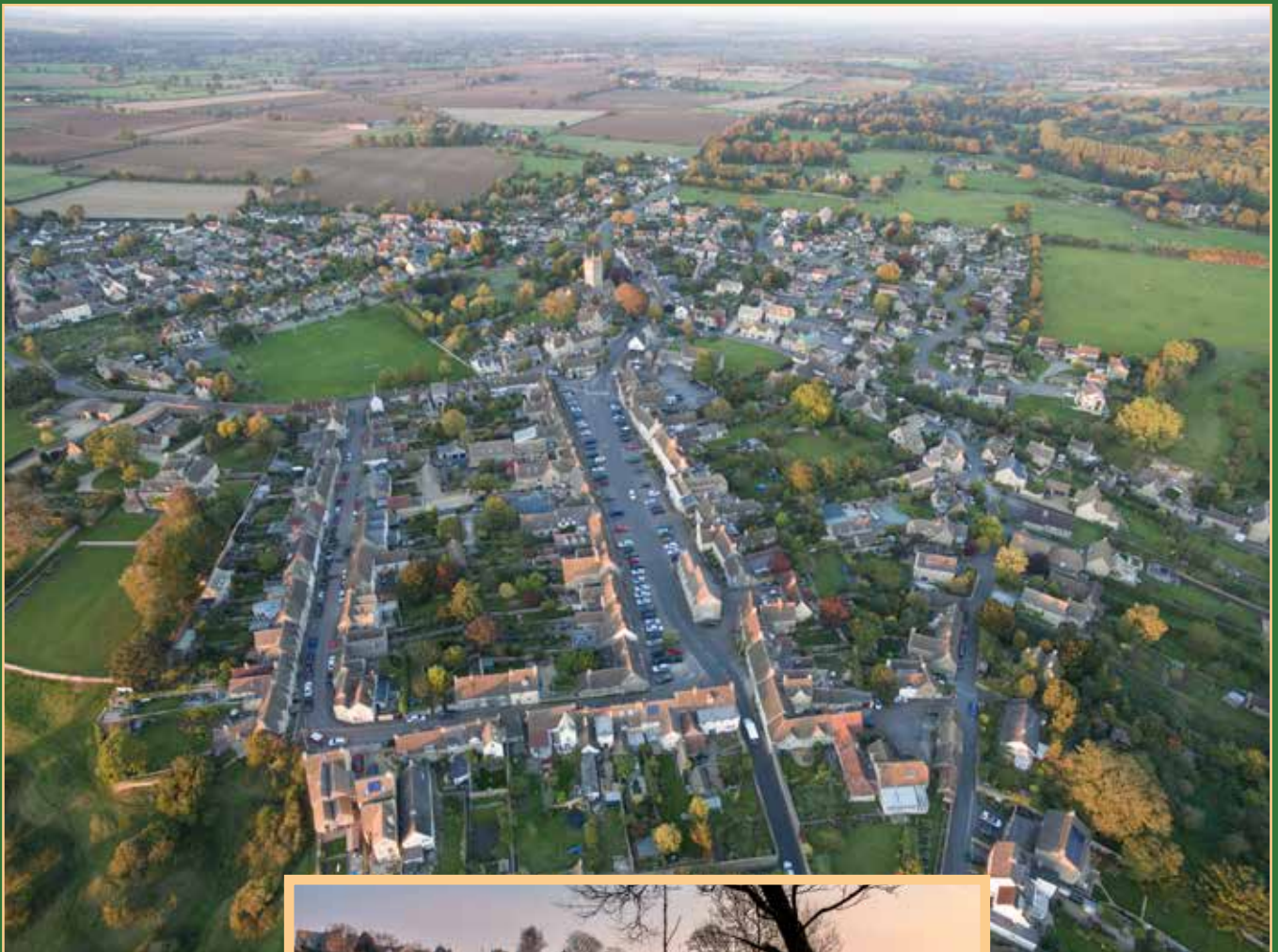




# Sherston Neighbourhood Plan 2006 to 2026 Made - May 2019







# Sherston Neighbourhood Plan

## 2006 to 2026

### Made - May 2019

#### Contents

1.0	Purpose	4
2.0	Submitting Body	4
3.0	Planning Policy Context	5
4.0	Physical Context	6
5.0	Vision of the Plan	9
6.0	Community Engagement	9
7.0	Main Objectives of the Plan	11
8.0	Policies of the Plan	13

#### Maps

MAP 1	SHERSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA
MAP 2	EXISTING SHERSTON VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY
MAP 3	LOCATION PLAN
MAP 4	SHERSTON VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PHASES
MAP 5A & 5B	FACILITIES, SERVICES, SHOPS AND LOCAL BUSINESSES
MAP 6	LOCAL GREEN SPACES
MAP 7	ADDITIONAL PROTECTED OPEN SPACES
MAP 8	SOPWORTH LANE
MAP 9	SOPWORTH LANE CONSTRAINTS MAP
MAP 10	THE VICARAGE SITE
MAP 11	THE VICARAGE SITE CONSTRAINTS MAP
MAP 12	THE ELMS
MAP 13	THE ELMS CONSTRAINTS MAP
MAP 14	ANTHONY CLOSE
MAP 15	POTENTIAL SPORTS FACILITIES SITE

## 1.0 PURPOSE:

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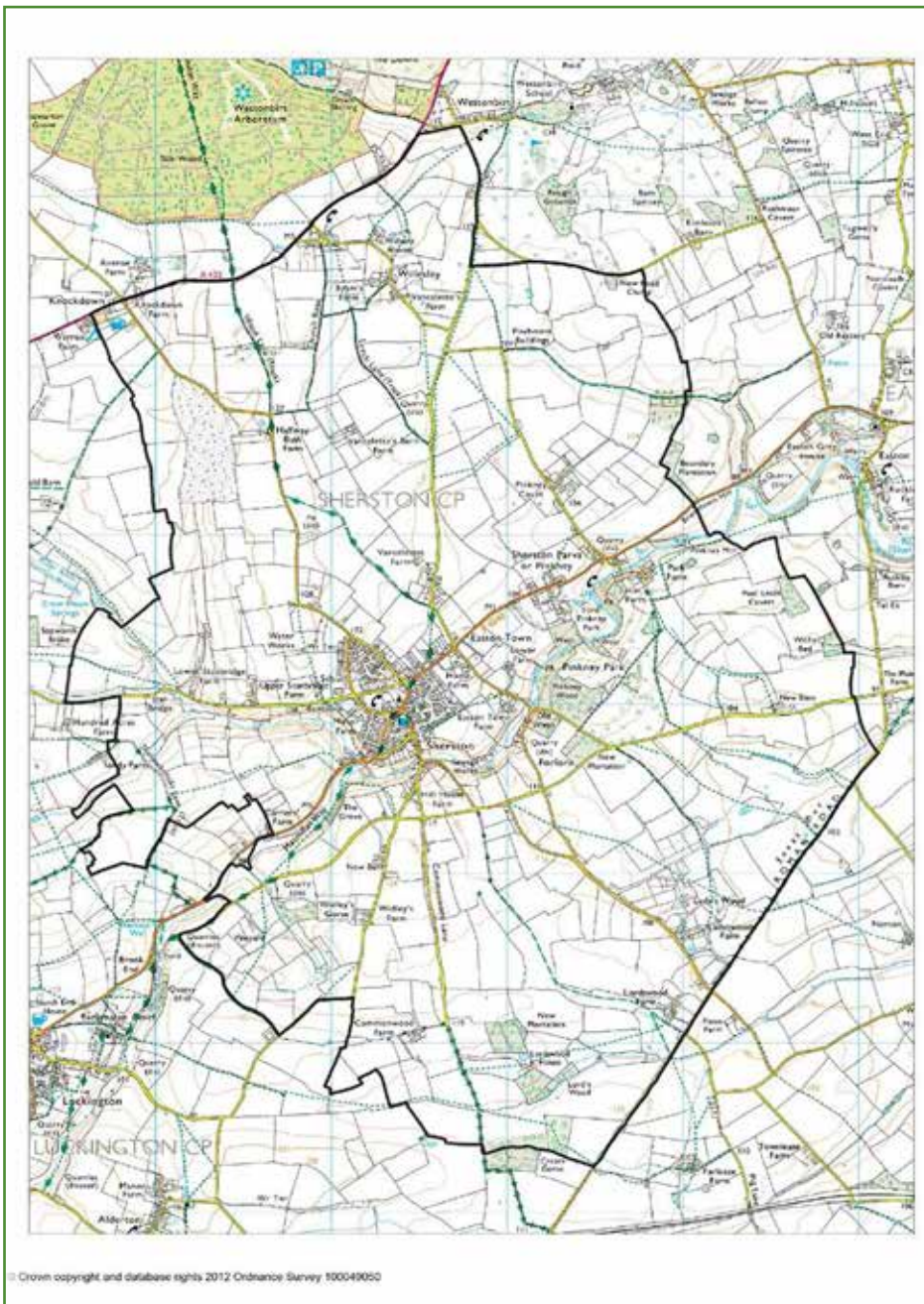
1.1 In April 2012 the Localism Act 2011 amended the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 introducing new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development in their community by preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan which can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in the defined neighbourhood. This document is a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in the Localism Act.

## 2.0 SUBMITTING BODY:

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2.1 This Neighbourhood Development Plan has been submitted by Sherston Parish Council, which is a qualifying body as defined by the Localism Act 2011. It covers the administrative area of the Sherston Parish Council (see Map 1 below).

### MAP 1 SHERSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA



2.2 The Sherston Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) covers the same plan period as the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy, up to 2026.

2.3 The Parish Council meeting held on 28th June 2011 unanimously agreed to make an application to Wiltshire Council for Sherston to be proposed as a Neighbourhood Planning Front Runner. This proposition was accepted by Wiltshire Council.

2.4 In September 2011 Wiltshire Council advised the Parish Council that it had been successful in its bid for Sherston to be chosen as a Front Runner under the scheme. A Steering Group was set up under the chairmanship of the Parish Council Chairman. The Steering Group comprised a mixture of local councillors, residents and other community stakeholders.

2.5 The Steering Group first met in February 2012 and work progressed on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan until its submission for examination in 2018. The plan allocates development sites and seeks to complement the policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

2.6 A Neighbourhood Area Designation Application dated 3rd December 2012 was approved by Wiltshire Council in February 2013 (following the statutory period of consultation), establishing the area of Sherston Parish as the plan area for the SNP (Map 1). A Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment) for Sherston was published by the Steering Group in February 2013.

### **3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT:**

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3.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (adopted January 2015), saved policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan (NWLP) and adopted policies of the Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals and Waste Development Framework (SMWDF) form the current Development Plan for the area covered by the SNP. Care has been taken to ensure that the SNP is in broad conformity with the policies of these plans.

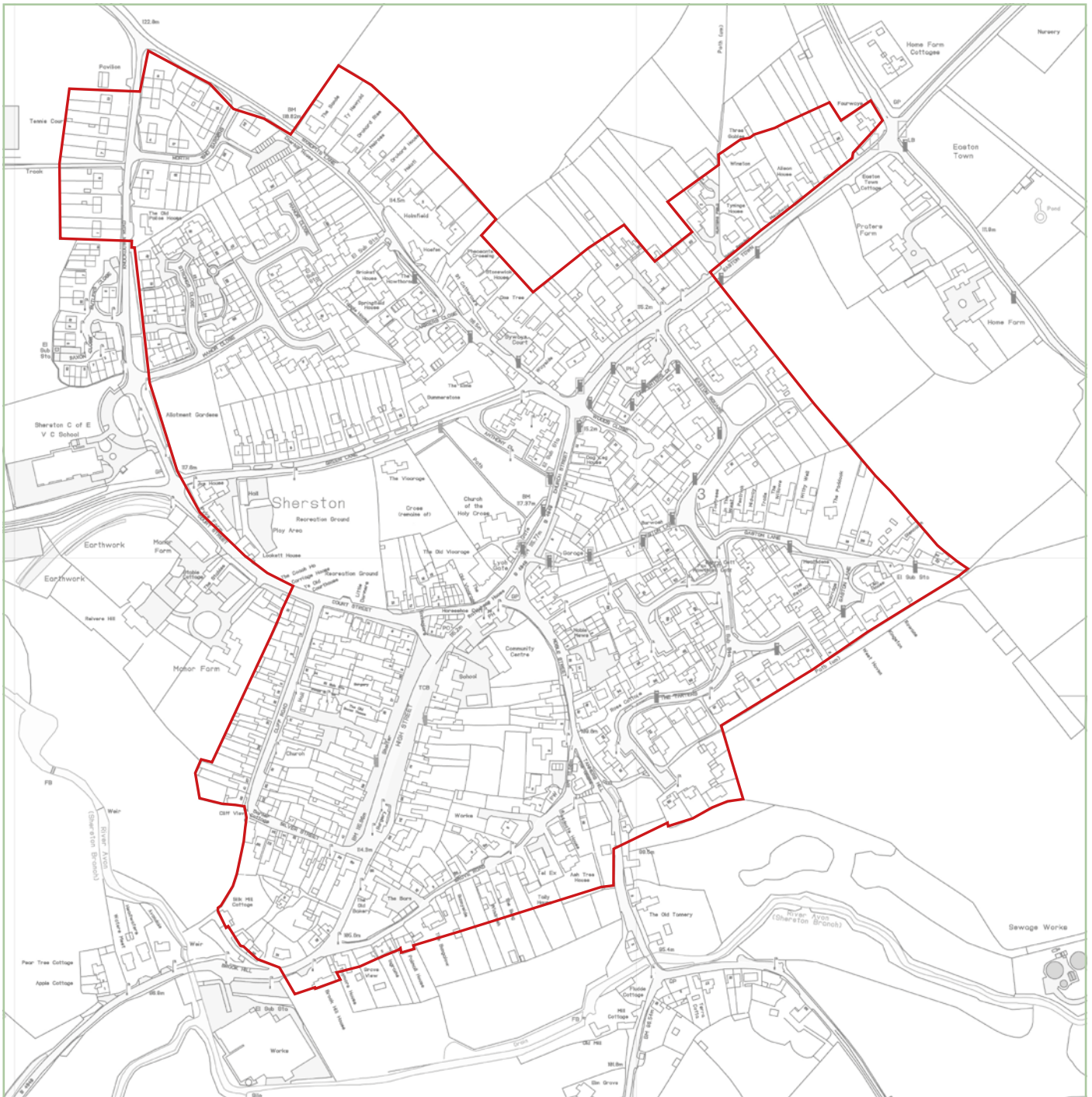
3.2 In terms of the adopted WCS and saved policies of the NWLP, the SNP takes forward their policies, especially the focus on sustainable development - including the recognition that Sherston is defined as a Large Village in the settlement strategy as set out in the WCS (within which only a limited level of development is anticipated sufficient to help retain the vitality of the community).

3.3 Paragraph 216 of The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides guidance for emerging plans.

3.4 The saved policies from the NWLP remain extant until either deleted or incorporated into the WCS.

3.5 The longstanding policy of Sherston Parish Council has been to support development within and around the village that it considers to be appropriate in scale and location sufficient to meet the continuing and future needs of the community. Wherever possible this has been within the existing NWLP defined Village Development Boundary (VDB) – as shown on Map 2 (see below). It should be noted that in recent times however a number of exceptions have been made to this approach to meet identifiable and accepted exceptional needs (e.g. the construction of a new primary school and some affordable housing). Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to change the existing VDB it is noted that Wiltshire Council is progressing a separate Housing Site Allocation Plan. This does not propose housing allocations in Sherston, but does propose changes to the settlement boundary.

## MAP 2 EXISTING SHERSTON VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY



3.6 The identification of Sherston as a Large Village within the WCS means that it is likely to come under more development pressure than the surrounding villages and hamlets. The Steering Group believes a plan is needed specifically to address the issues that are likely to come from this functional role and take forward necessary growth in a manner that is sustainable and acceptable to the community.

### 4.0 PHYSICAL CONTEXT:

4.1 Sherston is situated in the northwest corner of Wiltshire, about 5 miles to the west of Malmesbury and close to the boundary with Gloucestershire. It is an historic settlement, first mentioned by Ethelred Ealdorman of Mercia in the 9th Century and is considered to be one of the earliest boroughs in the country.

### MAP 3 LOCATION PLAN



4.2 The original settlement at Sherston is considered likely to have been defended by earthworks – a section of which still remain north of Manor Farm – which are now a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

4.3 The south-eastern boundary of the SNP area is formed by the Fosse Way (the Roman Road linking Exeter to Lincoln). Whilst some evidence has been found of Roman and Romano-British occupation (in the form of a Roman burial site and a villa) close to the village itself, no evidence has to date been found of any more extensive activity or settlement dating from this period inside the SNP area.

4.4 Sherston was a place of some significance during the Saxon and Norman periods and there is evidence of a battle taking place nearby in 1016 between the Danes (Cnut) and the Saxons (Eadmund Ironside).

4.5 Sherston provides a good example of a small compact purpose-built market town, laid out alongside a smaller settlement to serve local needs.

4.6 The modern layout of the village preserves to a large extent the form of the original borough, centred around the wide High Street which once served as a market place.

4.7 The village has expanded considerably over the last 60 years, with various “modern” phases of development taking place just after the war, in the 1970’s and again in the early 2000’s (see Map 3 below). Indeed, some 90 new houses have been constructed in the village since the turn of the millennium.

MAP 4 SHERSTON VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PHASES



4.8 To have a working and sustainable community is vital to residents and whilst many still work in the village there has been a significant reduction in businesses in recent years. This is particularly true of retail outlets which have halved in number to seven since 1980. The largest employer, Stretchline Mill, has reduced its workforce from 100 to 35 within the last five years.

4.9 The village has a small number of shops, including a thriving Post Office/Stores that operate out of premises that have been converted from a former Victorian School. It has three pubs. It has a limited bus service. It has a new and thriving primary school. Nevertheless, shops have closed as until recently commercial premises in the High Street have generally been converted to residential use once they fall out of use - the most recent being the butcher's shop. The main exception to this rule being the decision by the Parish Council in 2011, with the backing of the entire community, to purchase a redundant Victorian School on the High Street and to convert this into a range of business and retail units – all of which are now fully let.

4.10 The Parish of Sherston covers an area of approximately 1712 square kilometres and has a population of about 1420 persons (Office of National Statistics 2011). In addition to the village itself, the Parish contains two smaller hamlets (Willesley and Pinkney) together with a large amount of agricultural land.



## 5.0 VISION OF THE PLAN:

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5.1 To allow the village to continue to thrive as a vibrant community and to evolve whilst retaining its unique and distinctive character.

5.2 To manage development within and around the village in a sustainable manner that is both appropriate in scale and location sufficient to meet the continuing and future needs of the community.

5.3 To provide and maintain an outstanding quality of life for current and future generations by retaining, enhancing and where necessary replacing a wide range of existing services and facilities.

## 6.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

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6.1 A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-driven plan and must derive its objectives, actions and authority from the community.

6.2 The Steering Group formed to prepare the SNP initially comprised representatives from each of the primary interest groups in the village, including:

- Sherston Allotments
- Sherston Busy Hands Pre School
- Sherston Businesses
- Sherston Churches
- Sherston Green Wing
- Green Square Housing Association
- Sherston Primary School
- Sherston Parish Council
- Sherston Old School Community Interest Company
- Sherston Sports
- Tolsey GP Surgery
- Sherston Seniors Club
- Sherston Scouts and Youth
- Sherston Village Hall
- (N.B. Four additional village residents were later seconded onto the Steering Group – having attended several meetings of the SG as interested parties and expressed an interest in influencing the shape of the plan)

6.3 The appointed representatives were tasked with canvassing opinion from their various interest groups and reporting back on the identified needs and aspirations. This was done at a series of (initially) monthly meetings.

6.4 The Steering Group were keen to ensure that local residents should be kept informed and given every opportunity to participate in the process.

6.5 A communication programme was established to:

- i. promote a high degree of awareness of the project;
- ii. invite residents to join the team advising the Parish Council;
- iii. encourage everyone to contribute to the development of the Plan;
- iv. promote consultation events;
- v. provide regular updates on the status of the Plan and its development.

6.6 Key to this programme was publicity, public events and the use of local print and electronic media to provide regular updates, together with the creation of a Sherston Neighbourhood Planning website (<http://www.sherston.org.uk/sherston-neighbourhood-plan.html>) to provide easily accessible, extensive information to the whole village and to encourage the village to participate. More recently use has been made of Facebook as a medium for discussing SNP issues.

6.7 The Sherston Cliffhanger is delivered to all homes in the village and read by a large proportion of the population. It is published monthly and since work started on the SNP has incorporated several articles at appropriate stages of the plan making process.

6.8 In addition, village opinion has been sought by:

- surveying every house in the Parish to assess the level of housing need (February 2012) – N.B. Survey undertaken by Wiltshire Council;
- running two workshops in July 2012 and March 2013 (each attracting about 100 people) to solicit views on the purpose, content and proposals in the Plan;
- holding a presentation and subsequent workshop session on the ideas evolving as a result of the work undertaken by the Steering Group and the appointed planning consultants in September 2014;
- holding an exhibition and open forum over the weekend of 20th/21st September 2014 – at which questionnaires were handed out seeking the views of local residents on the emerging ideas;
- holding a public meeting in January 2017 (attended by over 100 people) – to consider and discuss a particular proposal for the development of one of the key sites linked to the issue of a questionnaire seeking feedback on that specific proposal;
- holding a public meeting in May 2017 to consider a number of alternative options for that same key site which had been tabled by members of the Steering Group;
- holding a public meeting in September 2017 at which all of the objectives, policies and proposals that were being considered for inclusion in the draft SNP were set out, debated and subsequently agreed by the Steering Group.
- undertaking a formal consultation on the draft SNP (in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations) between 22nd February and 9th April 2018 after which a number of minor amendments were made to the plan.

6.9 Outcomes:

The main outcomes of this community engagement being:

- The identification of a wide range of initial aspirations;
- The subsequent identification of a set of primary Objectives for the SNP;
- Assistance with the identification of potential development sites in and around the village;
- The consideration and subsequent selection of a number of “preferred sites” for a variety of possible land use options;
- Confirmation of support for a set of policies and proposals that were being considered for inclusion in the SNP; and finally
- Assistance given to the Steering Group when making the final decision on the “objectives” and a set of draft policies and proposals that were to be incorporated in the draft SNP.

## 7.0 MAIN OBJECTIVES:

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The following primary objectives for the Sherston Neighbourhood Plan have been identified by the community:

### Objective 1:

The Plan will support the provision of facilities considered important for a vibrant community by:

- Protecting those facilities already in place;
- Supporting the provision of a new enhanced GP surgery;
- Facilitating the provision of additional facilities for the elderly, pre-school, and young people living within the village.

### Objective 2:

The Plan will ensure that all future development in the village:

- Conserves or enhances Sherston's significant heritage assets;
- Respects the high quality of the local environment by employing the use of building materials in sympathy with the Cotswold AONB;
- Is of the highest quality of design – utilising wherever possible traditional styles and proportions;
- Safeguarding those parts of the settlement that have been identified as being worthy of protection from development by reason of their landscape quality, ecological importance, historic interest or local significance.

### Objective 3:

The Plan will facilitate opportunities for new and existing businesses and social enterprise that benefit the community and support the delivery of advanced fibre connectivity to all parts of the village by:

- Supporting the creation of new business premises in appropriate locations;
- Resisting the change of use of existing business premises to alternative uses (except where there is a clear benefit to the community from allowing such);
- Encouraging the providers of broadband and other media services to deliver a level of service which will support the needs of local businesses and households.

### Objective 4:

The Plan will seek to provide for the housing needs of the community. It will do this through:

- Allowing an appropriate amount of development in selected locations – to include houses for sale on the open market, affordable rented and shared equity housing, and sheltered elderly persons accommodation;
- Ensuring that all such development includes a mix of house types capable of meeting the identified local need;
- Considering the redevelopment of existing brown field development opportunities first;
- Supporting the provision of a replacement dwelling for the local vicar in an appropriate location.

### **Objective 5:**

The Plan will seek to provide for the existing and future leisure, recreational, sporting, community and social needs of the village by:

- Ensuring that certain existing important open land and other green spaces within and adjoining the village are retained and/or enhanced – or that suitable replacement facilities are provided as part of any agreed redevelopment proposals;
- Ensuring that sufficient additional areas of open space are created within all new developments;
- Identifying and securing a site for the provision of additional burials within the village;
- Ensuring that existing sports and leisure facilities are retained and wherever possible enhanced.
- Supporting the provision of new build sports, leisure and recreational facilities in and around the village in appropriate locations.

### **Objective 6:**

The Plan will facilitate measures for managing traffic in and around the village by:

- Ensuring that sufficient on-site parking is provided in all new developments sufficient to meet current and likely future car ownership and use.
- Seeking to identify solutions to existing identified access and parking problems (associated with drop off and pick up) at the Sherston Primary School.
- Encouraging measures which lead to a reduction in traffic volumes, movement and speed throughout the village and provide safer journeys for both pedestrians and motorists alike.
- Encouraging greater use of public transport, cycling and walking.

### **Objective 7:**

The Plan will encourage the sympathetic management of the countryside surrounding the village so as to retain and/or enhance it's high quality, improve biodiversity and provide other longer term benefits to the local community by:

- Considering the creation of a community wood and/or orchard;
- Identifying and safeguarding any sites identified in the locality that are considered to be of significant ecological or landscape quality.
- Protecting, maintaining and enhancing the historic environment.

### **Objective 8:**

The Plan will encourage a move towards a low carbon economy which includes local food production and the generation of renewable energy by:

- Considering the need for additional allotments;
- Encouraging the appropriate introduction of alternative energy sources (specifically solar, wood fuel, ground and air source heat systems) for use within existing and all new development within and around the village.

## 8.0 POLICIES:

8.1 This section of the Plan contains the various policies that, together with the Core Strategy and the NPPF, will help manage development in the area until 2026 and help to achieve most if not all of the above-mentioned objectives. There are policies to cover: the protection of existing services, community facilities and business premises; the protection of those open areas within and around the village that are considered to be worthy of specific protection because of their distinctive character; the allocation of land for a range of additional community and other facilities; the allocation of land for future housing development; the safeguarding of land in current recreational use; and the safeguarding of land to allow for the possible extension of the existing sports field.

8.2 It should be noted that some of the objectives noted above have not been translated into planning policies contained in this plan. It has been accepted by the Steering Group that in several cases there are existing planning policies contained in either the WCS or NWLP which are perfectly capable of managing future development proposals without the need for any additional specific policy in the SNP. There are of course some other objectives identified which cannot naturally be translated into planning policies. The decision has been made to retain these objectives in the SNP for the sake of completeness but to accept that in such cases they simply remain aspirations rather than “policy”.

8.3 The policies of the SNP stem directly from the various public consultations that underpinned the identification of the key Objectives and of course an analysis of the relevant background information. They have been drafted so as to carry forward the requirements of the NPPF and the planning policies contained in the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy.

8.4 The following policies are considered necessary to achieve the various objectives set out above:

### **1. Protection of community services and facilities and business premises:**

- There is a concern that development pressure could lead to the further loss of existing services and facilities in and around the village and damage the character and vitality of the existing community.
- There is a concern that there will be a further loss of commercial premises in and around the village with the resultant loss of vitality and business activity.
- There is a strong feeling that important village assets need safeguarding.
- There is a strong feeling that every effort should be made to retain jobs and services within the village.
- Helps meet Objectives 1 and 3.

8.4.1 It became clear from the outset, both from the feedback received via the individual members of the Steering Group and subsequent dialogue with the wider community (via the various workshops and related feedback opportunities – including the later questionnaire survey undertaken in September 2014) that there was a strong feeling that the village should be doing all that it possibly can to seek to protect as many of its existing remaining services and facilities as possible. This is not entirely surprising given the fact that over an extended period the village has lost many such services and facilities and that the pressures for change have not gone away.

8.4.2 In addition, over the last twenty years the village has lost many of its commercial services and businesses – including pubs, shops, and other employment opportunities. Most of these sites have subsequently been redeveloped for housing. The village considers it desirable to try and slow or stop this decline and possibly to reverse the trend. The decision by the Parish Council to purchase the Old School premises on the High Street and to secure their conversion to a range of business units – to prevent their conversion to housing – being a case in point.

8.4.3 This policy (Policy I) is designed to try and limit further losses. It is designed to supplement WCS Core Policies 35 and 49 by identifying those specific facilities, services and business premises that have been selected by the local community as being worthy of protection at various community events.

### **POLICY I Protection of community services, facilities and business premises**

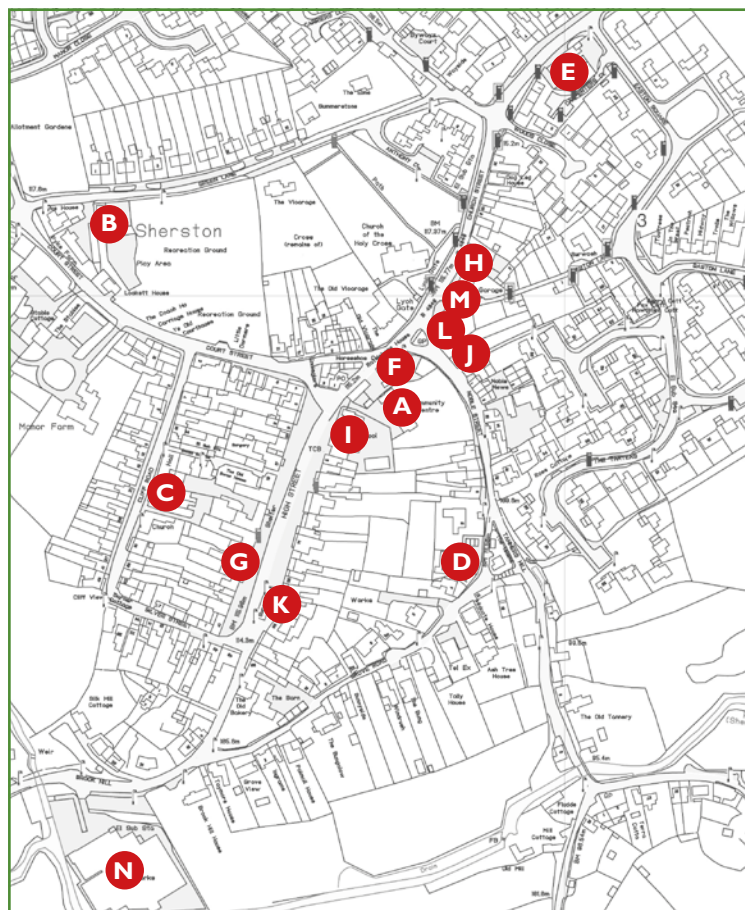
Facilities, services, shops and local businesses recognised as important to the local community are shown on Maps 5A and 5B and listed below. The loss of community facilities or services, or the change of use of businesses to non-business or non-community uses, will be resisted.

Where a change of use that would result in the loss of a community asset or service, or the change of use of a business to a non-business or non-community use is proposed, this should demonstrate why the benefits arising from the proposal outweighs the harm to the community in respect of the loss of a local asset and must be supported by evidence to demonstrate that the existing use of the asset is no longer viable, including at least six months active marketing for an alternative community or business use, taking full account of local market conditions.

Facilities/premises to be protected:

- |    |                                  |    |                                    |
|----|----------------------------------|----|------------------------------------|
| A. | Village Hall                     | I. | The Old School (shops and offices) |
| B. | Scout Hut                        | J. | Tucks                              |
| C. | British School Room              | K. | The Tolsey Surgery                 |
| D. | The Methodist Chapel             | L. | Apples and Pears                   |
| E. | Carpenters Arms PH               | M. | The Wine Shop                      |
| F. | The Rattlebone PH                | N. | Stretchline premises               |
| G. | The Angel (hotel and restaurant) | O. | Pinkney Park Business Units        |
| H. | Grays Garage                     | P. | B & W Equine Vets at Willesley     |

**MAP 5A**



**MAP 5B**





## 2. Protection of open spaces and open areas:

There is a concern that development pressure could lead to a loss of open spaces in and around Sherston and damage the AONB.

- There is a strong feeling that important village assets need safeguarding.
- There is an acknowledged need to protect the landscape of the Cotswold AONB.
- Helps meet Objective 7.

8.4.4 There is a strong feeling that the village should be doing all that it possibly can to safeguard those parts of the settlement that have been identified as being worthy of protection from development by reason of their landscape quality, ecological importance or local significance. These areas, which were initially identified via the work undertaken on the Strategic Environmental Assessment and subsequently confirmed as being strongly supported at various community events, have been identified in Policy 2. This designates three of the areas - the allotments, recreation ground and village hall - as Local Green Spaces as they meet the criteria set out in national policy. In addition the Avon river valleys, Manor Farm and Grove Wood are identified as areas that make a positive contribution to local character.

8.4.5 The following policy (Policy 2) is designed to supplement WCS Core Policy 51.

### **POLICY 2 Protection of open spaces and open areas**

- The Village Hall field, the Recreation Ground and the Allotments, shown on Map 6, are designated as Local Green Space, where new development is ruled out other than in very special circumstances.
- Development must respect the character and appearance of the land identified on Map 7, at Avon river valleys, Manor Farm and Grove Wood.

### **MAP 6 LOCAL GREEN SPACES**





## Map 7 ADDITIONAL PROTECTED OPEN AREAS



### 3. High speed broadband:

- High speed broadband is now available within the village.
- It is considered essential that all new development should make provision for accessing this service for the benefit of future occupiers.
- Helps meet Objective 3.

8.4.6 The provision of good telecommunications is particularly important in rural areas and for the support of rural enterprise and home-working. Currently fibre optic connections are the most robust and future-proof method of delivering high performance connectivity and this should be the aim for new developments.

8.4.7 The proposed new GP surgery on Site 1 (Sopworth Lane) will be heavily reliant on such technology. The inclusion of this policy in the plan it is hoped will ensure that the necessary provision is made for this important local facility from the outset.

8.4.8 Demonstration of compatibility could be through a Connectivity Statement, to include consideration of such matters as: the intended land use and the anticipated connectivity requirements of the development; known nearby data networks and their anticipated speed (fixed copper, 3G, 4G, 5G, fibre, satellite, microwave, etc); realistic assessments of connection potential or contribution to any such networks.

### **POLICY 3 High Speed Broadband**

New development should, where appropriate, demonstrate how it will contribute to and be compatible with high quality communications including local fibre or internet connectivity. Where no internet provider is available, as a minimum and subject to viability, suitable ducting that can accept fibre should be provided either to:

- the public highway; or
- a community led local access network; or
- another location that can be justified through the connectivity statement.

Where possible and desirable, additional ducting should be provided that also contributes to a local access network; or a justified alternative location. The provision of additional ducting that contributes to a local access network for the wider community will be supported.



#### 4. New Build Development:

- A range of new build development requirements have been identified to meet future needs over the remaining plan period.
- A need has been identified to provide a site for the erection of a replacement/enhanced GP surgery.
- A need has been identified to provide a site for the erection of a building for use by the pre-school group.
- A need has been identified to make provision for the possible expansion of the existing Primary School.
- A need has been identified for the construction of additional affordable housing.
- A need has been identified for the erection of some new build housing within and around the village.
- A need has been identified to seek to provide inclusive access between the proposed new GP surgery, the existing Sherston Primary School and a range of facilities in the centre of the village.
- A need has been identified to provide space for future burials.
- A need has been identified to provide a replacement/enhanced vicarage within the village.
- There is a concern to ensure that any new development is consistent with the aims and objectives of the Cotswold AONB and hence to minimise its impact on the surrounding landscape.
- The upgrading or replacement of the existing Anthony Close development to provide an up to date care or close care facility has been identified as a desirable objective.
- Helps meet Objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6.

8.4.9 The existing GP surgery in the village is no longer considered to be fit for purpose over the long term. There is clear evidence that, without a new purpose-designed building, there is a very real possibility that the existing surgery may be closed within a relatively short timescale. A request was made by the GP practice therefore to try and identify a site for the erection of a new purpose-built facility somewhere in or around the village and to consider possible ways of funding such a proposal. This idea received a significant amount of local support. This matter was therefore given high priority by the Steering Group.

8.4.10 The Steering Group spent almost two years exploring all of the possible ways of achieving this objective. The conclusion eventually reached was that the only viable and deliverable option was to propose the allocation of a site off Sopworth Lane (Site 1) for the erection of a new surgery as part of a broader mixed use development - which would help overcome the anticipated high infrastructure costs of opening up the site. This is in fact the only site that is considered to have potential for the erection of such a building being on land that is effectively under the control of Wiltshire Council. This proposal therefore forms part of a proposed mixed use allocation (Policy 4 below).

8.4.11 The pre-school facility that formerly operated out of the Sherston Village Hall has recently closed. The Village Hall is no longer considered suitable for this use due primarily to competing demands and a lack of flexibility over timing of sessions etc. The Group seeking to resurrect this important local service have concluded that the best option would be to seek to secure funding for the construction of a new facility. A request has therefore been made by the Management Committee of the pre-school group to identify a site for the erection of a new purpose-built facility somewhere in or around the village. This idea has received good support from the village. The only site that is considered suitable and likely to be available for such a use is located adjoining the existing new Primary School. It is proposed therefore to allocate land for such a purpose on Site 1 – as part of a proposed mixed use allocation (Policy 4 below).

8.4.12 The “new” Sherston Primary School was built in 2005 when the school roll was about 140. The school roll has grown continuously since it opened and has now risen to over 180 children (aged 4 to 11). The school governors consider it prudent to make provision for the possible future expansion of the school beyond its present limits over the long term. This idea is supported by the local community. It is proposed therefore to allocate land adjoining the existing primary school (on Site 1) for its possible future expansion – as part of a proposed mixed use allocation (Policy 4 below).

8.4.13 The Housing Needs Survey undertaken in 2012 (by Wiltshire Council) identified the following level of affordable housing need in the village:

**Subsidised rented housing:**

3 x one bed homes for singles / couples (1x single level accommodation)

8 x two bed homes for families (1x single level accommodation)

3 x three bed homes for families

1 x four bed home for a family

**Shared / Low cost home ownership**

3 x two bed homes for families (1x single level accommodation)

2 x four bed homes for families

**Sheltered housing for older people**

1 x two bed sheltered shared ownership home for a single / couple

8.4.14 Since 2012 six affordable housing units have been built in the village. Whilst meeting some of the above-mentioned identified need there is clearly still an outstanding requirement.

8.4.15 In accordance with WCS Policy 43 a proportion of any privately constructed new build houses on those sites allocated for future housing development in the SNP will have to be “affordable”. The level of provision being set at a target of 40% of any new build housing in this part of the County bearing in mind the fact that WCS Policy 43 also states that “the provision of affordable housing may vary on a site-by-site basis taking into account evidence of local need, mix of affordable housing proposed and, where appropriate, the viability of the development”.

8.4.16 The WCS identifies Sherston as a “Large Village” within its settlement strategy. (Large Villages are defined as “settlements with a limited range of employment, services and facilities”). Core Policy 2 of the WCS states that “*Development at Large and Small Villages will be limited to that needed to help meet the housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities.*”

8.4.17 Sherston lies within the Malmesbury Community Area (MCA) as defined in the WCS. Core Policy 13 of the WCS states that “*development within the Malmesbury Community Area should be in accordance with the settlement strategy set out in Core Policy 1*” and then goes on to define the level of new build housing development required to be met over the plan period to 2026 within the MCA.

8.4.18 The minimum housing target for Sherston is effectively determined by the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Core Policy 13 of the WCS states that, “*over the plan period (2006 to 2026), approximately 1395 new homes will be provided of which about 885 will occur at Malmesbury. Approximately 510 homes will be provided in the rest of the Community Area*”.

8.4.19 The Steering Group initially sought to establish what level of housing should be planned for in the settlement given its status as a Large Village. The advice given by Wiltshire Council being that it was for the community to decide on any precise level of new build housing deemed acceptable or appropriate as per WCS Policy 2. It was suggested however that the starting point for considering what might be appropriate would be to seek to make provision for new housing on an equitable basis across the “rest of the Community Area”. Sherston is one of 5 “Large Villages” identified in the MCA. As a base line, therefore, it would not be unreasonable to seek to make provision for a minimum of 20% of any residual requirement (which makes allowance for both completions and outstanding commitments).

8.4.20 When work first started on preparing the SNP the overall residual requirement was quite significant. This has inevitably reduced over the last five years (including some new build housing in Sherston). At the time of drafting the Plan the residual requirement was about 90 dwellings (20% of which would be 16 units). But that is not the end of the story.

8.4.21 A rigorous site selection process was undertaken to identify the most appropriate deliverable, viable and sustainable locations for each of the various different types of development that it was considered would be needed to meet the underlying objectives of the plan. Full details of this process are to be found in the Sustainability Assessment document that accompanies the plan.

8.4.22 As noted above, Site 1 was identified as the preferred location for a number of future “community” facilities (notably a new GP surgery, a new pre-school facility, and the possible future expansion of the existing Primary School). The cost of opening up that site for development is known to be significant. There was a question mark over the viability and deliverability of such a proposition. The Steering Group accordingly, at the suggestion of Wiltshire Council, asked a local firm to undertake a series of Viability Assessments. Their finding was that a mixed use development on the Sopworth Lane site comprising 45 dwellings (of which 40% - some 18 units - would be affordable housing in compliance with WCS 43) should be sufficient to fund the development. Various alternative options that were considered, including schemes incorporating a range of independent living units and a lesser number of houses were not considered viable. The conclusion reached was that in order to be able to open up the Sopworth Lane site for development and to secure the necessary infrastructure so as to enable some or all of these community facilities to be delivered then it would be necessary to allocate the site for a housing development of up to 45 units.

8.4.23 These findings were discussed with the site owners and Wiltshire Council (who have a controlling interest in the site). Both have indicated that they are supportive of the proposition that, in return for the allocation of this site for a mixed use development – including an allowance for the erection of up to 45 dwellings (40% of which should be affordable housing units) and the allocation of an appropriate amount of land for all of the “community” uses noted above – the landowners and Wiltshire Council will secure the delivery of the new surgery. To this end, and for the avoidance of any doubt, Wiltshire Council has now formally resolved at a Cabinet Capital Assets Committee meeting held in November 2016 to support this proposition.

8.4.24 It is considered that there would be some qualitative benefits deriving from the allocation of this site for this number of houses. These benefits include a higher potential return from any CIL payments – to help cover the costs of the desired improvements to the village sports facilities and/or certain identified highway improvements in the village – and the opportunity to Master Plan a high quality mixed use development on the edge of the settlement (incorporating a mix of community uses that the village wishes to see delivered), taking into account the need to minimise the impact on the landscape by incorporating appropriate landscaping and buffer planting.

8.4.25 It should be noted that the amount of development being proposed in the SNP still represents a slowing down of the pace of development in the village over the last 20 years. The development that has taken place over this time period has without doubt helped to maintain/support a wide range of existing services and facilities in the village (e.g. the school; the surgery; local shops and pubs etc.). It is considered prudent and appropriate to seek to make provision for sufficient development in and around the village to help safeguard these existing services and facilities and future proof the settlement from less appropriate development.

8.4.26 It is proposed therefore to allocate Site 1 (Sopworth Lane) for a mixed use development comprising up to 45 houses (40%affordable) plus land being set aside to accommodate a new GP surgery, a pre-school facility and for the future expansion of the Sherston Primary School). See Policy 4 below.

8.4.27 In addition to the above it is also proposed to make two further small housing allocations in the SNP. The first of these being a proposal for the redevelopment of the existing Vicarage Site off Green Lane (Site 2 on the Proposals Map). A need has been identified for the replacement of the existing vicarage together with the provision of some additional land for use as burial space. This site immediately adjoins the existing churchyard. The proposal is for this site to be allocated for mixed use – housing and burial space. It has an estimated capacity of 3 dwellings (net 2). See Policy 5 below.

8.4.28 The second small site comprises an existing saved and therefore outstanding housing allocation in the adopted North Wiltshire Local Plan. This is identified as Site 3 (The Elms) on the Proposals Map and has an estimated capacity of 4 units (net 3). See Policy 6 below.

8.4.29 A “Development Brief” and a “Design Brief” are set out below each of the land allocation Policies. These set out key issues that should be taken into account when considering how best to develop each site, along with recommendations in respect of design and layout

8.4.30 It is anticipated that some windfall development on small sites is likely to continue to take place on land falling inside the defined Village Development Boundary (subject to normal planning policy considerations) during the plan period. (N.B. As noted above, the Village Development Boundary is being reviewed separately by Wiltshire Council). The SNP does not seek to prevent this.

8.4.31 The existing elderly persons accommodation at Anthony Close is considered to be of a poor quality design and somewhat out-dated. Ideally, the Steering Group would like to see this site redeveloped for some form of care or close-care facility which it is considered would better serve the long term needs of the community. The site is owned by the Greensquare Group. The existing properties are let out to individuals on the Homes 4 Wiltshire Register. There is currently no onsite care provided. It is considered that the site owners should be encouraged to consider replacing/redeveloping the existing units with some sort of care or close care facility should the opportunity arise. See Policy 7 below.

## MAP 8 SOPWORTH LANE



### POLICY 4 Land off Sopworth Lane

- Approximately 3.3 hectares of land situated off Sopworth Lane (**Site I**), as identified on Map 8, is allocated for mixed use development to include the following:
- Sufficient land for the erection of a new enhanced GP surgery with associated parking and space for related mobile services.
- Sufficient land to allow for the future expansion of the existing Sherston C of E Primary School and staff parking together with a site suitable for the erection of a new pre-school facility with associated parking.
- Up to 45 dwellings to serve diverse residential needs of which 40% should comprise affordable housing.
- Strategic landscaping and open space to retain and reinforce existing hedgerows, and to establish new areas of substantial planting and landscaping so as to mitigate the impact of the proposed development on both the existing PROW and the wider AONB.
- Development of the site should conserve and/or enhance heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Development will be subject to the following requirements:

1. Development must not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
2. The provision of footpath and cycle links to both the proposed new surgery site and the western edge of the existing primary school as well as to the existing Parish playing fields to the north.
3. A design and layout that protects and preserves the character of the settlement and conserves the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB.
4. A detailed Ecological and Mitigation Strategy that ensures that any future development of this site retains existing features and habitats of ecological value, minimises the impact on protected species and maximises the potential of retained habitats to enhance biodiversity.
5. An archaeological assessment.

Development proposals should be supported by a masterplan taking account of the “Development Brief” and the “Design Brief” information set out in the supporting text.

## Development Brief – Sopworth Lane

### Site Description:

- The site is located on the western edge of the village and would be accessed from Sopworth Lane.
- The site, which is approximately 3.3 hectares in size, comprises an agricultural field currently in arable use. The boundaries of the site are formed by a combination of hedges and fences.
- The site is abutted to the north by existing public sports facilities (tennis courts and a football field), to the east by housing development and the village primary school, to the south by Sopworth Lane and to the west by a single dwelling and its large domestic curtilage and further agricultural land.

### Key Issues:

#### 1. Landscape:

- The site comprises an open agricultural field lying within the designated Cotswold AONB. The site has a strong relationship with the existing settlement.
- There is the potential for the north western edge of the site to become visible on the skyline, particularly when viewed from the west (Sopworth direction). Whilst the church tower and water tower are currently visible from this direction, the main body of housing of the village is not visible in these views. As such, in designing any scheme for this site, care will need to be taken over the design of development in the north western quadrant of the site. This may entail heavily landscaping the western edge with additional trees incorporated into the development parcels here to break down massing.
- There is a Public Right of Way (PRoW) crossing the site from a stone stile at the southwest corner, running along the western boundary and exiting at the base of the water tower in the north-west corner. This footpath affords open views across the whole of the site area and over expansive areas of the open countryside to the west and south. Views within the site are dominated by the rear elevations of existing housing and the primary school to the east. The effects on the users of this footpath will need careful consideration in the design of development.

#### 2. Ecology:

- There are no statutory designated sites of ecological importance within 1 kilometre of the site. The hedgerows situated in the southern half of the site are species rich and contain a number of trees. These should where possible be retained. Some minor hedgerow removal will need to occur to facilitate the development. As compensation for the loss of any sections of hedgerow, new hedgerow planting will need to be incorporated into the development scheme.
- Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement may include:
  - Retention of vegetated field margins to hedgerows, facilitating wildlife dispersal across the site and into neighbouring habitats;
  - The planting of new species-rich hedgerows and native trees (e.g. between new property boundaries). Once established, they will provide further nesting and foraging habitat for a range of bird species, as well as commuting and foraging opportunities for bats and other small mammals, creating new connectivity between the site and the surrounding habitats;
  - Creation of a mixture of habitats in areas of open space (e.g. in structure and through management) to provide opportunities for a range of species;
  - Use of native species, or those with a known benefit to wildlife within future landscape proposals. This may include tree planting (specifically fruit trees such as apple, plum, pear etc.) which may provide an important winter food source for birds;
  - Inclusion of scented night-flowering plants which would enhance the post developed site by attracting night-flying insects, providing a food resource for bats;
  - The addition of wildlife boxes (e.g. bird, bat, hedgehog and invertebrate boxes) into the post-developed site.



### 3. Heritage Matters:

- The primary archaeological resource identified in the area surrounding the Site is characterised largely by the known settlement in Sherston, which was established in the early medieval period and later expanded during the medieval period through to the present day. In addition, a Scheduled earthwork is located a short distance to the south of the Site, which existing interpretations suggest may be remnants of a Norman ringwork/castle, part of the medieval settlement, or an early medieval defensive earthwork associated with the suggested site of a Saxon battle nearby.
- Historic aerial photography showing plough marks within part of the Site, as well as much of the land around the settlement suggests that much of this area was farmland from at least the medieval period onwards. Any remnant agricultural features such as furrows or ditches would not be of more than low heritage significance.
- There is no specific evidence for remains associated with the Scheduled medieval earthwork to the south of the Site to extend to the north into the Site. The southernmost part of the Site has obviously a greater potential for any such possible associated features but nothing has as yet been identified.
- There are no listed buildings in close proximity to the proposal site. The nearest being Manor Farm some distance to the south off Court Street.
- The site is abutted to the south by the northern boundary of the designated Sherston Conservation Area and as such development has the potential to affect the setting of the Conservation Area.

### 4. Transport Issues:

- The sole means of vehicular access into the site is off Sopworth Lane. Certain offsite improvements are likely to be required to Sopworth Lane (and its junction with Court Street) to facilitate a safe means of vehicular access.
- Consideration may need to be given to the provision of an emergency access link through to Saxon Close (subject to ownership constraints).
- Consideration should be given to the safeguarding of an area of land immediately adjoining the proposed new GP surgery for the possible introduction of a bus stop for local services at some future date.
- There is an existing public footpath along the western side of the site. This links to the wider footpath network and should be retained.
- Additional footpath links should be provided where possible including links to:
  - Butlers Close/Saxon Close;
  - The primary school;
  - The track to the north of the site;
  - The creation of a new footpath along Sopworth Lane.
- The needs of cyclists to be considered as part of any development.
- Parking provision for the proposed development will need to be provided in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Adopted Parking Strategy for new developments. Specific consideration will need to be given to the provision of some additional parking for the existing Primary School (staff and/or visitors).

### 5. Other matters:

- The site is crossed by an existing high pressure water main. This will either need to be relocated or avoided.
- There is an existing overhead power line crossing part of the site. This will need to be rerouted or undergrounded.
- A SUDS drainage system should if possible be introduced.
- The new GP surgery and other forms of development on site should have access to advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure.

### Design Brief:

See the attached Constraints Plan.

The following recommendations are made for the design and layout of any development on this site:

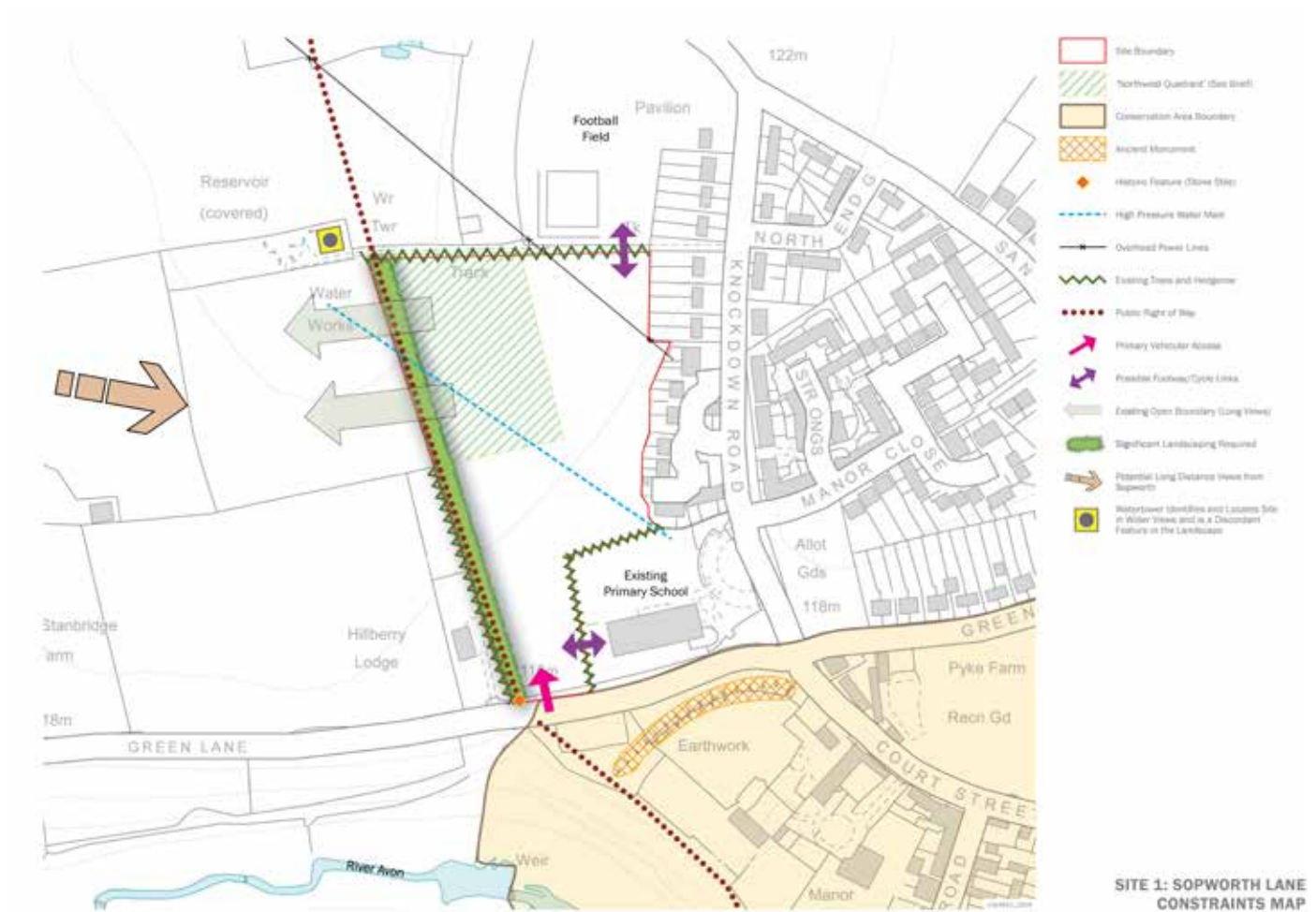
- I. In designing any scheme for this site, particular care will need to be taken over the design of development in the north western quadrant of the site and the western edge should be heavily landscaped with additional trees incorporated into the development parcels here to break down massing.
- II. Existing mature hedge boundaries and trees should be retained. Overall, site boundaries would benefit from enhancement on nearly all sides – there are species poor hedges to several boundaries and some are completely open. ‘Gapping up’ and new hedgerow planting should be undertaken;
- III. Consideration should be given to the need for the provision of an emergency access link through to Saxon Close (subject to ownership constraints).
- IV. Consideration should be given to the possible safeguarding of an area of land immediately adjoining the proposed new GP surgery for the introduction of a bus stop for local services at some future date.
- V. Pedestrian and cycle movements should be fully considered not just with respect to the existing PROW, but with access being provided to: the sports facilities to the north; the Primary School and existing residential areas to the east; and via Sopworth Lane to the rest of the village;
- VI. The linear form of the PROW should be retained within a robust ribbon of open space along the western boundary of the site, allowing for further mitigation planting to soften the settlement edge here while also allowing the creation of a public space in which people can enjoy the visual connection with the wider countryside;
- VII. Built form should be carefully considered on the highest parts of the site and additional tree planting incorporated where possible to break up the mass/form of the development;
- VIII. A surface water management scheme that can achieve less than current greenfield runoff rates should be utilised on this site. The lowest part of the site would be best suited to a Suitable Urban Drainage System;
- IX. The existing overhead powerline which crosses the site in the north-eastern corner should be re-routed or undergrounded as part of any scheme. (N.B. The removal of this feature from the landscape could be a positive benefit of the scheme);
- X. The character and quality of any new built form should be typically Cotswold in fashion - have strong architectural merit, using local materials and building techniques (dry stone walls). This doesn't necessarily mean it should be ‘pastiche’ – contemporary versions of the vernacular may be possible and desirable but the architectural approach should be strongly informed by a detailed understanding of the village vernacular and high quality local materials should be used wherever possible;
- XI. When preparing the site layout full regard will need to be given to the existence of the water main that crosses the site;
- XII. Parking provision for the proposed development will need to be provided in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Adopted Parking Strategy for new developments.
- XIII A detailed ‘Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy’ should be prepared for this site. This should consider the opportunities for:
  - Retention of vegetated field margins to hedgerows, facilitating wildlife dispersal across the site and into neighbouring habitats;
  - New species-rich hedgerow and native tree planting (e.g. between new property boundaries). Once established, they will provide further nesting and foraging habitat for a range of bird species, as well as commuting and foraging opportunities for bats and other small mammals, creating new connectivity between the site and the surrounding habitats;
  - Creation of a mixture of habitats in areas of open space (e.g. in structure and through management) to provide opportunities for a range of species;
  - Use of native species, or those with a known benefit to wildlife within future landscape proposals. This may include tree planting (specifically fruit trees such as apple, plum, pear etc.) which may provide an important winter food source for birds;
  - Inclusion of scented night-flowering plants which would enhance the post developed site by attracting night-flying insects, providing a food resource for bats;
  - The addition of wildlife boxes (e.g. bird, bat, hedgehog and invertebrate boxes) into the post-

developed site.

XIV. When considering the heritage issues relating to the future development of this site particular regard should be had to the need to:

- Ensure that the design, materials, layout and massing of any development is sympathetic to the Conservation Area;
- Maintain existing mature hedgerows and trees and encourage new planting where appropriate;
- Retain the existing historic footpath link through the site on its present alignment;
- Limit the density of new build development on the site to help maintain a “quiet residential area”. This can be assisted by siting the proposed new community facilities (GP surgery and educational uses) on the southern half of the site.
- Ensure that the stone access point/stile on the southern Site boundary which positively contributes to the Conservation Area is retained.

MAP 9 SOPWORTH LANE CONSTRAINTS MAP



## MAP 10 THE VICARAGE SITE



### POLICY 5 The Vicarage Site

Land at **Site 2** (the Vicarage Site), as identified on Map 10, is allocated for mixed use development, to include:

- Land for use as additional burial space.
- About 3 dwellings (including new vicarage).

Development will be subject to the following requirements:

1. The provision of a footpath link to the existing adjoining churchyard from the proposed new burial area.
2. Development should conserve or enhance heritage assets, including the Sherston Conservation Area and the setting of the Grade I Listed church.
3. Development should conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB.

Development proposals should be supported by a masterplan taking account of the “Development Brief” and the “Design Brief” information set out in the supporting text.

### Development Brief – Vicarage Site

#### Site Description:

- The site comprises the existing vicarage and its garden. It is a brown field site. It has a site area of approximately 0.35 hectares.
- The existing vicarage was constructed in the late 1960's and later extended. It's design and appearance are not considered to be in character with the surrounding Cotswold AONB, Sherston Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings.
- The site lies inside the existing Sherston Village Development boundary. It is abutted to the north by Green Lane, over which lies “modern” primarily semi-detached housing, to the west by the existing village Recreation Ground, to the south by several existing residential properties (including the former vicarage) and to the east by the burial ground belonging to the Church of the Holy Cross.
- Most of the existing properties fronting onto Green Lane are ex- Council houses (including those comprising Anthony's Close at the eastern end of the lane) whose design, layout and massing is generally considered also to be out of character with much of the rest of the village.

#### Key Issues:

##### 1. Landscape:

- The entire village lies within the designated Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- The site is visible from the adjoining churchyard to the east but is separated from such by a high rubble stone wall.

## **II. Ecology:**

- The proposal site comprises an existing domestic garden.
- There are no statutory designated sites of ecological importance within 1 kilometre of the site.
- The leylandii tree screen that runs along the entire western site boundary is species poor and places severe limitations on the habitats of various species within close proximity to this boundary.
- There are several existing trees on the site – with native species to the front and mainly fruit trees to the rear. The majority of the rest of the site is mown grass. None of the trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- The site is considered to be a potentially suitable habitat for birds and small reptiles (such as slow worms) and has potential as a bat foraging area. There is no suitable breeding habitat for great crested newts on the site. It is considered highly unlikely that the site would be suitable for dormice or brown hares.

## **III. Heritage Matters:**

- The site lies within the designated Sherston Conservation Area and immediately abuts the curtilage of the Church of the Holy Cross (a Grade I listed building).
- The burial ground to the rear of the church contains several listed structures (tombs) and the former vicarage to the south is Grade II listed.
- The site itself contains one listed structure – the remains of a medieval village cross (which is Grade II listed). The Sherston Conservation Area Statement (SCAS) suggests that this was placed here at some point during the early 19th Century having previously marked one of the boundaries of the village.
- A heritage appraisal has been undertaken by Border Archaeology and this can be made available by the Parish Council
- The SCAS identifies a number of different “key areas of character” within the village. These include “specific key features” in and around the proposal site such as: the afore-mentioned listed buildings; the wall running down the eastern site boundary of the vicarage; and certain individual trees. It also identifies certain “key areas” deemed worthy of particular consideration such as: the areas fronting the High Street and Court Street. Finally, it identifies a number of “key settings” such as: the Recreation Ground and the existing churchyard.
- The north side of Green Lane lies outside of the defined Conservation Area (CA). This side of the road is characterised by modern (post war) former Council housing – comprised of a row of sixteen semi-detached houses set behind a wide verge that has more recently been used for car parking. All of these properties front onto Green Lane and abut the CA boundary. They predate the creation of the CA. Their design and appearance is considered to be out of character and appearance with the adjoining Conservation Area.
- One new house (Summerstone) has been constructed on Green Lane since the creation of the CA. This is sited a short distance to the east of the proposal site – immediately opposite the cemetery. This large detached house is set back some distance from the road albeit a garage has been erected at right angles to the road close to the site entrance. The design of this property is considered to appear more in keeping with its setting and location adjoining the CA and within the AONB. This property has a direct line of sight to the listed church.
- The guidance given in the SCAS in relation to this part of the Conservation Area is to “preserve long views of the church and skyline, with “no new development south or west of the church” whilst retaining the “full curtilage of church land”. The most notable feature of the church being its spire – which is visible from many distant viewpoints.
- However, no long views of the church are currently achievable when viewed from the west (Recreation Ground or Knockdown Road) and only limited views of the church from the north (Green Lane). The former being precluded by the existing leylandii tree screen and the latter by the positioning of the modern vicarage and tree planting. Indeed, the church itself is only visible from very limited viewpoints along Green Lane – most notably from the viewpoint immediately opposite the new house that was constructed on the north side of Green Lane a few years ago.

## **IV. Transport Issues:**

- Vehicular access to the site would be taken off Green Lane. There is an existing vehicular access situated on the eastern side of the site frontage. This could be used to provide a shared access to any new build on this site.
- The site lies within close proximity to a wide range of existing services and facilities elsewhere in the village. It

is within easy walking/cycling distance of the village centre as well as the proposed new GP surgery and existing Primary School.

- Pedestrian access will need to be provided between the existing cemetery and the proposed new burial space. This will require creating a new pedestrian opening in the wall between the two spaces. This footpath link will also be used by the Vicar when on duty at the nearby church.

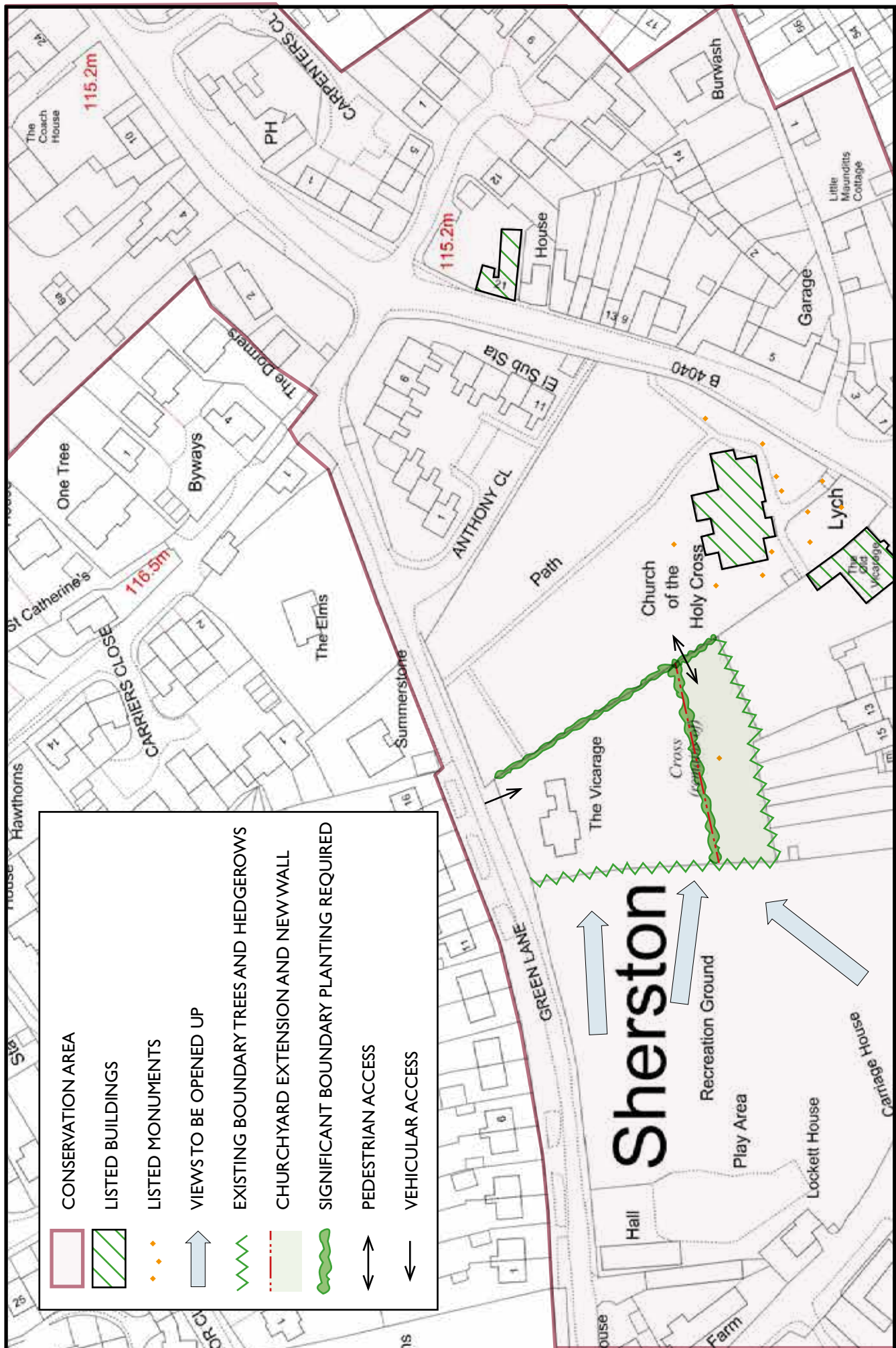
### **Design Brief:**

See the attached Constraints Plan.

The following recommendations are made for the design and layout of any development on this site:

- I. The development should conserve and where possible, enhance heritage assets. Given this, consideration should be given to the following:
  - Ensure that the design, materials, layout and massing of any development is sympathetic to the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings. Particular attention will need to be given to the scale, massing and architectural detailing so as to ensure that they respect the setting of the adjoining churchyard and its monuments.
  - Careful consideration will also need to be given to the orientation of any new dwellings on the site to help minimise any potential adverse impact on the adjoining listed buildings.
  - Retain as many of the existing trees on the site as possible (with the exception of the leylandii trees referred to below) and encourage new planting where appropriate;
  - Carry out new tree and hedge planting along the entire eastern boundary of the site adjoining the churchyard;
  - Retain all existing tree and hedge-cover along the site boundary with the Old Vicarage.
  - Open up long views of the nearby Church of the Holy Cross through the removal of most if not all of the existing leylandii tree screen that runs along the western site boundary. This should be replaced by deciduous tree-planting along this boundary to ensure its leafy, secluded character is maintained and also to soften views of any new houses which will then be potentially discernible in views from the adjoining recreation ground and more distantly from Court Street.
  - Retain all of the existing stone walls around the perimeter of the site and if feasible increase the height of the existing stone wall that runs along the western site boundary.
  - Limit the density of new build development on the site to that required to help deliver a new vicarage and to minimise the potential impact of any development on the surrounding Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings. A maximum of three dwellings should be permitted on the site.
  - The proposed new Vicarage should be set back from the churchyard boundary to reduce any potential visual impact.
  - The existing former village cross should be retained “in situ” and protected from development during the construction phase.
  - The southernmost portion of the site which is proposed to be allocated for an extension to the churchyard should be separated from the curtilage of any new housing by a 1.5m high stone boundary wall. Additional tree planting should be carried alongside the proposed new wall. An appropriate display board should be erected describing the history of the listed monument.
- II. Vehicular access should be provided off Green Lane. This should comprise a single shared vehicular access serving all of the properties;
- III. A pedestrian access should be provided through the existing stone wall between the existing cemetery and proposed new burial area in a location to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority;
- IV. The character and quality of any new built form should be typically Cotswold in fashion - have strong architectural merit, using local materials and building techniques (dry stone walls). This doesn't necessarily mean it should be 'pastiche' – contemporary versions of the vernacular may be possible and desirable but the architectural approach should be strongly informed by a detailed understanding of the village vernacular and high quality local materials should be used wherever possible;
- V. Parking provision for the proposed development will need to be provided in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Adopted Parking Strategy for new developments.

SITE 2 : THE VICARAGE SITE - CONSTRAINTS MAP



## MAP 12 THE ELMS



## POLICY 6 The Elms

**Site 3** (The Elms), as identified on Map 12, is allocated for the development of around 4 dwellings. Development should conserve or enhance any heritage assets affected, including the setting of the Sherston Conservation Area. Development should also conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB.

Development proposals should be supported by a masterplan taking account of the “Development Brief” and the “Design Brief” information set out in the supporting text.

## Development Brief – The Elms

### Site Description:

- The site comprises a single dwellinghouse set in a large garden. It has a site area of approximately 0.3 hectares. It is a brown field site.
- This site has been allocated for new housing development for many years. It remains allocated for housing in the adopted North Wiltshire Local Plan. Most of the land adjoining this property, formerly in the same ownership, has already been developed. This includes the land immediately to the north of the property – a former transport yard – which contains 14 houses (Carriers Close). Five other houses have been constructed on other residual land belonging to this property in recent years – four of them to the north of Carriers Close (off Sandpits Lane) and one immediately to the west of The Elms (off Green Lane).
- The Elms is a post war construction with a rendered exterior and clay tiled roof. Whilst not of a typical Cotswold style or design it is nevertheless not considered to be entirely out of keeping with this part of the settlement.
- The site lies inside the existing Sherston Village Development boundary but outside of the existing defined Conservation Area boundary. It is surrounded on all four sides by existing mostly post war housing development including: on the opposite side of Green Lane, by the sheltered housing development known as Anthony’s Close; to the west and north by the afore-mentioned recent modern housing developments; and to the east by a single older property.

### Key Issues:

#### 1. Landscape:

- The entire village lies within the designated Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- The proposal site is centrally located within the existing settlement and is virtually invisible from any public viewpoints beyond the immediate locality.
- The southern site boundary is formed by a two metre high trimmed privet hedge. All of the other site



boundaries abut existing residential properties – with the exception of a very short section of Sandpits Lane from which vehicular access is taken.

- There are no public viewpoints from the north or east. Available views from the north are therefore from Green Lane itself and from the afore-mentioned site entrance off Sandpits Lane.
- The site is visible from the adjoining churchyard to the south west but is separated from such by a high stone wall.

## **2. Ecology:**

- The proposal site comprises an existing domestic garden.
- There are no statutory designated sites of ecological importance within 1 kilometre of the site.
- The privet hedge that runs along the entire southern site boundary is species poor and places limitations on the habitats of various species within close proximity to this boundary.
- There are several existing trees on the site. The majority of the rest of the site is mown grass. None of the trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- The site is considered to be a potentially suitable habitat for birds and small reptiles (such as slow worms) and has potential as a bat foraging area. There is no suitable breeding habitat for great crested newts on the site. It is considered highly unlikely that the site would be suitable for dormice or brown hares.

## **3. Heritage Matters:**

- The site lies just outside of the designated Sherston Conservation Area.
- The village cemetery that lies within the curtilage of the Church of the Holy Cross (a Grade I listed building) is situated a short distance to the south west of the site – on the opposite side of Green Lane.
- The church itself is visible from the site in long views across the churchyard. This contains several listed structures (tombs). There is a high stone wall surrounding the churchyard.
- The site lies directly opposite Anthony's Close – a sheltered housing development built in the 1960's. The Sherston Conservation Area Statement (SCAS) describes this as being of “a unified, single storey, concrete block design” which “although partially screened by maturing trees, the flat roofing, cladding and poor window detailing (does) not sit well as neighbours to the church”. This development is considered to be totally out of character with the Conservation Area. It is the subject of a separate policy in the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to secure its replacement by a well- designed purpose-built care or close-care facility (see Policy 7).
- The SCAS identifies a number of different “key areas of character” within the village on a composite plan which it is considered “contribute the most to its character and which it should be a priority to preserve”. These include one “specific key feature” near the proposal site – comprising the existing stone wall surrounding the churchyard. It also identifies certain “key areas” deemed worthy of particular consideration – none of which are close to the proposal site. Finally, it identifies a number of “key settings” including the Recreation Ground and the existing churchyard. None of these are considered likely to be seriously affected by any new build development on the proposal site.
- The north side of Green Lane lies outside of the defined Conservation Area (CA). This side of the road is characterised by modern (post war) former Council housing – comprised of a row of sixteen semi-detached houses set behind a wide verge that has more recently been used for car parking. All of these properties front onto Green Lane and abut the CA boundary. They predate the creation of the CA. Their design and appearance is considered to be out of character and appearance with the adjoining Conservation Area.
- One new house (Summerstone) has been constructed on Green Lane since the creation of the CA. This is sited immediately adjoining the proposal site – and hence immediately opposite the cemetery. This large detached house is set back some distance from the road albeit a garage has been erected at right angles to the road close to the site entrance. The design of this property is more in keeping with its setting and location adjoining the CA and within the AONB. It has a direct line of sight to the listed church.
- The guidance given in the SCAS in relation to the part of the Conservation Area that abuts the proposal site is to “preserve long views of the church and skyline, with “no new development south or west of the church” whilst retaining the “full curtilage of church land”.

#### 4 Transport Issues:

- Vehicular access is currently taken off Sandpits Lane in the far north eastern corner of the site.
- Local residents have expressed concern about the potential adverse impact of additional traffic on Sandpits Lane arising from the development of this site – pointing out that there have been approximately 25 new houses built on that lane since 1985.
- It is not as yet clear whether it would be intended to retain the existing house and seek to construct some additional housing or to redevelop the entire site. Either way it is considered that no more than one dwelling should take access off Sandpits Lane. The remainder should be accessed off Green Lane with possibly a footway being provided along the site frontage so as to improve pedestrian safety.
- The site lies within close proximity to a wide range of existing services and facilities elsewhere in the village. It is within easy walking/cycling distance of the village centre as well as the proposed new GP surgery and existing Primary School.

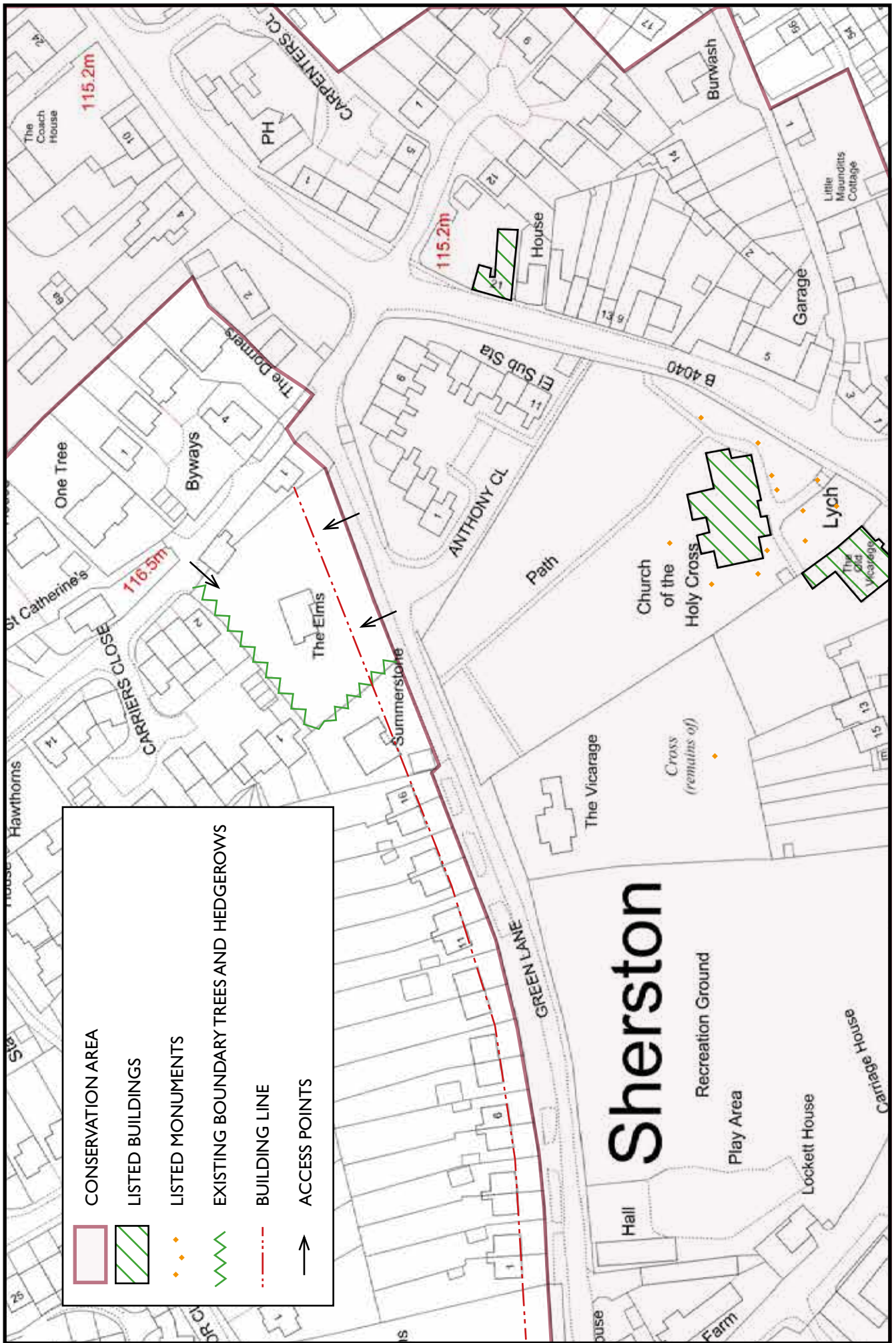
#### Design Brief:

See the attached Constraints Plan.

The following recommendations are made for the design and layout of any development on this site:

- I. The development should conserve and where possible, enhance heritage assets. Given this, consideration should be given to the following:
  - Ensure that the design, materials, layout and massing of any development is sympathetic to the adjoining Conservation Area;
  - Retain as many of the existing trees on the site as possible and encourage new planting where appropriate.
- II. The existing vehicular access off Sandpits Lane to be retained but not used for more than one single dwellinghouse. Vehicular access to any other properties built on the site should be provided off Green Lane. This should in turn comprise a shared vehicular access serving at least two of the properties;
- III. Consideration should be given to the provision of a pedestrian footway across the entire Green Lane site frontage;
- IV. No more than four dwellings in total should be provided on the site;
- V. All new housing on this site should adhere to a similar building line to the rest of the properties fronting this side of Green Lane;
- VI. The character and quality of any new built form should be typically Cotswold in fashion - have strong architectural merit, using local materials and building techniques (dry stone walls). This doesn't necessarily mean it should be 'pastiche' – contemporary versions of the vernacular may be possible and desirable but the architectural approach should be strongly informed by a detailed understanding of the village vernacular and high quality local materials should be used wherever possible;
- VII. Parking provision for the proposed development will need to be provided in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Adopted Parking Strategy for new developments.

SITE 3 : THE ELMS - CONSTRAINTS MAP



## MAP 14 ANTHONY CLOSE



### POLICY 7 Anthony Close

Proposals to upgrade or replace the existing sheltered accommodation on Anthony Close with a purpose-built care or close care facility will be supported.

#### 5. Highway Issues:

- A need has been identified to seek to provide inclusive access between the proposed new GP surgery, the existing Sherston Primary School and a range of facilities in the centre of the village.

8.4.32 A high level Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) was prepared by Arup in May 2017, on behalf of a group of local residents, in order to assess the likely impact of a mixed use (housing and community) development on Site 1 (i.e. the land off Sopworth Lane). The main purpose of the TIA being to estimate the number of vehicular trips that would be associated with that development and to assess the ability of the local highway network to absorb those trips. It also considered a range of possible off-site improvements that could be undertaken to improve safety and accessibility between the proposed development site and the rest of the village.

8.4.33 Two different development options were considered. These were:

**Option A** - utilising the southern half of the site only (based around an 18 bed Independent Living Unit plus additional market and affordable housing, a new GP surgery, a new pre-school facility, and an expanded Primary School).

**Option B** – utilising the entire site (based on the proposals as set out in Policy 4 above).

8.4.34 Site visits were undertaken to observe the base line traffic conditions in the locality and traffic counts undertaken. The likely trip generation of each option was estimated using data obtained from the TRICS database. These estimated trips were assigned to the local highway network on the basis of the existing known traffic conditions (taken from earlier survey work). It was concluded that in either case it was “unlikely that road users would perceive the increase in traffic and that the local highway network would continue to function adequately in both development scenarios”.

8.4.35 Various other matters were dealt with in the report. During the site assessment it was noted that there was an existing problem with the arrangements for picking up and dropping off children at the local Primary School. Whilst this was a known problem to the Steering Group, which had been identified at the beginning of the NP process, this information confirmed the necessity to seek to ensure that this issue was dealt with when the proposals for Site 1 are eventually brought forward. It is understood that this is a matter that the School Governor's and Wiltshire Council are already trying to address.

8.4.36 It was also noted in the report that should a new healthcare facility be built on Site 1 and the existing GP surgery in the centre of the village closed and relocated it would be sensible to consider what improvements could be made to the local highway network for the benefit of pedestrians and cyclists who were likely to be attracted to the site. These were set out in some detail in the report. Inclusive access routes were identified along Court Street and Green Lane.

8.4.37 Discussions were held with Wiltshire Council about which if any of these works could reasonably be required to be provided by the prospective developer(s) of Site 1 – and hence be subject to a legal agreement requiring such works to be undertaken. The Steering Group were advised that only those works directly required as a result of such development would be included within any such agreement and that this was unlikely to include most of the offsite works being suggested on both Court Street and Green Lane. The Steering Group felt nevertheless that it was still appropriate to seek to secure the provision of such improvements via other means. The Parish Council considers this to comprise a local priority infrastructure project for the use of CIL receipts received by the Parish Council.

## **POLICY 8 Highways Matters**

The enhancement of inclusive access and crossings between the proposed new GP surgery on Site 1, the Sherston Primary School and the Post Office/Stores on the high street as well as key residential areas will be supported, so as to encourage all modes of non-vehicular access to these facilities.

### **6. Sports facilities:**

- There is a concern about the amount and quality of the existing sports/recreational facilities in the village.
- There is a concern that development pressures might result in the loss of some or all of those facilities.
- There is a desire to improve and enhance the range of sports facilities available to the local community.
- The existing changing rooms serving the football club are totally inadequate and need to be replaced.

8.4.38 The Parish Council controls two large recreational spaces in the village – comprising the Recreation Ground (which is primarily used for general/informal play by large numbers of children) and the Football Field (which is used by Sherston FC as its base together with the Sherston Tennis Club and a recently constructed skate-boarding area).

8.4.39 The Recreation Ground contains a good range of play facilities for children of all ages – mostly currently in good repair. There is a Scout Hut on the edge of the Recreation Ground.

8.4.40 The Football Field by way of contrast is in a relatively poor state. The football pitch is small by current standards and there is currently little scope to extend the pitch in any direction. The “changing rooms” are in

a poor state and in urgent need of replacement. There is no space available within the current structure for any social facilities. There is nowhere for the football players to train (indoor or outdoor). There has been an identified need to improve/enhance the facilities on the Football Field for some considerable time now – but no finance available to do so.

8.4.41 Sherston Cricket Club has access to land in private ownership (albeit on a long lease) comprising part of Pinkney Park. This is an excellent facility. It is only usable for cricket. There is no urgent need to seek alternative or additional facilities to serve this particular activity.

8.4.42 The Village Hall is utilised for a wide range of recreational, cultural and educational activities. It was converted to its current use from an agricultural barn at some point in the last century. On the sporting side, it is currently utilised for badminton, yoga, Zumba and indoor bowls – but was not designed for any such uses.

8.4.43 There are no indoor facilities currently available in the village for use by children (or adults) for a wide range of sporting activities – e.g. indoor football, cricket or hockey. There is nowhere for children or adults to keep fit – e.g. a gymnasium or any sort of training facility.

8.4.44 There is an identifiable need to improve the range and quality of facilities available on the Football Field – both in terms of the playing pitch itself and the associated changing/social facilities. There is also a longer term desire to provide additional indoor sports/play facilities – purpose built for use by a range of different sports activities (including most of those mentioned above). It is accepted, however, that there is insufficient land available to accommodate such a facility on the existing Football Field and insufficient demand at the moment to justify the identification and/or allocation of additional land for such a purpose. This nevertheless remains a longer term aspiration for the village.

8.4.45 The SNP seeks to support the carrying out of necessary improvements to the Football Field, including the erection of new replacement changing rooms and club facilities (see Policy 11 below).

8.4.46 The following policies are designed: to provide extra protection to those sites that can be specifically identified as providing open air sports facilities (Policy 9); to safeguard land adjoining the existing Football Field to allow for its possible future expansion (Policy 10); and to allow for the construction of replacement changing and other facilities on the Football Field (Policy 11).

## POLICY 9 Protection of Sports Facilities

The loss of existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, will be resisted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the open space, buildings or land is surplus to requirements; or the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quality and quantity in a suitable location; or the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss.

MAP 15 POTENTIAL SPORTS FACILITIES SITE



## POLICY 10 Land safeguarded for future recreational use

The development of **Site 4** adjoining the Football Field, as shown on Map 15, for the expansion of existing sports facilities, will be supported.

## POLICY 11 Erection of new or replacement sports facilities

The development of new/replacement changing rooms and club facilities at the Football Field will be supported.

## 7. Community Infrastructure Levy Payments:

8.4.47 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge introduced by the Planning Act 2008 (and brought into force by the 2010 Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations) as a mechanism for local authorities to provide or improve infrastructure that will support the development of their area.

8.4.48 In England, where there is a neighbourhood development plan in place, the neighbourhood is entitled to 25% of CIL revenues from new development taking place in the plan area (for areas without a neighbourhood plan, the neighbourhood proportion of CIL is a lower figure of 15%). This money is paid directly to parish and town councils.

8.4.49 It is likely that all three of the development sites allocated in the SNP will be liable to make CIL payments. The rates payable are set out in a Charging Schedule published by Wiltshire Council. The amount payable being calculated when planning permission is granted.

8.4.50 The SNP has identified the following items as priorities when determining how any CIL receipts received by the Parish Council should be utilised.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY PAYMENTS - PRIORITIES		
ITEM	DETAIL	COMMENT
Offsite highway works	Policy 8 lends support to the “enhancement of inclusive access and crossings” between the proposed new development on Site 1 and the village centre as well as other key residential areas. It is not known at this stage what works if any will be funded directly from the development of Site 1.	The Parish Council will prioritise such works when determining how to utilise CIL payments received.
Sports facilities	There is an identifiable need to improve the range and quality of facilities on the Parish Council owned “Football Field” situated off Knockdown Road. The SNP safeguards land for the possible future expansion of these playing fields (Policy 10) and supports the erection of new and/or replacement sports facilities on this site (Policy 11).	It is considered that some of the CIL funding likely to be derived from the development of Site 1 (Policy 4) should be used by the Parish Council to fund the cost of improving these facilities.

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Design and artwork: Paul Ormiston, Compass Graphic Design, Sherston.



