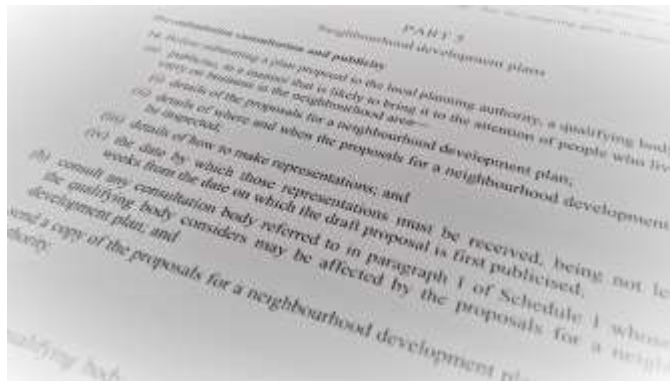
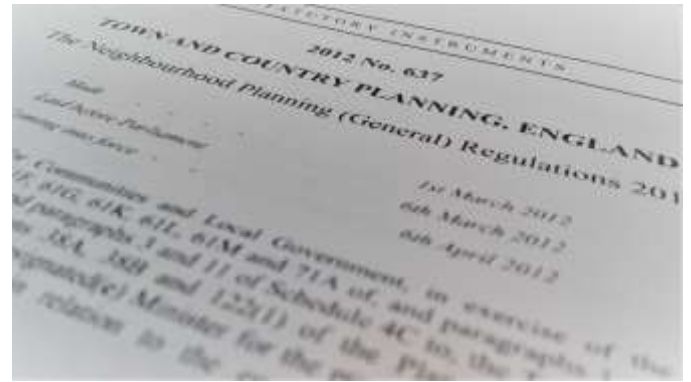




SHERINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

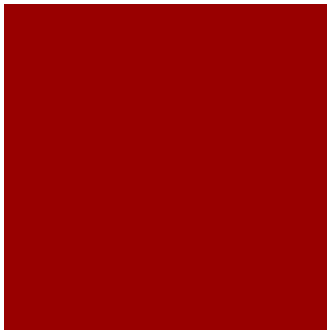


Sherington Neighbourhood Plan

Basic Conditions Statement

Submission Version, December 2016

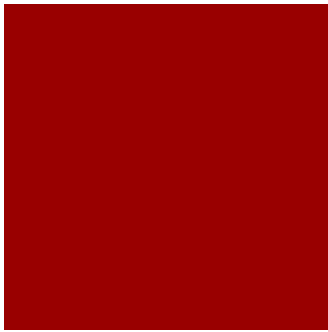
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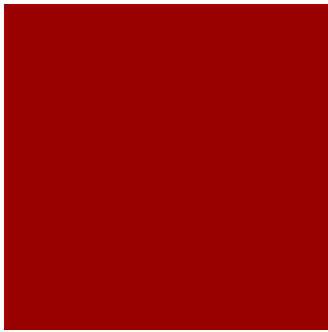
- 1.3 The policies described in the Neighbourhood Plan relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area only. No other Neighbourhood Plan covers this area. The plan period of the Neighbourhood Plan is from 2016 to 2031 and it does not contain policies relating to excluded development in accordance with the Regulations.
- 1.4 The Statement addresses each of the four 'basic conditions' required of the Regulations and explains how the Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.
- 1.5 The Regulations state that a Neighbourhood Plan will be considered to have met the basic conditions if:
- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan;
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.



2. Introduction

- 2.1 The decision to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan was made by the Parish Council in January 2015. The Neighbourhood Plan complements the saved policies of the Milton Keynes Core Strategy [the Core Strategy] adopted in 2013 and the Milton Keynes Local Plan [the Local Plan] adopted in 2005. It also seeks to anticipate the provisions of the forthcoming 'Plan:MK' - the new Local Plan - which will replace the Core Strategy and Local Plan and cover the period to 2031.
- 2.2 A Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was formed by the Parish Council, comprising Parish councillors and members of the local community and it was delegated authority to make day-to-day decisions on the Neighbourhood Plan. However, as the qualifying body, the Parish Council itself approved the publication of the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan of July 2016, the Revised Pre- Submission Neighbourhood Plan of November 2016 and now the Submission Neighbourhood Plan of December 2016.
- 2.3 There has been a long history of planning appraisals and village assessments covering Sherington, dating back to the early 1970's. It was evident that the village faced increasing pressure for new development, particularly in circumstances when Milton Keynes was experiencing high levels of housing growth. Ensuring that the local community have a say in the future of their village and any new development proposed was one of the underlying principles of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.4 In addition, it was fundamental that the Neighbourhood Plan protected the special character of Sherington and in particular, the rural identity and historic layout of the village. It was also recognised that the Neighbourhood Plan would have to allocate new housing development for the village, to meet the requirements of the Core Strategy.

- 2.5 There has been considerable community engagement on the Plan. This has been detailed in the separate Consultation Statement, which is published by the Parish Council as part of the submission documentation.
- 2.6 The Parish Council has worked closely with officers of MKC during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure the relationship between the Neighbourhood Plan and the saved policies of the Core Strategy and Local Plan, together with the reasoning and evidence of the emerging Plan:MK (“the new Local Plan”) have been properly understood.
- 2.7 The Steering Group has also benefited from the professional planning and design advice of Chris Akrill BA (Hons) Dtp MRTPI of Town Planning Services Limited.



3. Conformity with National Planning Policy

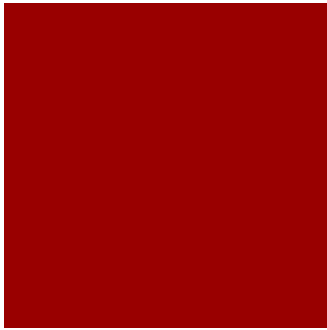
- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with regard to national policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of April 2012. It is also mindful of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) published by the Government in April 2014 in respect of formulating neighbourhood plans.
- 3.2 The Neighbourhood Plan conforms with the NPPF paragraph 16 in that the Neighbourhood Plan includes positively worded policies that seek to shape new development and makes allocations for new housing over and above that identified by the Milton Keynes Core Strategy. The Neighbourhood Plan has also been prepared with due regard to NPPF paragraphs 183 to 185, and conforms with the requirement to be in accordance with the requirements of the Development Plan.
- 3.3 Set out in Table 1, is a summary of how each policy conforms to the NPPF. The paragraphs referred to in the table are those considered the most relevant to each policy but are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all possible relevant paragraphs.

Table 1: Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan policies and the NPPF

Policy No.	Policy Title	NPPF Paragraph	NP Policy Comparison to NPPF
NP1	Sherington Settlement Boundary and Development Principles	15, 55, 109, 128	Includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Seeks to guide development to locations within the settlement boundary where development would enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Provides criteria to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of heritage assets, the rural character of the village, green spaces and the wider landscape setting.
NP2	Local Green Space	76, 77	<p>Land designated as Local Green Space is restricted to two fields that adjoin the settlement boundary and are used extensively by the community for walking and recreation.</p> <p>The designated land lies within the Conservation Area and the setting of St Laud's Church. The land holds special significance to the local community and has been identified in past village appraisals as being important to the medieval setting of Sherington, extending the countryside and historic field patterns into the heart of the village.</p> <p>The designated land is contained within two relatively small fields that adjoining the settlement boundary. It is not an extensive tract of land.</p>
NP3	Biodiversity Enhancement	109	Supports proposals that enhance biodiversity and the environment of Sherington, and requires new development to demonstrate how they would create new habitats, landscape features and enhanced biodiversity.

NP4	Community Hub and Facilities	28, 70, 74	This policy guards against the unnecessary loss of and the improvement of community facilities within the village, including the redevelopment of the village shop to create a new community hub in the centre of the Sherington where it will be accessible to most residents.
NP5	Developer Proposals	66	Applicants are expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals. The Parish Council will be able to facilitate this and assist developers to engage with the community.
NP6	Design and Energy-Efficiency	56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65	The policy requires high quality design, that respects the character and appearance of the village, the setting of heritage assets and the Conservation Area. The policy does not impose architectural styles or particular tastes. It has focused on development respecting the character of its surroundings.
NP7	Land adjacent to High Street, Sherington	50, 55, 58, 70, 97, 110, 126	The policy promotes a positive approach to delivery new homes in the village. It requires development to be sustainable, enhance biodiversity and support community assets in the village.
NP8	Land at Water Lane, Sherington	50, 55, 58, 70, 97, 102, 110, 111, 126	The policy promotes a positive approach to delivery new homes in the village. It requires development to be sustainable, enhance biodiversity and support community assets in the village. A sequential approach has been applied to the allocation, taking account of the flood risk designation covering the site. The allocation of the site is consistent with para. 102 of the NPPF, where an exceptions test can be applied if there are wider sustainability objectives that would outweigh the flood risk. The site is brownfield land, which would fulfil that requirement. A site-specific flood risk assessment has been undertaken that has

			demonstrated that the site is not at risk of flooding. Further mitigation measures are required by the NP policy to ensure that the development is not at risk from flooding and does not exacerbate that risk elsewhere.
NP9	Local Economy and Employment	21, 28, 69	The policy supports existing and new businesses within the Parish, and provides a range of criteria to guide development and protect the environment of the parish and the amenity of neighbours.



4. Conformity with the Development Plan

- 4.1 The development plan for Sherington is the Milton Keynes Core Strategy 2013 and the saved policies of the Milton Keynes Local Plan 2005. Plan:MK will replace both documents and will include new strategic and site specific policies once it is adopted.
- 4.2 It has not yet advanced to a point where the strategic policies of Plan:MK inform the basic condition of the Neighbourhood Plan being in general conformity. The Neighbourhood Plan has therefore been prepared to ensure its general conformity with the policies of the Core Strategy.
- 4.3 Table 2 below sets out how each policy is in general conformity with the Milton Keynes Core Strategy, 2013.

Table 2: Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan policies and the Core Strategy

Policy No.	Policy Title	Core Strategy	NP Policy Comparison to Core Strategy
NP1	Sherington Settlement Boundary and Development Principles	Policy CS1 Policy CS9	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan applies the settlement boundary for the village defined by the Adopted Local Plan, updated to reflect the two new housing allocations.</p> <p>Policy CS1 and Policy CS9 identify Sherington as a Selected Village, and suggests that 20-40 dwellings should be provided over the plan period.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan makes two housing allocations that would provide 45 houses, and also positively supports appropriate small scale infill development within the settlement boundary in accordance with Policy CS9.</p>
NP2	Local Green Spaces	Policy CS19	Policy CS19 requires development proposals to consider the character, appearance, and setting of sites, buildings, structures and landscapes that are of historic significance. The Local Green Space allocation is in accordance with this aim.
NP3	Biodiversity Enhancement	Policy CS19	Policy CS19 protects and enhances the green infrastructure within the Borough. The policy also seeks to maximise biodiversity, creating new habitats to help wildlife adapt to climate change. Policy NP3 reflects this approach.
NP4	Community Hub and Facilities	Policy CS4 Policy CS17	Policy CS4 supports the provision of convenience shopping and service facilities within village centres to reduce car dependency and ensure access to people with limited mobility.

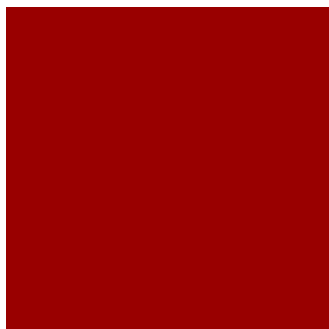
			<p>Policy CS17 protects public open space, leisure, recreation, sport and community facilities, including local centres, village shops, pubs and Post Offices. Community facilities no longer required should be used for an alternative community use.</p> <p>Policy NP4 in the Neighbourhood Plan accords with these policy aims.</p>
NP5	Developer Proposals	Policy CSA	<p>Policy CSA confirms that the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favours of sustainable development. It will work pro-actively with applicants to jointly find solutions.</p> <p>This approach is reflected in Policy NP5</p>
NP6	Design and Energy-Efficiency	<p>Policy CS10</p> <p>Policy CS12</p> <p>Policy CS13</p>	<p>Policy CS10 requires new housing to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing population, by providing a range of house types, styles and tenures. Housing should also meet the Council's (MKC) adopted standards of energy efficiency, renewable energy generation, carbon neutrality, safety and lifetime homes.</p> <p>Policy CS12 supports the development of sustainable neighbourhoods, achieving the highest standards of design.</p> <p>Policy CS13 requires all new development to be of high quality design, making a positive contribution to the character of the area in which it is located.</p> <p>Policy NP6 in the Neighbourhood Plan is in accordance with these strategic policy aims.</p>
NP7	Land adjacent to High Street, Sherington	<p>Policy CS1</p> <p>Policy CS10</p>	<p>Policy CS1 and Policy CS9 identify Sherington as a Selected Village, and suggests that 20-40 dwellings should be provided over the plan period.</p>

			<p>Policy CS10 requires new housing to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing population, by providing a range of house types, styles and tenures.</p> <p>Policy NP7 accords with the Core Strategy.</p>
NP8	Land at Water Lane, Sherington	Policy CS1 Policy CS10	<p>Policy CS1 and Policy CS9 identify Sherington as a Selected Village, and suggests that 20-40 dwellings should be provided over the plan period.</p> <p>Policy CS10 requires new housing to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing population, by providing a range of house types, styles and tenures.</p> <p>Policy NP8 accords with the Core Strategy.</p>
NP9	Local Economy and Employment	Policy CS16	<p>Policy CS16 offers support for new business units across the Borough and require new small business units with the flexibility to support growing businesses.</p> <p>Policy NP9 supports the same aims.</p>



5. Contribution to Achieving Sustainable Development

- 5.1 A Sustainability Appraisal has not been undertaken as this is not a requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan. However, the Neighbourhood Plan has taken account of the need to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 5.2 The strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan require development to enhance the quality of the environment within the village, including biodiversity and wildlife networks. These objectives include:
- Objective 1 requires development to be sustainable and incorporate elements of renewable energy where appropriate and not exacerbate the risk of flooding.
 - Objective 2 supports the community facilities within the village, meeting local needs and reducing the need to travel to meet day to day requirements.
 - Objective 3, promotes improvements to allow safer walking and cycling around the village, and traffic calming initiatives. Both will encourage local trips by non-car modes.
 - Objective 4 concerns new housing to meet local housing needs.
 - Objective 5 supports the local economy and encourages appropriately sited employment within the village and surrounding parish.
- 5.3 These objectives are reflected in the wording of the individual policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.



6. Compatibility with EU Obligations and Legislation

- 6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act.
- 6.2 A screening opinion was issued by Milton Keynes Council in November 2016 which advised that The Neighbourhood Plan will be in general conformity with Core Strategy which itself was screened for Appropriate Assessment. The screening process for the Milton Keynes Core Strategy demonstrated that Milton Keynes lies in an area void of any Natura 2000 sites. The nearest European site is the Chiltern Beechwoods to the south of the Borough although it was determined that the site would not be affected by Milton Keynes planning policy due to the distance of the site from Milton Keynes and there being no obvious impact pathways.
- 6.3 The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits have been granted Special Protection Area status. As with the Ouse Washes SPA/SAC and the Portholme SAC, due to the connection with the River Ouse, and development in Milton Keynes could have an impact on the SPA. However, it is assessed that any development in Milton Keynes would be unlikely to have a significant effect on the new SPA.
- 6.4 Therefore, given that the scope of development in the Sherington Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to extend beyond that of the Milton Keynes Core Strategy, it is concluded that the Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA is also unlikely to be significantly affected by the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.5 Given the role of Neighbourhood Plans and the scale of development being proposed in the Sherington Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that Appropriate Assessment of the plan is not required.

- 6.6 A copy of the full Appropriate Assessment Screening report from Milton Keynes Council can be seen at Appendix A.



Annex A: Appropriate Assessment Screening report from Milton Keynes Council

Sherington Neighbourhood Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report
Appropriate Assessment Screening

1. Introduction

1.1 What is the screening opinion?

1.2 This report has been produced to determine the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

1.3 This document also addresses the need for Appropriate Assessment, in accordance with European Directive 92/43/EEC, commonly known as the Habitats Directive.

1.4 What is the Neighbourhood Plan trying to achieve?

1.5 The Neighbourhood Area covers the whole of the Sherington Parish Council Area (see Appendix 1), which consists of a village area and a rural hinterland. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to shape the future growth of the Village by allocating sites for development. It will also protect important spaces from development and will ensure that the necessary infrastructure and community facilities are in place to support the future needs of the Village.

1.6 The draft Plan proposes two new land allocations to deliver 48 dwellings. One of the proposed allocations (policy NP2) has already got planning permission for 36 dwellings. The Core Strategy, which has already been subject to SEA, identifies Sherington as a Selected Village, where land for new housing development will be found. These allocations will help to deliver the Core Strategy rural housing requirement.

2. Policy context

2.1 The Milton Keynes Local Plan was formally adopted December 2005. Along with the Core Strategy (see below) the Local Plan provides the statutory land use planning framework for Milton Keynes.

2.2 The Council's Core Strategy was adopted in July 2013. The document contains the vision, objectives and strategic policies for the future of Milton Keynes to 2026, replacing the strategic elements of the Core Strategy.

2.3 Although the Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and the Core Strategy, it can promote more development, but must not propose less. It will also provide a more local context to the non-strategic policies of the Local Plan.

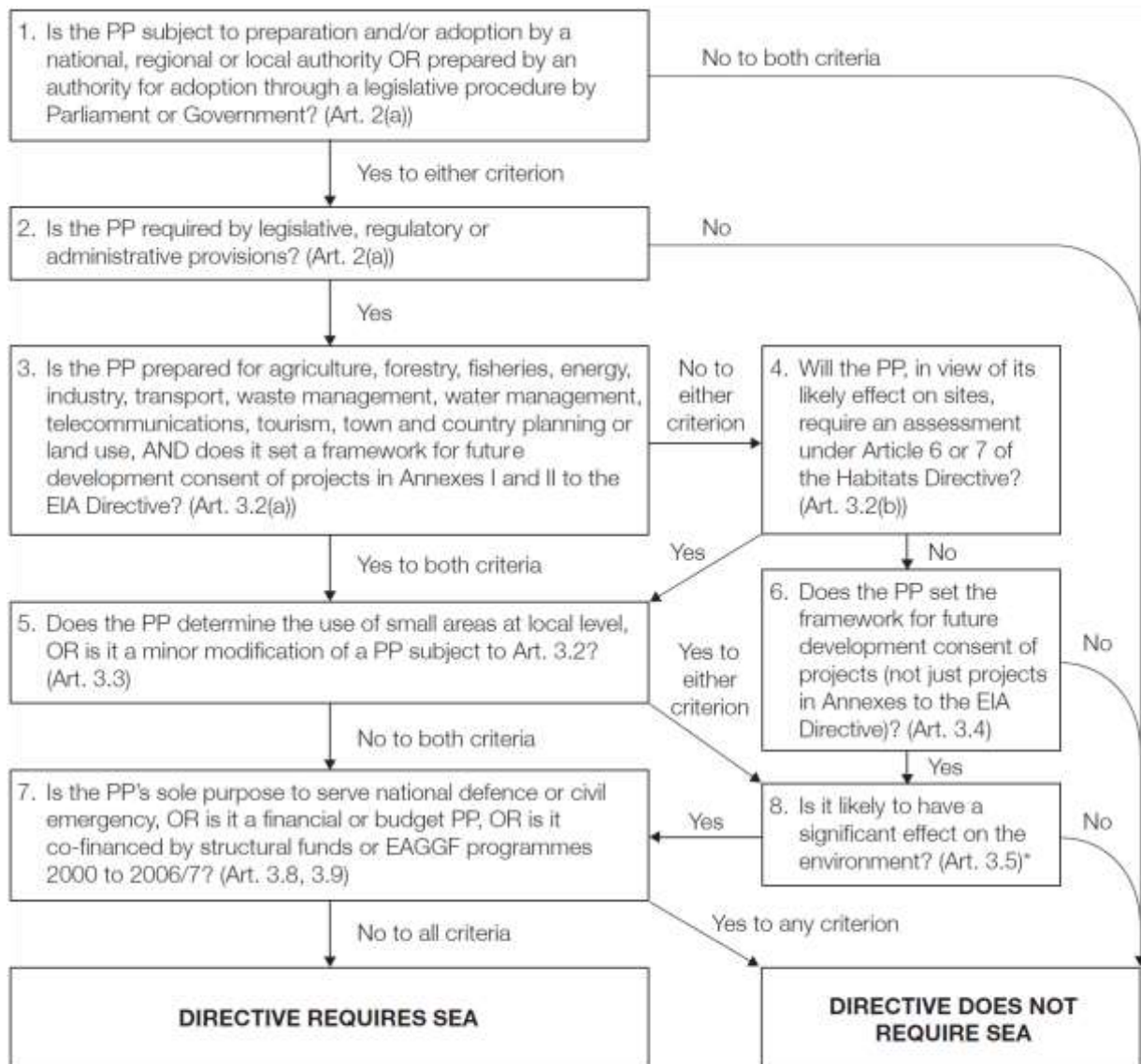
- 2.4 The Neighbourhood Plan has undergone some public consultation and will be publicised further in accordance with the relevant regulations prior to its adoption.

3. SEA Screening

- 3.1 The requirement for a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) is set out in the “Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004”. There is also practical guidance on applying European Directive 2001/42/EC produced by the ODPM (now DCLG)¹. These documents have been used as the basis for this screening report.
- 3.2 Neighbourhood Plans must be screened to establish whether or not they will require Strategic Environmental Assessment. The ODPM practical guidance provides a checklist approach based on the SEA regulations to help determine whether SEA is required. This guide has been used as the basis on which to assess the need for SEA as set out below.

¹ A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005) (ODPM)

Figure 1: Establishing the need for SEA



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

Figure 2: Establishing the need for SEA of the Neighbourhood Plan

Stage	Answer	Reason
1. Is the NP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament of Government? (Article 2(a))	Yes	It will be prepared by the Parish Council and adopted by Milton Keynes Council under the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.
2. Is the NP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))	Yes	Although there is no requirement to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, they are subject to formal procedures and regulations laid down by national government. In light of the European Court of Justice ruling in the Case C-567/10 it is considered that this means the NP is 'required'.
3. Is the NP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art. 3.2(a))	No	The NP is prepared for town and country planning purposes but does not explicitly set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I or II of the EIA Directive.
4. Will the plan in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats directive?	No	The Core Strategy was screened and it was concluded that appropriate assessment was not required. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the Core Strategy and, although it can propose more development, it is unlikely to be significant enough to require assessment under the Habitats Directive.
6. Does the plan set the framework for future development consent of projects?	Yes	The Neighbourhood Plan will provide a framework for future development consent of projects in the area.
8. Is the NP likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	See results of Figure 3: Determining the likely significance of effects	

Figure 3: Determining the likely significance of effects

SEA Directive Annex II: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)		
Criteria	✓/x/ ?	MKC Comment
<i>The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:</i>		
1a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	✓	The NP will set a framework for future development projects, in terms of location, nature and scale/size. However, the plan will need to be in general conformity with higher level plans so the scope of the plan to fully influence projects and activities is somewhat limited.
1b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	✓	The NP will form part of the statutory development plan for Milton Keynes with the same status in decision making as development plan documents.
1c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	✓	Sustainable development will be at the heart of NPs and policies could make a significant contribution to promoting sustainable development, particularly ensuring any appropriate brownfield sites are identified for possible development and ensuring any greenfield allocations are planned in a sustainable way.
1d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	x	It is not considered that there are any particular environmental problems relevant to the plan. The designated area does contain an area of flood risk, which will be taken into account through the plan making process. However, as highlighted by Natural England in areas within and adjacent to Sherington Parish there is a high density of records for European protected Bat species and Greater Crested Newt (GCN).
1e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked	x	The NP is unlikely to be directly relevant in regard to this criterion.

to waste-management or water protection).		
<i>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</i>		
2a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	x	Overall the effects of the plan on SEA topics are considered to be neutral. Where new development might have a negative effect this will be reasonably long term, although the effect is potentially reversible as redevelopment can occur.
2b) The cumulative nature of the effects	x	<p>The effects of the Neighbourhood Plan need to be considered alongside the Core Strategy however it is not considered that the neighbourhood plan introduces significant additional effects over and above those already considered in the SA for the Core Strategy.</p> <p>The cumulative impact of the effects of the plan on the environment is not expected to be any greater than the individual parts.</p>
2c) The trans-boundary nature of the effects	x	Any impacts are only likely to be felt by the local area.
2d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	x	It is unlikely that the nature of any development proposed would impact on human health. Any major development is likely to be for housing and ancillary uses.
2e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	x	The effects of the plan are unlikely to be felt in a spatial area wider than the plan area. The plan is also unlikely to affect any population outside the plan area.
2f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: I. special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, II. exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values	✓/?	The NP covers an area which includes a conservation area (part of Sherington village). However, any policies will need to be in accordance with higher level plans which should prevent any proposals leading to a negative impact. Also, the proposed policies seem to add a further level of protection to areas of heritage significance. The plan's designated area also includes areas of flood risk. However, the draft plan

III. intensive land-use		does not propose any development within these areas. Therefore, there is unlikely to be any impact on flooding.
2g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status	x	There are no areas or landscapes with these designations in Milton Keynes.

4. Advice of the Statutory consultees

4.1. Environment Agency confirmed that an SEA is not required.

4.2. Natural England raised concern that the draft SEA Screening Report in section 1d) did not acknowledge that in areas within and adjacent to Sherington Parish there is a high density of records for European protected Bat species and Greater Crested Newt (GCN). However, Natural England was happy for this to be taken into account through the plan making process.

4.3. Natural England would like to see policies pertaining to:

- Development locations chosen to avoid sites with GCN and bat records.
- Potential development sites with waterbodies or flood ways being surveyed for GCN.
- Potential development sites with suitable bat habitat being surveyed for bats.
- Water features and bat habitat being included in Green Infrastructure plans.

4.4. Natural England would also like to see policies that support net gains in biodiversity for developments and Green Infrastructure included in the proposed neighbourhood plan.

4.5. Historic England confirmed that the draft plan does would not lead to likely significant environmental effects within the area of interest to Historic England and therefore it does not require a formal Strategic Environmental Assessment.

5. SEA Conclusion

5.1. Sherington Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to identify a limited amount of development in the plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan will provide a planning policy framework to be used when considering planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area.

5.2. The Plan's effects are unlikely to have any significant impacts beyond the Neighbourhood Area beyond the plan boundary and it is considered that overall the plan will not have significant effects on the environment.

It is, therefore, concluded that the Sherington Neighbourhood Plan does not need to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.

6. Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening

- 6.1 Legal protection is afforded to habitats and species of European importance through Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna - known as the 'Habitats Directive'. Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive require AA of plans to be undertaken. This involves assessing the contents of plans to ensure that their policies and proposals maintain the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. The assessment must determine whether the plan would adversely affect the nature conservation objectives of each site. Where negative effects can be identified, other options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.
- 6.2 The application of the precautionary principle through the Habitats Directive means that plans can only be permitted once it is shown that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites. In the rare case of there being no alternatives available or over-riding reasons of public interest why a plan needs to be implemented, plans that do have negative impacts may still be approved.

7. Screening for Appropriate Assessment

- 7.1 The first stage in carrying out an Appropriate Assessment for the Habitats Directive is screening, by determining whether the plan is likely to have any significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
- 7.2 The Neighbourhood Plan will be in general conformity with Core Strategy which itself was screened for Appropriate Assessment. The screening process for the Milton Keynes Core Strategy demonstrated that Milton Keynes lies in an area void of any Natura 2000 sites. The nearest European site is the Chiltern Beechwoods to the south of the Borough although it was determined that the site would not be affected by Milton Keynes planning policy due to the distance of the site from Milton Keynes and there being no obvious impact pathways.
- 7.3 However, it was determined that there were two sites which could potentially be affected by the Core Strategy, and other Local Development Documents, due to the pathway provided by the River Great Ouse (which feeds in to Natura 2000 sites). These sites were:
- **Ouse Washes SPA /SAC-** The SPA designation is due to the site's importance as an internationally important assemblage of birds. The presence of the spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*) – the clear water and abundant macrophytes, is particularly important in the Counter Drain, and a healthy population of spined loach is known to occur
 - **Portholme SAC-** It is the largest surviving traditionally-managed meadow in the UK, with an area of 104 ha of alluvial flood meadow. Supports a small population of fritillary *Fritillaria meleagris*.

7.4 As a result of the screening process it was concluded that:

- The impact of the Core Strategy on water flow will not be significant primarily because Milton Keynes already has a comprehensive flood management system in place that has ensured the effective control of water flows, alongside the continued growth of the city. The Core Strategy will include a continuation of this approach which, informed by the emerging Water Cycle Strategy, will ensure continued effective management of the flow of water into the Great Ouse from Milton Keynes.
- The Growth Strategy developed for the city has used flood risk maps as a key constraint to directions for growth. As such, the broad locations for growth to be identified in the Core Strategy are away from flood risk areas, further reducing the potential of the plan to have a significant impact on water flow.
- In combination with other proposals in the wider Milton Keynes/South Midlands area, it is noted that the majority of proposals affect the River Nene Catchment area (in the case of Northampton) and ultimately the Thames for Aylesbury Vale.

7.5 Considering the above factors, it was concluded Appropriate Assessment for the Core Strategy was not required. The full screening report is available from: <http://www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/planning-policy>

7.6 Since the Appropriate Assessment was undertaken for the Core Strategy, the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits have been granted Special Protection Area status. As with the Ouse Washes SPA/SAC and the Portholme SAC, due to the connection with the River Ouse, and development in Milton Keynes could have an impact on the SPA. However, for the same reasons as set out above in paragraph 6.4, it is assessed that any development in Milton Keynes would be unlikely to have a significant effect on the new SPA. Therefore, given that the scope of development in the Sherington Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to extend beyond that of the Milton Keynes Core Strategy, it is concluded that the Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA is also unlikely to be significantly affected by the Neighbourhood Plan.

8. Appropriate Assessment Conclusion

8.1 Given the role of Neighbourhood Plans and the scale of development being proposed in the Sherington Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that Appropriate Assessment of the plan is not required.

9. Contact

Further information can be obtained from:

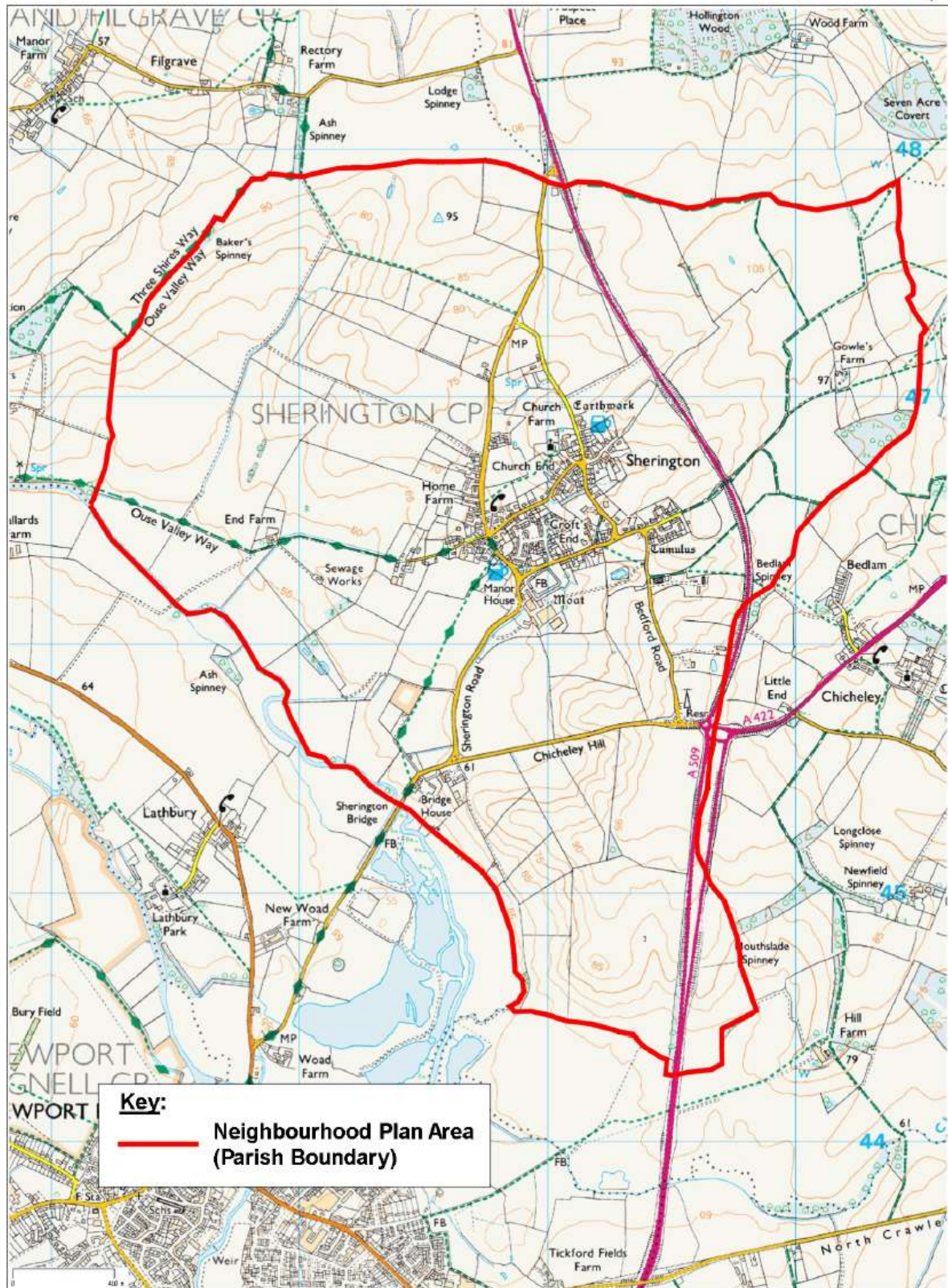
Development Plans
Planning and Transport
Civic Offices
1 Saxon Gate East
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 3EJ

W: www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/planning-policy

T: 01908 252358

E: development.plans@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – map of the Sherington Neighbourhood Plan designated area





Prepared with the support of Town Planning Services

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01234 924 920

www.townplanning.services

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