village Development is a ratchet which inexorably satisfies the former at the expense of the latter. So when development is essential we should absolutely prioritise features which support and grow the existing sense of community and the value of living in this place rather than another

NDP Questionnaire respondent

For Mortimer to continue to be a successful parish and village a mix of home types must be provided - starter homes, family homes, homes suitable for 'downsizers'. The mix of home types included in the Site Design Brief is based on housing needs analysis and in accordance with the Housing Mix and Density policies.

The policy regarding the preparation of Site Design Briefs (see [Site Design policy DS1](#)) will be the process for bringing together these separate policies into a coherent whole for each new development site. This NDP sets out robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for new developments in Mortimer. These policies are based on stated objectives for the future of the area (Vision Statement and the three Principles approved in the questionnaire) and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. The community also identified a number of significant design features as important to them. These are addressed in specific policy statements on street lighting, flooding prevention measures, off-road parking and telecommunications.

Design policies D1 and D2 together with the specific policies regarding Site Design, Building Design, Street Lighting, Flood Management, and Parking are intended to ensure that new developments:

- Function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development
- Create a strong sense of place by using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, creating and sustaining an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space)
- Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation
- Are safe and accessible environments so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion
- Are visually attractive through good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

To ensure the NDP policies will be observed and quality site designs are delivered, the Building for Life 12 (3rd Edition) industry standard for the design of new housing developments published by the Design Council will be implemented; it was supported by 903 people or 80% of respondents to the questionnaire. A summary of Building for Life 12 is given in Appendix D and the full guide [on http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/knowledge-resources/guide/building-life-12-third-edition](http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/knowledge-resources/guide/building-life-12-third-edition).

Projects

None

Delivery and Monitoring

All new development planning applications, designs and delivery will be assessed for adherence to the design policies, including the production of Site Design Briefs and adoption of the '*Building for Life 12 principles*'.

Site Design

Objectives

While achieving the overall design policy objective, new sites will incorporate the essential features that in the expressed view of the community will maintain and enhance the rural character set out in the vision of Mortimer.

Innovative designs that enhance the distinctive identity of Mortimer and avoid urban or semi-urban characteristics will be encouraged.

Policies

The policies to meet this objective are:-

DS1 The design of The Site will be of a high standard, adhere to the Site Design Brief in Appendix C, abides by the policies in totality in this NDP and adopts the principles set out in Appendix D

DS2 Any windfall site or brownfield developments will prepare a Site Design Brief that adheres to the policies set out in the Plan in totality.

DS3 New development will not be permitted unless every reasonable effort is made to safeguard the amenity of existing residents adjacent to the new development

DS4 An integrated strategy for water and wastewater will be prepared to support a planning application for any new development (including windfall and brownfield sites) and this will cover flood risk, water quality and conservation. These strategies will adhere to WBC policy CS16 Flooding.

DS5 Any new connection of new developments to the Mortimer primary sewer network will be rejected unless it can be shown by rigorous analysis that there is sufficient capacity in the local sewerage system and that the new connection will not increase the risk of system back up/flooding.

Context and Justification

The design of new developments' site layout and the design of the buildings, street furniture, lighting, footpaths, roads etc. fundamentally influence how the community perceive the quality and appropriateness of each new development.

The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 69) emphasises the importance of

- creating healthy, inclusive communities
- promoting opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, including through mixed-use developments ... and active street frontages which bring together those who ... live and play in the vicinity;
- safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and
- safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes and high quality public space that encourage the active and continual use of public areas.

Throughout the consultation a consistent concern has been expressed that creeping urbanisation could lead to the loss of the character that makes Mortimer what it is, a rural village. The responses to the consultation identified key features that people consider should be included in any new substantial (larger) developments to mitigate that possibility.

The provision of rural footpaths and cycle ways which link to the centre of the village is supported by 1081 people (or 91% of respondents) and 941 people (or 80% of respondents) respectively, encouraging healthy lifestyles and to reduce car usage.

Green spaces within a development are seen as a very important element with 1002 people (90% of respondents) supporting the provision of open green space and 974 people (83% of respondents) supporting the provision of wildlife habitat e.g. ponds, wetlands, bird and bat boxes. The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems is an essential part of flood risk policies; 1012 people (87% of respondents) supported the use of these systems to provide ponds and wetland amenities.


The transition from the boundary of a development and the adjoining countryside should be natural and seamless to maintain the rural feel of the village and residential developments.

Concern was expressed that the design of a site would be 'formulaic', based on developers standard models more suited to urban or semi-urban situations.

The responses to the questionnaire regarding the detailing of new buildings gave strong support for features that echo the Victorian/Edwardian character of the buildings central to Mortimer (see the Stratfield Mortimer Evidence Base - Appendix B). Though these design characteristics are well-supported this is not considered a prohibition on innovative designs which sit well with those characteristics and that of the surrounding properties.

New developments can be perceived to have detrimental impact on existing residential properties abutting the new development and without care this impact can be genuine and significant. The negative impact may be economic but may also affect the quality of life of existing residents. If a new development is to be supported, it is vital that all reasonable effort is taken in the site design to reduce such negative impact. Provision of natural screening such as tree belts and hedging using native species, avoidance of light, noise or dirt pollution and the design of attractive views and landmarks can all play their part in making new developments less of a threat.

The National Planning Policy Framework recognises the importance of involving all sections of the community in the development of Local Plans. The majority of the people of Mortimer (973 people or 88% of respondents) support the use of a Site Design Brief to achieve their aspirations of the new development site. Developing this as part of the NDP is seen as the way that all interested parties can achieve a common vision of how new sites will integrate with the surrounding landscape and existing properties, how these sites will be laid out and the features they will incorporate. The Site Design Brief will be undertaken by the NDP



“With regard to the design of any homes built I would like to see some elegant, new design solutions ...”

NDP Questionnaire Respondent

Steering Group with input from residents and supported by independent professional planners. 'Planning and Development Briefs: A Guide to Better Practice' published by Department for Communities and Local Government and summarised in Appendix C provides a useful basis for the development of these Briefs. These guidelines will be supplemented by latest best practice advice provided by independent professional planners. The guidelines are made available on the government website:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7774/156363.pdf

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis identified several weaknesses of the present parish including restricted sewage capacity.

Both sewage and rain water drainage networks are at capacity and in some places and in heavy rainfall are unable to pass the volume of water safely with consequent flooding at the east end of the parish by the station. Any new developments should not place additional load on the system until capacity problems have been addressed.

The delivery of the analysis as part of policy DS5 must make it clearly how a solution would be delivered to any concerns identified as the development came forward in time. This shall apply to all sites, regardless of whether concerns have been raised by Thames Water.

Projects

None.

Building Design

Objective

To develop homes which meet the requirements of 21st century lifestyles and improve the overall quality of the housing stock in the parish while remaining sympathetic to the Victorian and Edwardian styles at the heart of the village.

Policies

DB1 The design principles listed in Appendix C will be adopted unless it is proven there are overriding reasons to disregard one or more of the principles.

DB2 Innovative designs which respect and are in sympathy with the rural vision of Mortimer and the vernacular style of the surrounding homes will be encouraged

DB3 The adoption of energy management technology will be encouraged in all new home developments

Context and Justification

A significant amount of local work has taken place to identify the features that make Mortimer unique. In 2007 the parish council published the Village Design Statement, founded on a detailed understanding of the village's landscape setting, its shape and grain and the style and nature of its buildings. The Village Design Statement describes the distinctive surroundings and character of the District, with clear guidance that all new developments must follow to be successfully accommodated into the Parish. Though 8 years old, much of the statement continues to be supported.

Designs with Victorian and Edwardian-style decorative features and red/orange bricks, red tiles or grey slates are thought to compliment the original architecture better than the designs from the 1950s; this is supported by the responses in the parish-wide survey (May 2015)

Building Design Feature	People agreeing or strongly agreeing	
	%	Number
Have no buildings higher than 2 principal storeys (or 3 if using roof space)	81	1085
If bricks are used these will be red/orange in colour, similar to those of the Victorian buildings in the village	82	969
Have roofs of red tile or grey slate	78	925
Have gabled or hipped roofs rather than flat roofs	87	1035
Use details such as coloured brick inserts, mouldings or patterns of raised brick around windows or between levels, similar to those on existing buildings in the village.	77	894

Mortimer, like most villages has developed over time with different designs reflecting the period in which they were built. Some of the more modern ones are thought to sit somewhat uncomfortably with the predominant core village style. Though there is strong support for the propositions put forward in the questionnaire, concern was expressed that slavish adherence to those guidelines could inhibit the evolution of the nature and character of the parish. It is thought appropriate that proposals for innovative design that are aesthetically a natural evolution of Mortimer should be encouraged and certainly not prohibited.

The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 95) emphasises the importance of energy efficient designs to support government's zero carbon buildings policy. The people of Mortimer support the proposition to '*Encourage energy management technology*' in the design of new homes (903 people or 77% of respondents).

Projects

None

DRAFT

With regard to the design of any homes built I would like to see some elegant, new design solutions

Comments from Questionnaire

Street Lighting

Objective

To avoid light pollution and intrusion

The presumption is in favour of no lighting on new developments.

Policies

DL1 New roads will not have street lighting unless exceptional circumstances dictate that lighting should be provided.

DL2 Low level lighting for pedestrians may be used if it avoids light pollution and intrusion, and the design retains the rural feel of the site.

Context and Justification

Mortimer is a rural parish and is largely unlit. Except for key warning signs and at the four mini-roundabouts, the old roads of Mortimer are unlit. In the older residential parts of the village there is no street lighting. The more recent residential developments are lit and have introduced light pollution in this rural settlement. It is the stated preference of parishioners, according to the Parish Plan, to minimise detrimental environmental and economic factors, to preserve an unspoilt and dark night sky, and to ensure that electrical energy is not wasted. A majority of those parishioners who expressed a preference for street lighting said they would prefer lighting standards which were in keeping with the Victorian nature of the core village (Village Design Statement, 2007).

The more recently developed residential sites and new road junctions have had lighting provided as standard. The sodium street lamps used tend to create light pollution both of individual homes and in general cast a yellow glow in the night sky.

The street lighting in the parish was provided when no thought was given to light pollution and energy efficiency. The NPPF paragraphs 95 and 97 support a drive to a low carbon future by reducing unnecessary energy. West Berkshire Council is addressing this weakness but the extent to which this will be applied throughout the parish is uncertain.

However, there is no consistent policy about street lighting as to whether, where and what form of street lighting should be provided.

The NDP questionnaire conducted in April/May 2015 asked the parish for its opinion on street lighting. 1177 responses were received and were as follows:

"I believe the issue of street lighting should be re-addressed. There must surely be a compromise in the current age of technology with the consideration of led/ low emission lighting that can be switched off in the late evening to conserve costs. To be in keeping with the village 'dark' feel, to provide strategically placed low level lighting ... "

NDP Questionnaire Respondent

Choices	No of Responses	% of respondents
---------	-----------------	------------------

No public lighting	405	34%
Ground level lighting on pavements and paths	331	28%
Lamp post lighting at junctions only	287	24%
Lamp post streetlights throughout	154	13%


As can be seen there is a strong preference for ‘no public lighting’ or ‘ground level lighting on pavements and paths only’. A minority want street lighting throughout

Accordingly, this Neighbourhood Plan requires that all new developments within the parish shall feature either no lighting or only low-level lighting for pedestrians. (Low-level lighting refers to the height of the lighting source, not the strength of the light, and is less than approximately 1 metre) The presumption will be in favour of no lighting. This decision will pay particular attention to the impact on light pollution and intrusion, wildlife, safety of pedestrians, power consumption in the context of a rural village with a tradition of no street lighting

Where lighting is provided it shall be in accord with the most up to date lighting standards to minimise light pollution and power consumption.

Projects

The design and the need for existing lighting will be reviewed to determine the benefit of bringing that lighting into line with the lighting policies in this plan.



“Care should be taken to avoid light pollution and intrusion, particularly in rural areas. In some cases it may not be appropriate to provide lighting, for example in a new development in an unlit village.

Manual for Street, Communities and Local Government

Flood Management

Objective

To ensure that flooding risk is not increased, and ideally is reduced, taking into account climate change.

To take the opportunity provided by new developments to include adequate anti-flooding measures as an integral part of each site's design.

Policies

DF1 All developments will be designed and constructed so as to reduce the overall level of flood risk (surface water run-off and water course flooding) both on the site itself and elsewhere downstream.

Context and Justification

Mortimer suffers from flooding. This occurs when the drains are unable to cope with heavy rainfall. In particular, the eastern end of The Street close to the station is flooded after exceptionally heavy rainfall.

The Flood Report following the 2007 storm (ref) identifies the nature and distribution of flooded properties and damage. (Note This report was incomplete and in parts incorrect, the Parish Council and WBC were advised)

The Environmental Agency maps of surface water and river flooding identify several areas at high risk and water courses that flood on The Site. A small part of The Site is at present at risk of surface water flooding. The run off from the site enters the water courses which are also identified as at significant risk from surface water flooding.

The DFM1 flooding policy was supported by 1105 people (or 95% of respondents). This policy must be considered alongside and at the same time as DS5.

Projects

None

Delivery and Monitoring

Assess planning applications flood management strategies and designs to confirm these will meet the objectives of the flooding policy

Parking

Objective

To provide private parking space that matches the needs of a community that has most of its employment outside the parish, the great majority of which cannot reasonably be reached using public transport.

To have parking space policies which reflect the specific needs of Mortimer residents.

Policies

DP1 The Mortimer standard will be the same **overall** as the WBC standards but that homes which are primarily for economically active persons will have a minimum of 2 spaces per dwelling while dwellings primarily intended for occupation by non-economically active residents may have a minimum of one space per dwelling.

DP2 All developments will have a further one visitor parking space per 5 dwellings

DP3 Garages must be large enough to be useable - internal dimensions of 6m x 3m with adequate sized doors (2.0m high x 2.3m wide) to enable modern cars and 4 x 4s to enter and set back from the street frontage.

Context and Justification

Though Mortimer is a semi-rural parish, the majority of residents commute to their place of work outside of the parish. The latest official data (Census 2011) showed that 76% of the working population travelled to work by private transport. This travel is often to locations that are not easily reached by public transport. Only a minority of residents work in rural and local businesses

While accepting the overall parking policy proposed by WBC, it is felt it does not adequately reflect the difference in dwelling types that are to be found and that are proposed in Mortimer. Specifically it does not recognise the difference between one-bedroomed properties that are suitable for starter homes where it is likely that two persons may require separate cars to go to work and retirement properties where one car is often adequate. It also seems strange that flats should have one extra space for visitors per five flats while smaller houses do not.

Because of the rural and commuter characteristics of Mortimer, the standard should be the same **overall** as the Zone 3 WBC standards but that homes which are primarily for economically active persons should have a minimum of 2 spaces per dwelling while dwellings primarily intended for occupation by non-economically active residents may have a minimum of one space per dwelling. In addition all dwellings should have a further one visitor space per 5 dwellings, which may be provided communally or as an addition to the normal parking standard for individual dwellings.

In reality this means that some one-bedroomed dwellings will now have a minimum of 2 spaces as opposed to one space in the WBC standards. This will be offset by some dwellings for non-economically active persons will only have a minimum of one space as opposed to the WBC standard of two spaces.

On the most recent residential developments though garage dimensions have been adequate, the garage door size has severely limited the ability to get a car into the garage.

Garages must be designed to accommodate modern cars (4 x4) with the required door size (suggested to be 2.0 m high and 2.3 m wide).

Projects

Establish the specific residential off-road parking space standards that shall be applied on new developments and incorporate them in Site Design Briefs.

Delivery and Monitoring

Planning applications will be scrutinised to ensure the off-road space standards and the minimum garage and door sizes have been provided; applications that do not meet the standards will be rejected

DRAFT

Commercial

Objective

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

Progressively enhancing the village centre encouraging greater use of the local shops and services with an increased range of shops, clear and attractive signage, clear safe pedestrian and cycle routes, appropriate traffic management and a welcoming green spaces away from traffic is seen as an attractive means of achieving the objective.

Policies

General

C1 Development of the centre of the village as an increasingly attractive place for residents and businesses will be sought and encouraged.

C2 Local economic innovation that creates a range of job types and create higher added value employment will be encouraged.

C3 Applications for the conversion of existing buildings to use for retail, services or business will be approved)

C4 All developments will adhere to all policies in the Plan and will not add to the urbanisations of Mortimer – perceived or real.

Retail Development

C5 Applications by and for new independent local retail outlets and expansion of existing outlets will be supported

C6 Applications/proposals from national high street retail businesses will not be supported

Local Businesses and Office Space

C7 The creation of additional business accommodation through small scale expansion of existing employment premises and the conversion of existing buildings will be supported if they

- are within the Settlement Policy Boundary or are the reuse of farm or rural buildings (see policy C8 below);
- adhere to the design policies set out in this plan

Use of Farm Buildings

C8 Conversion of redundant farm and rural buildings to commercial use generally will be supported.

- Proposals will
 - respect the surrounding rural landscape and be sensitive to the amenities of neighbouring residents and other users and its setting in regard to size, light pollution, noise, dirt, loss of wildlife habitat.
 - not have any unacceptable impact on the local road network.
 - work in harmony with agriculture and other land-based activities and maintain habitats and rural recreational activity.
- The buildings will not be normally extended by more than approximately 30% of the net floor area

Other

C9 Proposals for change of use of existing local shopping facilities or business premises reducing employment opportunity will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer economically viable

C10 Applications/proposals for larger commercial/industrial activity/warehousing development, light industrial units, solar farms or businesses requiring large purpose built buildings will not be supported.

C11 Proposals to extend public WiFi services will be supported.

C12 Local businesses will be encouraged to contribute to the setting up of a Mortimer specific business directory and website.

Context and Justification

Historically farming has been the key driver behind the prosperity of the parish. But in line with experiences across the British countryside employment opportunities in the agricultural

If I wanted to live in a town, I would move to a town nearby.

NDP Questionnaire respondent

sector have reduced. Mortimer parish has seen a steady growth in population with a substantial number of working outside the parish commuting to the local towns of Reading, Basingstoke, Newbury and to London. Despite the rise of the commuting population Mortimer village has retained a successful retail and service centre including a bank, post office, two general purpose grocery shops, hardware store, chemist, travel agent, dentist, doctors surgery and services of a pub and cafe. The parish has over 100 small businesses and many farm buildings now converted and used for a range of business enterprises.

There is a strong desire among the local community to retain a vibrant and prosperous retail, service and business activity for the convenience they represent to local residents and the economic and social benefits they bring. The principle of maintaining local employment and encouraging successful business is supported by 953 people (75 % of respondents). 1121 people (88% of respondents) supported the principle of making the village centre increasingly attractive encouraging more people into the local shops and services, and attracting small/micro businesses (employment up to 10 is appropriate).

Before we moved here we lived in Bracknell ... which was once a village!! The facilities being suggested are the type available in towns,

NDP Questionnaire respondent

However when asked for their opinion on specific proposals for the development of office and retail space, the community was more hesitant. Just 502 people or 43% of respondents supported the conversion of existing buildings in the village to office space with 291 people or 25% of respondents disagreeing with the proposition. Similarly only 568 people (48% of

respondents) supported and 271 people (23% of respondents) were against the conversion of existing buildings in the village to retail. Applications for new retail outlets by independent and local businesses would be supported by 548 people (46% of respondents) and 324 people (29% of respondents) disagreed. This hesitation appears to be due to an underlying concern that over development and influx of more retail outlets and business would bring about urbanisation that the community is strongly against.

Widely supported is the approval for the conversion of redundant farm buildings to office space (823 people or 72% of respondents).

The people of Mortimer are much clearer what they do not want:

- Large commercial or industrial activity, or warehousing (1024 people or 88% of respondents against)
- Applications for retail space by high street chain businesses (914 people or 78% of respondents against)
- A small number of small light-industry units (524 people or 45% of respondents against)

The community does not support either:

- The allocation of land for new retail units (671 people 57% of respondents against), or
- The allocation of land for a small number of small office units (500 people or 43% of respondents against and 329 people or 28% of respondents for)

Therefore this Plan has not allocated land for either new retail or office space.

Projects

Develop an overarching vision for the progressive development of the village centre.

Infrastructure Development

Objective

To provide the infrastructure services and amenities required in a modern rural parish.

The opportunity provided by the new development, the Community Infrastructure Levy and other financial sources, will be exploited to extend and improve the infrastructure services of the parish.

Policies

IS1 Telecommunications

- A superfast broadband strategy statement will be expected with all planning applications. The statement shall outline how the developer will provide a development which provides the maximum broadband speed currently feasible in Mortimer, show how predicted future speeds will be obtained and explains what discussion have taken place with the operators in advance of submitting a formal planning application
- Enhanced WiFi services that service the parish will be encouraged

IS2 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Projects

- The potential infrastructural enhancements, listed under projects, will be pursued within the limits of budget and resources available with the priorities determined by Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council.
- Infrastructure as identified within this Plan Programme and within the Parish Boundary and associated with the development of new sites should be provided onsite directly by developers

IS3 Station Car Parking

Extension to the station car parking will be promoted and encouraged

IS4 Day Nursery


The NDP will support proposal for a day nursery to open a facility during the plan period, reusing an existing property. The amenities of adjoining residential properties must not be harmed by the proposed location, design, and car-parking/drop-off arrangements.

IS5 Proposals for new developments that accord with the policies in the Plan and result in improvements in the management of traffic, in particular contributing to appropriate traffic calming measures in the village, will be encouraged and supported.

Background and Justification

For a rural parish to continue to be an attractive location requires the infrastructure to continuously to evolve and the introduction of new modern services and amenities. This principle is supported by 1191 people or 94% of questionnaire respondents.

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis identified several



This is the opportunity to modernise and future proof the village; aside from simply expanding it. Things like superfast broadband should be a given.

Questionnaire comments

weaknesses of the present parish including lack of parking notably at the station

An advanced telecommunications infrastructure is an essential pre-requisite for sustainable economic growth and in facilitating the provision of local community facilities and services. The availability of very high speed telecommunications infrastructure capable of supporting future services was supported by 689 people or 85% of respondents as the most important service for local business activity – home working and office based businesses. The lack of public WiFi in the parish was next most important service identified by 359 people (44% of respondents).

The space for car parking at the station has not kept pace with demand and is routinely at capacity early in the morning. This lack of parking space at the village station is unsurprisingly a major issue for the community, 1006 people or 92% of respondents to the questionnaire support the enlargement of the available space. Several sites have been suggested and as part of this NDP a project is included to identify a site. The site selection and design will conform to all relevant policies in the Plan.

The questionnaire suggested a number of possible projects that could be supported using the financial gain accruing from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) of which the following received majority support:

- More bike racks at the station (724 people or 63% of respondents)
- Contribute to the development of a community/sports centre on the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field (674 people or 58% of respondents)
- Provision of Allotments (637 people or 55% of respondents)

The provision of public toilets in the centre of the village sharply divided respondents with 476 people (41% of respondents) in favour and 450 people (39% of respondents) against provision; a proposal for their provision is not built into this plan. The provision of a new village hall was rejected by 581 people (51% of respondents) and similarly is omitted.

542 people (46% of respondents) were in favour of a policy to support the building of a commercial day care nursery with 241 people (21% of respondents) against. Policy IS4 has been developed to help find a local solution for working parents; current provision in the village is of the pre-school type with very limited hours and nothing for children under 2 years of age.

A major concern expressed repeatedly throughout the responses to the questionnaire related to traffic levels; 68 traffic comments were received. The concerns related to existing traffic levels (volume, movement and speed) and the impact new developments will have on what are considered to be difficult traffic conditions in the village. Making the village safer for pedestrians and cyclist is vital particularly to address concerns about the danger to children walking to and from the schools. It is considered important therefore that opportunities to manage and reduce traffic movement and speed are identified and pursued. This will encourage increased walking and cycling with the associated health and welfare benefits and will give Mortimer a more enjoyable and congenial environment.

The respondents suggested a number of other possible projects; the most popular are listed in the projects section.

The number and range of possibilities is more than the CIL can finance. This plan establishes the policy for determining how the CIL finance and any other source of funding will be distributed to the greatest benefit of the community.

Projects

1. More bike racks at the station
2. Investigate options for increasing car parking provision at the station and identification and allocation of land for this.
3. Contribute to the development of a community/sports centre on the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field (673 people or 58% of respondents)
4. Provision of Allotments
5. Extension of Fairground facilities (various see questionnaire feedback)
6. Extension of sports facilities (various see questionnaire feedback)
7. Traffic management features.
8. Several biodiversity suggestions
9. Improvement to the footpath to St Mary's school and the station.

Delivery and Monitoring

The Community-Led Plan which will be commencing in January 2016 may be able to help the Parish Council develop these ideas, involve the community in determining priorities and feedback to the Parish Council for decisions re spending the CIL.

Biodiversity and Environmental Gain

Objective

To maintain and where possible enhance the quality and diversity of the natural environment of the parish.

To achieve this it will be necessary to ensure that new developments do not threaten biodiversity and positively encourage it. The opportunity provided by new developments will be used to enhance the wild life habitats of Mortimer. At the same time existing areas and corridors in the parish could be enhanced to aid biodiversity.

Policies

The policies to meet this objective are:-

B1 No development will be allowed in that part of Biodiversity Opportunity Area 13 as identified by the Berkshire Local Nature partnership

B2 The Site development will make provision for high quality and multifunctional open spaces of at least 0.75 ha and will provide links to the existing green infrastructure network

B3 All new developments must provide a wildlife friendly environment by installing such things as hedgehog gates, bat roosts and incorporating habitat-rich wildlife areas which deliver net gains in biodiversity

B4 All new developments must provide wildlife corridor links to green space or other wildlife corridors and enhance existing wildlife corridors

B5 Wherever possible new development should enhance existing wildlife corridors.

Context and Justification

To change the biodiversity of the area for the better it is necessary to increase the area of species-rich land and to link such areas to allow animals, birds and insects etc. to travel from one habitat to another.

The plan area only contains one area of particular national importance in terms of biodiversity. This is Biodiversity Opportunity Area 13 as identified by the Berkshire Local Nature partnership. This area lies largely to the west of the plan area but does wrap round the northern edge of the parish. Bats and the Great Crested Newt are the only protected species that have been identified in the plan area.

Area 13 Biodiversity Opportunity Area



However, the rest of the plan area also contains a wide range of mixed habitats which does support a wide spectrum of fauna and flora. It is to protect this existing biodiversity, both within Area 13 and without that policies should be directed.

In addition it is accepted that the opportunity may well arise in the course of development to create further

enhancements to biodiversity.

These proposals are consistent with The National Planning Policy Statement which says at para 109:

The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*
- *recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;*
- *minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*
- *preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and*
- *remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.*

In particular the Lawton Report in 2010 identified the following action plan to help with the national decline in biodiversity:-

Improve the quality of current sites by better habitat management (and enhance heterogeneity)

- *Increase the size of current wildlife sites*
- *Create new sites*
- *Enhance connections between, or join up, sites, either through physical corridors, or through 'stepping stones'*
- *Reduce the pressures on wildlife by improving the wider environment, including through buffering wildlife sites*

Clearly not all of the above is achievable in this NDP but several of the points are relevant. In particular:-

- Enhance connections between, or join up, sites, either through physical corridors, or through 'stepping stones'
- Reduce the pressures on wildlife by improving the wider environment, including through buffering wildlife sites

New development, can, by definition reduce the areas of species-rich land and can block existing wildlife routes. Similarly the sub-division of existing large gardens in the parish reduces wild life habitat. As such it is essential that while improving existing areas that new development is made as environmentally friendly as possible. Indeed in many cases a well-planned new development may be better for biodiversity than an area of monoculture.

The idea of improving biodiversity was supported by the results of the questionnaire where all the relevant propositions had a large majority that were in agreement. The only exception to this was when respondents were asked if "Existing green spaces may be used for development as long as more than equivalent provision is provided close at hand." 672

people or 59% of respondents disagreed with this concept and hence it has not been included in the plan.

National policy is to minimise impacts on biodiversity and to provide net gains in biodiversity where possible. The objective is to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. (NPPF Paragraph 108 page 25). The planning policy goes on to say opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged;

It is essential therefore that new developments, at a minimum, replace the loss and wherever possible further enrich the wild life habitat features. Indeed in many cases a well-planned new development may be better for biodiversity than an area of monoculture.

908 people (79% of respondents) support the proposition that all new developments should be wildlife friendly with a range of wildlife areas.

Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS) can include features such as ponds, swales, and wetlands as an integral part of the site design all of which can achieve enhanced wild habitats. The adoption of SuDS to enhance biodiversity was supported by 1012 people (87% of respondents to the questionnaire).

Open spaces and community woodland can be provided in new developments, and connect these spaces with others in the parish which deliver environmental gains for residents and wildlife.

Projects

- Identify and map existing wildlife corridors
- Identify and map existing corridors that have the potential to be 'greened'
- Identify and map gaps in the existing and potential wildlife corridors
- Seek funds to enhance the existing network of wildlife corridors and to fill in any gaps
- Organise such enhancement

Delivery and Monitoring

Many of the policies can be delivered directly by this plan in that they relate to the design and form of development. Site Design polices DS1 and 2 refer to the requirement for a Site Design Brief to be agreed before any new development is allowed. Site Design Briefs will be in conformity with the relevant biodiversity policies and will include provision for biodiversity enhancement.

The specific projects listed above are not, in the main, deliverable by this NDP but are reliant on other bodies or groups to take matters forward. In this regard the prime mover would be the Parish Council, either directly or via the Community-Led Plan which is due to commence early in 2016.

It may well be the case that some new wildlife corridors or enhancements to existing corridors will involve negotiation with landowners to allow such improvements to take place. Equally, if such enhancements are to be organised they will only happen if agreement is reached with third parties, such as the Parish Council, to fund these activities.

The monitoring of the Community-Led Plan would be via the twice yearly monitoring report to WBC.

DRAFT

Green Spaces

Objective

To maintain and, where possible, improve green spaces and green routes.

To achieve this it will be necessary to ensure that new developments incorporate green spaces and routes within them that link to the wider network of such features in the parish. At the same time existing green spaces and routes in the parish could be enhanced, in part to aid biodiversity.

Policies

The policies to meet this objective are:-

GS1 Designate the following as Green Spaces:

The Fairground, the Pound and Heath Elm Pond (pond outside the fence) and War Memorial island

The Alfred Palmer Memorial Field

Foudry Brook - the watercourse and footpath and 10m strip either side from St. Mary's Church SW to the parish boundary

Summerlug Common

Windmill Common

Brewery Common

Bronze Age Barrows and surrounding land (Holden's Firs)

GS2 Connect new development sites into the wider area with pedestrian footpaths and where appropriate cycleways and link them with the existing network of green spaces and routes in the parish

GS3 All new cycle or pedestrian routes will be green e.g. they could have green margins and where possible will be surfaced with porous material

Context and Justification

Natural and semi-natural open spaces are highly valued by local residents, not just for their recreational value, but also for their landscape character, quiet enjoyment and biodiversity.

In particular recreation fields, etc. are valued open spaces that the community wishes to see protected. This is demonstrated by the highest approval rating for any question in the questionnaire when 1110 people (96% of respondents) agreed with the statement that the Fairground should be designated as a Local Green Space. A similar result (1025 people or 89% of respondents) was obtained for the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field.

In addition to maintain its rural 'green feel' the community would like to see more open space, woodland and public paths to be a part of any significant new developments.

However, green spaces are of limited value if they cannot be accessed and so it is considered important that non-motorised access to these spaces is maintained and enhanced. In this regard 495 people (43% of the respondents to the questionnaire) favoured more rural public footpaths as opposed to 325 people (28% of respondents) who felt there was no additional need.

Keep schools accessible on foot/ by cycle to cut down on the need for travelling to school by car - encourage safe walking routes. This is our chance to incorporate these elements into the plans. I used to cycle to Willink School from my childhood home in The Street - enable this again for future healthy generations

NDP Questionnaire comment.

Two specific proposals for new footpath/cycleway routes were considered as part of the questionnaire and both the proposal for additional facilities, away from the existing road, linking the village to St Mary's school and the station, and a link between Burghfield and Mortimer were agreed with by 869 people (76% of respondents) and 734 people (64% of respondents respectively).

A very important side effect of this sort of approach is that areas that support a diverse range of flora and fauna will become linked by what in effect may be considered as wildlife

corridors. This will assist in maintaining the biodiversity of the area. Such 'green' routes were positively supported by 52% of the respondents to the questionnaire.

Projects

- Identify and map existing green corridors
- Identify and map gaps in the existing green corridors
- Seek funds to enhance the existing network of green corridors and to fill in any gaps
- Organise such enhancement
- Develop parish cycleways, in particular investigate and if possible provide a pedestrian/cycleway:-
 - linking Burghfield & Mortimer
 - away from the road connecting the village with St Mary's school and the station

Delivery and Monitoring

Some of the policies can be delivered directly by this plan in that they relate to the design and form of development and its supporting infrastructure. Site Design policy SD2 refers to the requirement for a Site Design Brief to be agreed before any new development is allowed. These Site Design Briefs will contain and be in conformity with the relevant Green Space policies.

The policy to designate certain areas as Local Green Spaces is carried out as a function of this plan and if accepted will come into effect automatically.

The specific projects listed above are not, in the main, deliverable by this NDP but are reliant on other bodies or groups to take matters forward. In this regard the prime mover would be the Parish Council, either directly or via the Community-Led Plan which is due to commence early in 2016.

It will almost certainly be the case that some new footpaths/cycleways will involve negotiation with landowners to allow such facilities to cross their land. Equally, if such new

facilities are to be procured they will only happen if agreement is reached with third parties, such as the Parish Council or developers, to fund them.

DRAFT

Heritage

Objective

To develop the heritage of the parish and provide an added amenity for the community.

To achieve this it will be necessary to negotiate with landowners to allow access and to provide information to the public.

Policies

The policies to meet this objective are:-

H1 Adopt and adhere to WBC policy CS19 Historic Environment and Landscape Character

Context and Justification

There are several sites in the parish which have an interesting history and it is considered useful to try and make this history better known. These sites include the station, which was Brunel's model rural halt for the Great Western, the churches, World War II defences, the war memorial, the old fire station as well as a set of Bronze Age barrows. There are some 20 historic sites or buildings on various data bases that are shown as being within the parish.

It should be noted that Mortimer has a good tradition of trails and there is considerable support for the Scarecrow trail which is held each year as well as the weekly walking groups which normally set off from the Fairground.

The development of the Bronze Age barrows, at the western end of the parish, as an attraction/amenity was supported by 485 people (43% of respondents to the questionnaire). 400 people (35% of respondents) had no particular view and 245 people or 22% were against the idea.

The NDP's concept of recognising heritage assets is consistent with The National Planning Policy Statement which says at para. 126:-

Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

Projects

- Identify heritage sites

- Negotiate new or better access where appropriate
- Seek funds for information boards at sites where appropriate and erect such boards with the agreement of landowners
- Develop a Mortimer Heritage Trail: seek funding for the publication of a Mortimer Heritage Trail leaflet to identify and suggest routes for visiting heritage sites
- Seek funding and agreement to the installation of heritage trail signage

Delivery and Monitoring

As identified above the specific projects are not deliverable by this NDP but are reliant on other bodies or groups to take matters forward. In this regard the prime mover would be the Parish Council, either directly or via the Community-Led Plan which is due to commence in the autumn of 2015.

It may well be the case that access to the sites could be improved in some cases but this will be dependent on negotiating better access with the landowner. Equally if information boards and trails are to be organised this too will only happen if agreement is reached with third parties, such as the Parish Council, to fund these activities.

It is envisaged that the monitoring of the delivery will be via an annual report to the Parish Council detailing progress on all aspects of this NDP.

Appendix A - Explanation of SWOT points

Strengths

Identity – A sense of what Mortimer means to individuals

- Vibrant community spirit – The involvement of individuals in village life
- Obvious village boundary – clear distinction between the built up area of the village and the surrounding countryside
- Its history gives it its distinctive quality – This is an ancient village as compared to neighbouring villages and as such it has many amenities which are a product of its history e.g. The Fairground

Rural setting & extensive footpath network – The village is surrounded by countryside and there are many footpaths leading into the countryside

Generally thriving village amenities – For a village there are many shops and other amenities such as a garage and dentist

Desirable state schools – There are two well-regarded state schools in the parish

Varied housing stock – There is a range of property types and tenures in the parish

Proximity to

- National rail & road network – There is a station within the parish and the M4 is only some 5 miles away
- Heathrow & Gatwick – There is easy access to the two airports via the motorway network
- Employment opportunities – Reading, Basingstoke, Newbury and London all provide excellent employment opportunities
- London – London can easily be reached by both rail and road and offers the wide choice of venues for which it is world renowned

Developing an NDP – The community has responded well to the challenge of producing an NDP

Weaknesses

Village remote from railway station – The station is approx. 2km or 1.25 miles away from the village centre

Limited bus service – The bus service only runs into Reading and is not available in the later evening or on Sunday

Village centre lacks some attractive features – While having a good set of amenities the centre of the village does not have a particularly distinguished street scape

Housing

- Accelerating housing cost – Because Mortimer is an attractive place to live demand for homes is high and hence prices are rising
- Lack of affordable housing to buy – Not only are prices high but there are few homes on the market especially within reach of the average person
- Lack of affordable housing to rent – Again there are few homes available to rent at prices that would be considered affordable by the average person

Infrastructure

- Schools at capacity – The two village schools are at capacity
- Drainage – The drainage system becomes overloaded at times of exceptionally heavy rainfall

- Lack of parking - both at the station and in the village – The station car park is regularly full and cars are parked on surrounding roads. In the centre of the village car parking is not sufficient to meet regular demands
- Lack of cycle routes – There are no dedicated cycle routes in the parish
- Restricted sewage capacity – There is no spare capacity and sewage has been discharged in The Street at times of exceptionally heavy rainfall

Perceived dangerous walking/cycling route to St Mary's and station – The pavements are narrow, the road is well used and there are restricted site lines

Shortage of 20 to 30 year old living in parish – compared to West Berkshire or South East England this age group is very unrepresented

Opportunities

The power of an approved, comprehensive NDP to influence and shape

- Future housing numbers
- Future development
- Housing mix
- Parking

Improvements to rail service – The rail line that serves the parish is to be electrified. Crossrail will also make journeys to Central and East London far easier

Site for new school/surgery – A new site will allow the schools and surgery to expand to meet the needs of the parish

Manage growth to retain viability of services – Managed growth will give security to existing businesses and help attract other desirable businesses

Enhance village centre – It may be possible to improve the street scape of the centre of the village

Traffic management – Opportunities to make the streetscape more pedestrian friendly may be developed

Threats

Location

- Proximity to employment, national rail & road networks leading to development pressure and increase in house prices

Over development leads to identity loss

Urbanisation e.g. loss of green space, light pollution

Becomes a Reading suburb

Lack of investment leading to

- Possible closure of Post Office
- Cuts to bus services
- No traffic management
- No solution to parking problems

National policy changes – These could be changes to policies with regard to the status of NDPs or other things such as the overall requirement for housing

National housing shortage leading to imposition of too many new homes by WBC – This is a threat in the medium term but could be brought forward by national factors

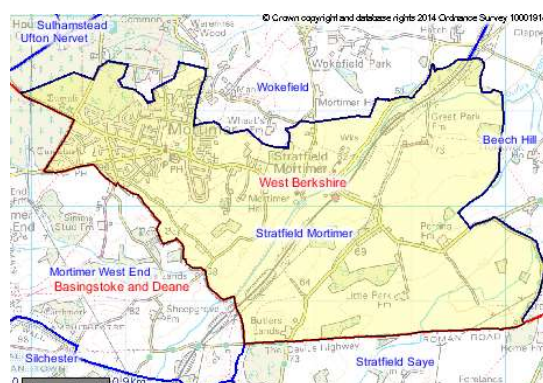
Speculative planning applications for unallocated sites – The existence of an NDP should mitigate this risk but it still remains.

Appendix B - Background statistics

Map 1 – Area of parish



Map 2 – Boundary map of parish



Headline statistics

Total number of dwellings	1644
Total number of households with at least one usual resident	1572
No. of usual residents	3807 (of which 1891 are male and 1916 are female)
Average no. of people per household	2.42
Area of parish (hectares)	967
Density (No. of people per hectare)	3.94

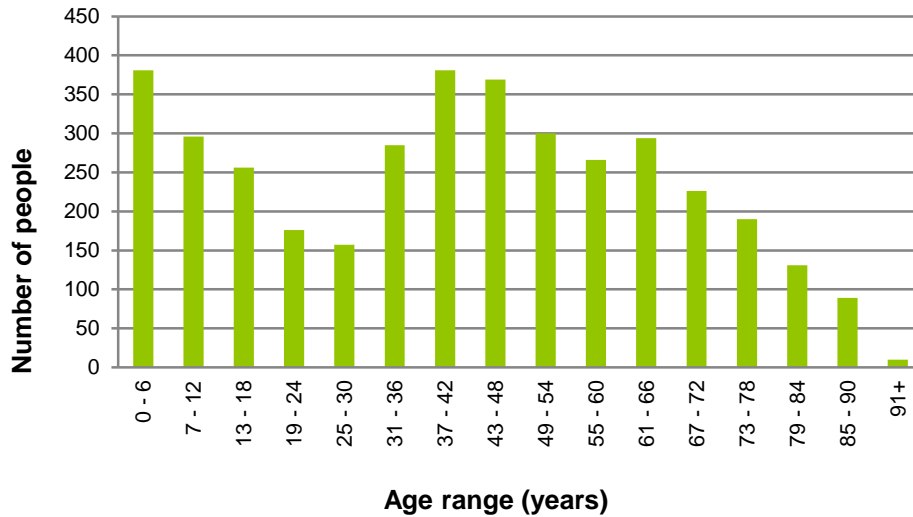
Age

Table 1 – Age profile of residents of Stratfield Mortimer & West Berkshire

Age ranges (by Year)	Stratfield Mortimer		West Berkshire	
	No. of persons	% of persons	No. of persons	% of persons
All usual residents total	3807		153822	
0 - 6	381	10.0	13733	8.9
7 - 12	296	7.8	11167	7.3
13 - 18	256	6.7	12351	8.0
19 - 24	176	4.6	8719	5.7
25 - 30	157	4.1	10348	6.7
31 - 36	285	7.5	11565	7.5
37 - 42	381	10.0	14530	9.4
43 - 48	369	9.7	15148	9.8
49 - 54	300	7.9	13376	8.7
55 - 60	266	7.0	11416	7.4
61 - 66	294	7.7	11144	7.2
67 - 72	226	5.9	7585	4.9
73 - 78	190	5.0	5591	3.6
79 - 84	131	3.4	4062	2.6
85 - 90	89	2.3	2334	1.5

91+	10	0.3	753	0.5
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Graph 1 – Age profile of Stratfield Mortimer residents, March 2011



Graph 2 – Age profile comparison between Stratfield Mortimer and West Berkshire residents, March 2011



Housing

The 2011 census counted 1,572 households in Stratfield Mortimer parish. The average household size in the parish was 2.42 persons per household, which is exactly the same as the county average. A large proportion of households are owner occupied (70.1%) in Stratfield Mortimer, almost the same as the county average (69.7%). Stratfield Mortimer has a higher proportion of dwellings rented from the council or housing association (15.65%) than the county average (13.84%), but a lower proportion of dwellings rented from private landlords (Stratfield Mortimer = 11.51%, West Berkshire = 13.72%).

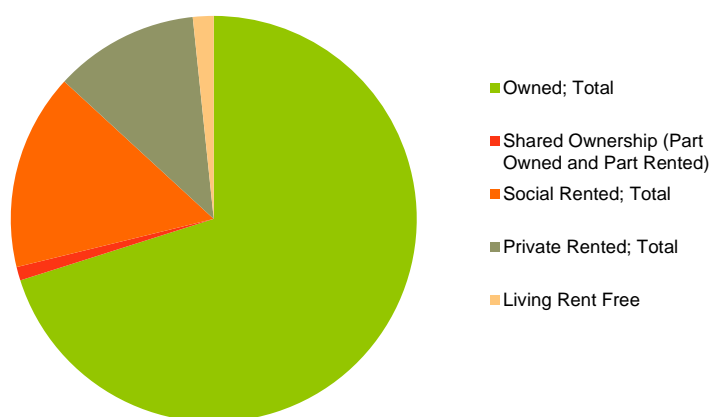
Table 2 – Household size in Stratfield Mortimer & West Berkshire, March 2011

	Stratfield Mortimer			West Berkshire		
Total no. of households	1572			62340		
No. people in households	No. of households	% of households	Total no. of people	no. of households	% of households	Total no. of people
1	416	26.5%	416	16123	25.9%	16123
2	580	36.9%	1160	22607	36.3%	45214
3	228	14.5%	684	10190	16.3%	30570
4	229	14.6%	916	9502	15.2%	38008
5	92	5.9%	460	2875	4.6%	14375
6	21	1.3%	126	822	1.3%	4932
7	4	0.3%	28	154	0.2%	1078
8	2	0.1%	16	67	0.1%	536
Total no. of people	3806			150836		
Average number of people per household	2.42			2.42		

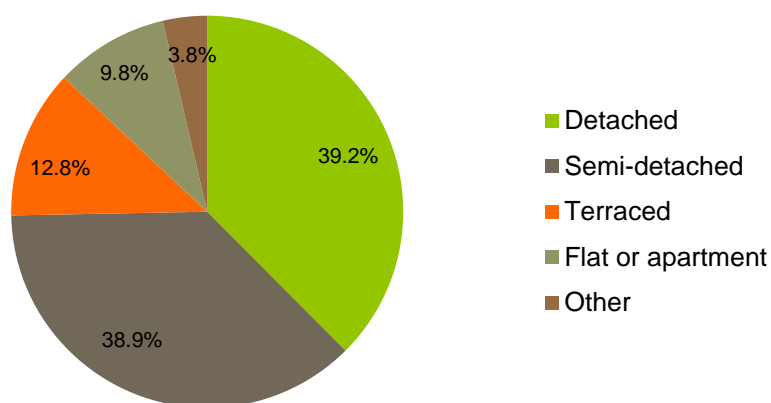
Table 3 – Household type, tenure and composition

	Stratfield Mortimer		West Berkshire	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All Households (total)	1,572		62,278	
Accommodation type				
Detached	600	38	21,163	34
Semi-Detached	575	37	20,722	33
Terraced	198	13	11,179	18
Flat, Maisonette or Apartment	184	12	8,549	14
Caravan or Other	15	1	665	1
No of bedrooms				
No Bedrooms (Household Spaces)	3	0.2	137	0.2
1 Bedroom (Household Spaces)	133	8.5	5,677	9.1
2 Bedrooms (Household Spaces)	345	21.9	13,946	22.4
3 Bedrooms (Household Spaces)	606	38.5	24,660	39.6
4 Bedrooms (Household Spaces)	356	22.6	13,322	21.4
5 or More Bedrooms (Household Spaces)	129	8.2	4,598	7.4
Tenure				
Owner occupied	1102	70.1	43435	69.67
Shared Ownership (Part owned and part rented)	17	1	695	1.11
Social rented	246	15.65	8628	13.84
Private rented	181	11.51	8555	13.72
Other	26	1.65	1027	1.65

Graph 3 – Stratfield Mortimer - Tenure, March 2011



Graph 4 – Stratfield Mortimer - Accommodation type, March 2011

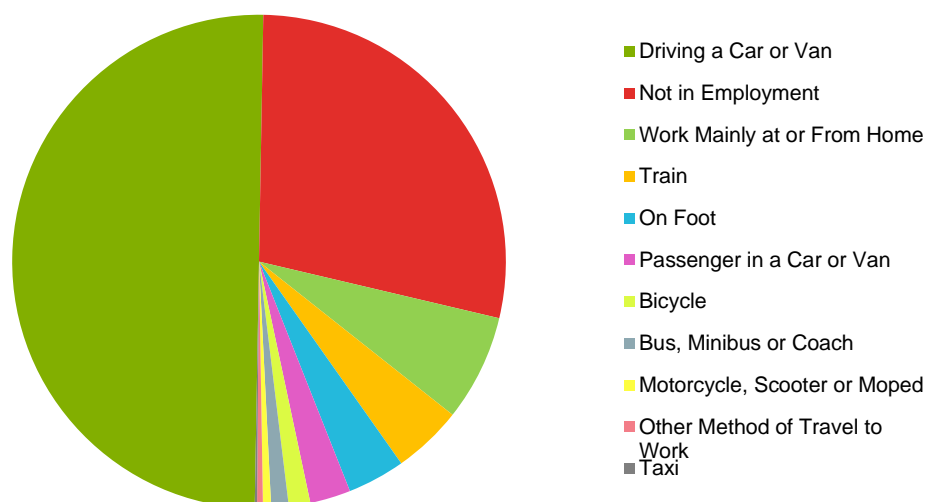


Travel

Table 4 – Method of travel to work

	Stratfield Mortimer		West Berkshire	
	No. of persons	% of persons	No. of persons	% of persons
All Usual Residents Aged 16 to 74 (Persons)	2,627		112,054	
Work Mainly at or From Home (Persons)	183	7.0	6,223	5.6
Underground, Metro, Light Rail, Tram (Persons)	1	0.0	124	0.1
Train (Persons)	120	4.6	3,997	3.6
Bus, Minibus or Coach (Persons)	30	1.1	2,976	2.7
Taxi (Persons)	4	0.2	179	0.2
Motorcycle, Scooter or Moped (Persons)	14	0.5	504	0.4
Driving a Car or Van (Persons)	1,313	50.0	53,437	47.7
Passenger in a Car or Van (Persons)	70	2.7	3,988	3.6
Bicycle (Persons)	37	1.4	2,126	1.9
On Foot (Persons)	99	3.8	7,680	6.9
Other Method of Travel to Work (Persons)	10	0.4	445	0.4
Not in Employment (Persons)	746	28.4	30,375	27.1

Graph 5 – Method of travel to work, Stratfield Mortimer (% of residents)



Economic activity

Table 5 – Economic activity of Stratfield Mortimer and West Berkshire residents

	Stratfield Mortimer		West Berkshire	
	(no. of persons)	(% of persons)	(no. of persons)	(% of persons)
All Usual Residents Aged 16 to 74	2627		112054	
Economically Active; Total	1949	74.2	85401	76.2
Employee; Part-Time	374	14.2	15567	13.9
Employee; Full-Time	1141	43.4	51084	45.6
Self-Employed with Employees; Part-Time	10	0.4	369	0.3
Self-Employed with Employees; Full-Time	64	2.4	2286	2.0
Self-Employed Without Employees; Part-Time	96	3.7	3416	3.0
Self-Employed Without Employees; Full-Time	147	5.6	6620	5.9
Unemployed	65	2.5	3279	2.9
Full-Time Student	52	2.0	2780	2.5
Economically Inactive; Total	678	25.8	26653	23.8
Retired	395	15.0	14094	12.6
Student (including Full-Time Students)	81	3.1	3799	3.4
Looking After Home or Family	115	4.4	4769	4.3
Long-Term Sick or Disabled	52	2.0	2420	2.2
Other	35	1.3	1571	1.4

Table 6 – Types of industry in which residents are employed (based on residents aged 16 to 74 in employment)

Type of industry	No. of persons aged between 16 – 74 years old employed in this industry	% of persons aged between 16 – 74 years old employed in this industry
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	7	0.4%
Mining and Quarrying	10	0.5%
Manufacturing	149	7.9%
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	12	0.6%
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	26	1.4%
Construction	141	7.5%
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motor Cycles	235	12.5%
Transport and Storage	58	3.1%
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	62	3.3%
Information and Communication	200	10.6%
Financial and Insurance Activities	80	4.3%
Real Estate Activities	22	1.2%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	195	10.4%
Administrative and Support Service Activities	89	4.7%
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	110	5.8%
Education	197	10.5%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	197	10.5%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; Other Service Activities	87	4.6%
Activities of Households as Employers; Undifferentiated Goods - and Services - Producing Activities of Households for Own Use	3	0.2%
Activities of Extraterritorial Organisations and Bodies	1	0.1%

Health

Table 7 - General Health

	Stratfield Mortimer		West Berkshire	
	(no. of persons)	(% of persons)	(no. of persons)	(% of persons)
All Usual Residents	3807		153822	
Very Good health	2025	53.19	79432	51.64
Good Health	1235	32.44	53069	34.50
Fair Health	407	10.69	16456	10.69
Bad Health	111	2.92	3818	2.48
Very bad health	29	0.76	1047	0.68
All Usual Residents	3807		153822	

Education

Table 8 - Highest Level of Qualification

	Stratfield Mortimer		West Berkshire	
	(no. of persons)	(% of persons)	(no. of persons)	(% of persons)
All Usual Residents age 16 and over	2981		122731	
No Qualifications	490	16.44	21065	17.16
Level 1	359	12.04	17378	14.16
Level 2	437	14.66	19880	16.20
Apprenticeship	111	3.72	4778	3.89
Level 3	316	10.60	14916	12.15
Level 4	1151	38.61	39406	32.11
Other Qualifications	117	3.92	5308	4.32

Appendix C - Site Design Briefs

Site Design Briefs provide guidance on how a site will be developed and are a material consideration when assessing planning applications.

They make clear what is likely to be acceptable and what is unacceptable, where there is flexibility and where requirements are firm. They inform developers and other interested parties of the constraints and opportunities presented by the site, and the type of development expected. Their aim is to satisfy the aspirations of the local community for the types of homes, social spaces and well-being such as paths and cycle ways.

A Site Design Brief will cover among other things:

- The overall vision for the site
- A site map showing the site's location and its context within its immediate neighbourhood including any areas of special landscape value, flood zones, the location of any heritage assets, landmark buildings or views
- An illustrative layout showing how the proposed development will be accommodated on the site
- Building design and site layout - scale, footprint, bulk and height of buildings, mix of dwelling types and tenure, design style and guidelines
- Access, parking, cycle and pedestrian ways and any required traffic congestion and parking assessments
- Landscaping, publicly accessible open spaces, wildlife habitats
- The location of trees and any that may be affected by the development
- An analysis of how the development proposals comply with the whole policy framework including the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- Drainage/flooding

A Site Design Brief will **not** consider the merits of the site for allocation for development.

Principles to be adhered to by Site Design Briefs for Mortimer developments

Developments will be designed to a high standard that delivers the rural character valued by Mortimer as expressed in the Vision statement and will:

- Satisfy the mix of housing identified as required at the time of each new development
- Provide well-designed groups of houses, located in attractive, inclusive and secure spaces avoiding formulaic layouts that are more suited to urban and semi-urban situations
- Maintain a 'human scale' with regard to building heights (particularly careful design of roof elevations on rising ground), road widths, sight lines, coherent layout, low noise levels and appropriate lighting in houses and on streets (see policy DL2)– an environment in which individuals feel comfortable and secure
- Provide shared pedestrian, cycle and traffic space incorporating native trees with provision for parking, and landscaped boundary treatments
- Provide safe, convenient and direct natural footpaths and cycle routes to the principal parish facilities wherever possible
- Make generous provision for open green spaces

- which are linked to the wider natural environment and accessible to the public
 - at the junctions of roads within the development
- Provide attractive individual, one-off, streets and spaces at key locations within the development – for example, a feature space linking new and old; a boulevard along a main route; or a space where pedestrian routes meet.
- Encourage a whole-village feel to any new developments by not permitting gated housing to be built
- New development on the edge of the settlement should be designed to mitigate any visual impact or intervisibility between it and the immediate countryside
- Make sensitive use of local topography
- Minimise the need for street furniture and signage
- Provide for sustainable waste management, principally by having adequate storage space for refuse bins
- Incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) to avoid flood risk and to provide wildlife areas such as ponds and swales as an integral part of site design.
- Adhere to all policies in this NDP, where appropriate
- Do not exceed 2 principal storeys (or 3 if using roof space)
- Use bricks that are red/orange in colour, similar to those of the Victorian buildings in the village
- Have roofs of flat red tile or grey slate
- Have gabled or hipped roofs rather than flat roofs
- Use details such as coloured brick inserts, mouldings or patterns of raised brick around windows or between levels, similar to those on existing buildings in the village

Site Design Brief for The Site
To be supplied

DRAFT

Appendix D - Building for Life - 12 (Bfl12) Overview

The purpose of Bfl12 is to achieve well-designed homes and neighbourhoods through structured discussions between the local community, the planning authority and the landowner/developer. It provides the basis for a Site Design Brief.

The 12 questions split into three sections.

Integrating into the neighbourhood

1. Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings with the right connections (e.g. cycle ways, footpaths, layout of roads); whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?
2. Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?
3. Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?
4. Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?

Creating a place

5. Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?
6. Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?
7. Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?
8. Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?

Street and home

9. Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?
10. Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?
11. Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?
12. Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?

Based on a simple 'traffic light' system (red, amber and green) new developments will secure at least 10 'greens' as possible minimising the number of 'ambers' and avoiding any 'reds'. The more 'greens' that are achieved, the better a development will be. A red light gives warning that a particular aspect of a proposed development needs to be reconsidered. 'Ambers' would be challenged to try to raise them to a 'green'.