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Report on Castle Cary & Ansford Neighbourhood Plan 2016 -2028

An Examination undertaken for South Somerset District Council with the support of the Castle Cary Town Council and Ansford Parish Council on the September 2018 submission version of the Plan.

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Date of Report: 3 May 2019

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Main Findings - Executive Summary

From my examination of the Castle Cary & Ansford Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan/CCANP) and its supporting documentation including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- The Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – Castle Cary Town Council & Ansford Parish Council;
- The Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – Castle Cary and Ansford parishes as shown on the Map on Page 2;
- The Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – 2016 - 2028; and
- The policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to Referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

1. Introduction and Background

Castle Cary & Ansford Neighbourhood Plan 2016 - 2028

1.1 Section 2 of the Plan entitled “Castle Cary and Ansford Today” provides a concise but comprehensive description of the designated area and its main characteristics. Castle Cary and Ansford together form a market town, with some 3,360 people occupying 1,640 dwellings¹. The Plan area is located roughly midway between Shepton Mallet to the north and Yeovil to the south, and lies approximately 7 kilometres (kms) north of the A303, the principal west-east road through South Somerset. The area is relatively self-contained with some 58% of persons in employment either working at home or commuting less than 20kms to work. There is a range of employment opportunities locally, ranging from agriculture (dairy, cheese and cider farming) to light industry centred on the Torbay Road. There are also jobs related to retailing, tourism and other service industries. Castle Cary town centre has a weekly market and many independent shops located within a historic setting. It attracts trade from outlying villages and beyond, as well as from the Neighbourhood Plan area.

¹ Statistics from the 2011 Census.

- 1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan area contains 4 conservation areas, some 112 listed buildings and structures and 2 scheduled monuments. Many of the older buildings in Castle Cary & Ansford are constructed from honey-coloured limestone, extracted from a nearby quarry at Hadspen, giving the built environment a distinctive and attractive appearance. The town centre, which is based on High Street, Fore Street and Market Place is intensively developed with a variety of old buildings and other structures, including the war memorial surrounded by water and the Round House. Castle Cary rail station, situated about 1 mile north of the town centre, provides services to London and Penzance, as well as Bristol, Bath, Trowbridge, Yeovil, Dorchester and Weymouth. However, the timing of trains means that services are not generally convenient for commuting to work. Access for pedestrians and cyclists across the A371 along a hilly, rural track is not ideal, and there is limited parking at the station. Much of the Plan area comprises countryside, giving a green and attractive landscape setting to Castle Cary & Ansford, with much high quality agricultural land (graded 1, 2 or 3a).
- 1.3 As described in section 3 below, a working group was set up in July 2014, to prepare a neighbourhood plan for the two parishes of Castle Cary and Ansford. The CCANP was submitted for examination in November 2018.

The Independent Examiner

- 1.4 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed to examine the CCANP by South Somerset District Council (SSDC), with the agreement of the parishes of Castle Cary and Ansford.
- 1.5 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector, and have prior experience examining neighbourhood plans. I am an independent examiner, and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the submitted plan.

The Scope of the Examination

- 1.6 As the independent examiner, I am required to produce this report and recommend either:
- (a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or
 - (b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or
 - (c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.
- 1.7 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)('the 1990 Act'). The examiner must consider:

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- Whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions;
- Whether the Plan complies with provisions under s.38A and s.38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ('the 2004 Act'). These are:
 - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the Local Planning Authority;
 - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land;
 - it specifies the period during which it has effect;
 - it does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development';
 - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area;
 - whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the Plan proceed to referendum; and
- Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 ('the 2012 Regulations').

1.8 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

The Basic Conditions

1.9 The 'Basic Conditions' are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:

- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
- Be compatible with and not breach European Union (EU) obligations; and

- Meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

1.10 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the Plan does not breach the requirement of Chapter 8 Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017².

2. Approach to the Examination

Planning Policy Context

- 2.1 The Development Plan for this part of SSDC, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, is the South Somerset Local Plan adopted March 2015. A Local Plan Review is underway, with consultation on Preferred Options expected in June 2019, and plan adoption in 2021. The emerging plan is therefore at a relatively early stage of production.
- 2.2 The planning policy for England is set out principally in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) offers guidance on how this policy should be implemented.
- 2.3 A revised NPPF was published on 24 July 2018, with a further revised version on 19 February 2019, replacing the previous 2012 NPPF. The transitional arrangements for local plans and neighbourhood plans are set out in paragraph 214 of the 2018 (and subsequent 2019) NPPF, which provides that 'The policies in the previous NPPF will apply for the purpose of examining plans, where those plans are submitted on or before 24 January 2019'. A footnote clarifies that for neighbourhood plans, 'submission' in this context means where a qualifying body submits a plan to the local planning authority under Regulation 15 of the 2012 Regulations. The Plan was submitted to the District Council in November 2018. Thus, it is the policies in the original, 2012 NPPF that are applied to this examination and all references in this report are to the March 2012 NPPF and its accompanying PPG.

Submitted Documents

- 2.4 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I consider relevant to the examination, including those submitted which comprise:
- The Castle Cary & Ansford Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2028, September 2018;

² This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.

- The Map on Page 2 of the Plan, which identifies the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan relates;
- the Consultation Statement, September 2018;
- the Basic Conditions Statement, September 2018;
- all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation;
- the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Screening Report, December 2017, prepared by SSDC; and
- the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group's answers (1 and 21 March 2019) to my questions of 15 February 2019³.

Site Visit

2.5 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 28 March 2019 to familiarise myself with it, and visit relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

Written Representations with or without Public Hearing

2.6 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. The regulation 16 consultation responses clearly articulated objections to the Plan, and presented arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum. In February 2019, I sought answers from the CCANP working group on a number of matters which arose from my preliminary reading of the Plan and other documentation. Written responses dated 1 and 21 March 2019 were received. I have taken account of these in producing my report, and have considered the working group's observation that hearing sessions might help resolve some areas of disagreement with SSDC. However, I considered that hearing sessions were unnecessary, as I have received sufficient information from all parties.

Modifications

2.7 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

³ View at: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/your-council/your-council-plan-and-strategies/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>

3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights

Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 3.1 The CCANP has been prepared and submitted for examination by the Castle Cary & Ansford Neighbourhood Plan working group, on behalf of Castle Cary Town Council and Ansford Parish Council who are qualifying bodies. An application for designation of the Neighbourhood Plan Area was approved by SSDC on 4 June 2015. It is the only neighbourhood plan for Castle Cary & Ansford, and does not relate to land outside the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Plan Period

- 3.2 The Plan specifies clearly the period to which it is to take effect, which is from 2016 to 2028.

Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

- 3.3 The working group for the CCANP started preparing the Plan in July 2014, following a public objection to an application for development of some 165 homes off Station Road. The local newsletter distributed to some 1,500 homes in Castle Cary and Ansford parishes and an e-mail message system established in 2014, the Cary Crier, were used to recruit members to the working group and initiate communication with local people on plan-making. This process started in Autumn 2014. The working group held a series of informal meetings between January 2015 and January 2016 with local groups and organisations (i) to raise awareness of the significance of neighbourhood planning, and (ii) to develop the working group's understanding of the main issues facing the area. A major public event, a drop-in session, at the Market House in October 2015, attracted some 170 people.
- 3.4 Early drafts of the Plan were discussed with officers at SSDC in the first half of 2016, but two planning appeals relating to housing development in the area were held in late 2016 with decisions issued in January 2017. These decisions necessitated a review and re-drafting of the Plan. In February 2018, a pre-submission plan was published under Regulation 14. This was widely publicised using a variety of techniques from the local Newsletter to all households, notification on the Town Council and Parish Council websites, and letters to major and small businesses and community organisations inviting them to meetings. SSDC, all statutory bodies and other organisations were consulted on the draft Plan between March and May 2018.
- 3.5 Appendix 15 of the Consultation Statement submitted with the Neighbourhood Plan gives a commentary on the main issues raised by the responses to the Regulation 14 draft. The working group amended the

Neighbourhood Plan to take account of the responses and comply with the regulations for plan-making. However, on behalf of Hannick Homes, it was argued that their response to the Regulation 14 consultation exercise, with valid planning policy arguments, had not been properly addressed. I confirm that I have read all the submissions (at Regulation 14 and 16) from Hannick Homes, and taken them into account in the examination.

- 3.6 Eight responses to the Regulation 16 consultation exercise, undertaken between November 2018 and January 2019, were received. I am satisfied that the consultation process has met the legal requirements for neighbourhood planning in the 2012 Regulations and that due regard has been had to the advice in the PPG on plan preparation and engagement.

Development and Use of Land and Excluded Development

- 3.7 The Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with s.38A of the 2004 Act. The Plan does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development'.

Human Rights

- 3.8 SSDC has not suggested that the Plan would breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998). The Basic Conditions Statement advises that the CCANP has had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the 1998 Act. The Plan, it is argued, has been produced in full consultation with the local community and wider stakeholders. From my independent assessment, I see no reason to disagree with the conclusion that the CCANP does not infringe human rights.

4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

EU Obligations

- 4.1 The CCANP was screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) by SSDC, as reported in the submitted Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Screening Report, December 2017. This found that the draft objectives and policies of the Plan were unlikely to have significant environmental effects; consequently, it was unnecessary to undertake a full SEA. Having read the report, I support this conclusion.

- 4.2 The CCANP was further screened for Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA), and it was concluded that the requirement for an assessment was not triggered. The Somerset Levels and Moors Special Protection Area/Ramsar is within South Somerset, and another European site is

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located close to the District boundary south-east of Crewkerne, Dorset. The impact on these sites was addressed in the HRA for the South Somerset Local Plan, and I consider that there is no need for a further assessment for this Neighbourhood Plan. Natural England agreed with this conclusion, as reported in Table 3 of SSDC's SEA and HRA Screening Report.

Main Issues

- 4.3 Having regard for the CCANP, the consultation responses and other evidence, and the site visit, I consider that there are four main issues relating to the Basic Conditions for this examination. These are:
- Whether the Plan takes an appropriately positive approach towards future new housing development;
 - Whether the Plan includes suitable policies for:(i) business development, (ii) the town centre, (iii) transport and (iv) community facilities, notably school provision, having regard for planned new housing development;
 - Whether the Plan's policies seek to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment appropriately; and
 - Whether the Plan addresses monitoring and future plan review adequately.

Issue 1 – New Housing Development

- 4.4 The CCANP states that there is a strong housing market in Castle Cary and Ansford, particularly for higher and mid-cost dwellings, but a shortage of affordable and social housing, especially for young local people⁴. Chapter 5 begins with 'Main Aims' for housing and, in accordance with the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood planning, expresses its support for the level of new dwellings required by the South Somerset Local Plan.
- 4.5 Policy SS5 of the Local Plan (Delivering new housing growth) states that Ansford/Castle Cary should deliver 374 new dwellings over the Plan period, 2006-28. Policy SS1 (Settlement Strategy) identifies Ansford/Castle Cary as a Local Market Town, beneath the Strategically Significant Town of Yeovil and Primary Market Towns of Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster and Wincanton. Supporting text advises that market towns should provide 'locally significant development', having regard for the existing concentration of businesses, community facilities and services, and sustainable transport potential. Policy LMT1 of the Local Plan specifies a 'Direction of Growth' for Ansford/Castle Cary with new development north of Torbay Road and east and west of Station Road; the Direction of Growth should include a new link road.

⁴ Paragraph 2.2 of CCANP.

- 4.6 Table 5.1 of the CCANP indicates that only 68 new dwellings were completed in the area between 2006 and 2017, but current commitments should add 477 dwellings in the Direction of Growth and a further 88 dwellings on brownfield sites within the existing built-up area. I recognise that this gives a total of 653 new dwellings for likely completion 2006-2028 in Ansford/Castle Cary, which is considerably more than the Local Plan target of 374 dwellings. The figure of 653 exceeds the target of 496 dwellings set for Ilminster and is close to the target of 703 for Wincanton. Ilminster and Wincanton are 'primary market towns', and the numbers indicate that Ansford/Castle Cary could match the expectations for development in two of the four primary market towns. Paragraph 5.20 of the Local Plan is clear that smaller local market towns, such as Ansford/Castle Cary, should accommodate a lower level of housing growth than the larger, primary market towns. I am aware that good plans should provide some flexibility, in case planned schemes do not deliver as anticipated. With commitments for 653 dwellings (being 279 dwellings more than 374), the CCANP provides ample flexibility, in my view.
- 4.7 Somerset County Council stated that Table 5.1 of the Plan was out of date, and I note that its sources are the Five-year Housing Land Supply Paper, SSDC, and Annual Monitoring Report, September 2017. The Five-year Housing Land Supply Paper August 2018, however, shows similar figures for the named sites in Ansford/Castle Cary with an additional six sites for consideration in the Local Plan Review of options. These six potential sites could contribute a further 347 dwellings and bring the housing delivery figure for Ansford/Castle Cary, 2018-33, to 910 new dwellings. I consider that Table 5.1 need not be modified, as it makes clear the date to which it applies and as the Local Plan Review is at a relatively early stage. Having regard for the settlement hierarchy in South Somerset, and the number of sites currently available in Ansford/Castle Cary, I see no need for additional substantive housing schemes to be named in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.8 The CCANP refers to the concerns of local people that any further release of greenfield sites for new housing development could hold back the re-use of brownfield sites within the town's boundaries, which have been vacant and undeveloped for some years. Hence, Policy HOU1 of the CCANP encourages the early development or redevelopment for housing on brownfield sites, in particular on five named sites. Policy HOU2 aims to strongly resist further proposals for new housing development within the Direction of Growth, unless there is clear evidence that an identified local need for affordable or social housing will be met.
- 4.9 Objection is raised to this approach on the grounds that neither national planning policy nor the Local Plan advocates a sequential assessment whereby brownfield sites should be developed before greenfield sites. It is argued that there is scant evidence of any research undertaken to

ascertain whether the named brownfield sites in Castle Cary and Ansford are developable or deliverable. In answer to my preliminary questions, the Working Group provided information for each of the five brownfield sites which suggests there is ongoing interest in acquiring planning permission for every site. I accept that their development would provide new housing in accessible locations, and help remove some unsightly features, for the benefit of the appearance of the built and natural environment. Encouraging the re-use of brownfield sites in Castle Cary and Ansford should therefore contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

- 4.10 I also consider that Policy HOU1 is in general conformity with Policy SS7 of the Local Plan, which states that the Council will encourage early development of brownfield land. In addition, paragraph 7.112 of the Local Plan describes the BMI site as an important brownfield site for Ansford and Castle Cary, expected to deliver 89 dwellings within the plan period. I conclude that Policy HOU1 meets the Basic Conditions and does not require modification.
- 4.11 Regarding Policy HOU2, my attention was drawn to paragraph 7.120 of the Local Plan. This states: "*A North West direction of growth has been found to be the most sustainable location for Ansford/Castle Cary's future expansion of housing, employment and education proposals. well related to existing employment opportunities, the town centre, the town's Schools and least impact in respect of peripheral landscape.....*". The Direction of Growth was loosely defined in the Local Plan and it was originally envisaged that a Site Allocations Plan would set out a masterplan for expansion within the broad area. However, SSDC no longer intends to produce a Site Allocations Plan, and paragraph 5.2 of the CCANP points out that this has resulted in the absence of an overall masterplan for the Direction of Growth north-west of Ansford/Castle Cary.
- 4.12 Although criticism has been made of the reference to the lack of a masterplan in paragraph 5.2, I consider that it is useful to draw readers attention to this matter of fact, and to itemise the planning benefits which an overall masterplan could have provided, as in criteria a. to d. Whilst the CCANP should not restrict housing development by treating the figure of 374 as a ceiling, I see no requirement for immediately permitting development of all the pockets of land within the extensive Direction of Growth. I support the overall approach set out in section 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan (The Future – Issues facing the town) because it seeks to maximise the use of brownfield sites, achieve a balance of housing with employment and infrastructure provision, and maintain Ansford/Castle Cary's status in the settlement hierarchy as a small, historic market town in a rural setting.

- 4.13 The SSDC Five Year Housing Land Supply Paper, August 2018, indicated that there is only about a 4 year supply of sites in the District, and this shortfall could support the identification of additional housing in Castle Cary and Ansford. On behalf of Hannick Homes, it is stated that their "land at Clanville", within Ansford and the Direction of Growth, could be prevented from being progressed for housing development by the CCANP's housing policies. It is argued that this is contrary to national and local planning policy, especially as the Government's revised approach to housing need assessment and housing delivery may require South Somerset to raise its housing target. It is noted that the South Somerset Local Plan is currently under review. The Issues and Options Local Plan included Hannick Homes' site as suitable for housing and employment. It is contended that the lack of a five year supply of housing sites in South Somerset, and the inclusion of the Clanville site as 'developable' within the Five Year Housing Land Supply paper August 2018, mean that it should be promoted for development, and not held back by Policy HOU2 of the CCANP.
- 4.14 In reply to my questions on 1 March 2019, the CCANP Working Group stated its view that "*simply granting more and more permissions in one location at Castle Cary will [not] necessarily increase the overall rate of provision of housing, either locally or in the district as a whole.*" Paragraph 5.10 of the Plan refers to recent appeal decisions (Ref 3035753 & 3121541) wherein the Inspector supported the view that permissions now would not boost housing supply in the short-term. The Working Group also argued that a pause in permitting developments in the Direction of Growth would enable the impact of the first development schemes to be assessed, and the provision of new infrastructure to catch up. I support this approach noting that paragraph 16 of the NPPF encourages neighbourhoods to "*plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan*".
- 4.15 I therefore recommend that Policy HOU2 is modified so that (i) it positively supports delivery of all the sites listed in Table 5.1, (ii) enables additional housing development to meet local need for affordable or social housing⁵, and (iii) commits to a review of the Plan within 5 years of being made, or earlier if the current Local Plan Review has been completed. In case that review demonstrates that additional housing development should take place in Ansford/Castle Cary, Policy HOU2 should in principle support further new development within the Direction of Growth in the longer term. **PM7** should be made to ensure that Policy HOU2 has regard

⁵ The town of Castle Cary and Ansford serves a wider rural hinterland as described in the SSDC Local Plan, paragraphs 7.121-4. In rural areas, paragraph 54 of the NPPF expects local planning authorities to be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing.

for national planning policy to boost housing supply, for general conformity with the strategic policies of the South Somerset Local Plan and to promote sustainable development in the area.

- 4.16 I also propose other modifications to the text in the CCANP so that it conveys a positive message for securing new housing development in the right places and at the right times, to meet the outstanding need in this part of South Somerset. Paragraph 3.1b. should be modified to delete the words "*further release of greenfield sites for housing is not welcomed...*" (my underlining). The Main Aims following paragraph 3.2 (the second bullet) and at the start of Section 5 should include a reference to the Direction of Growth. Paragraphs 5.6 to 5.11 should be modified to remove references to the "*excessive number of committed dwellings*" etc. which give the impression that the Local Plan target for Castle Cary and Ansford is a ceiling. **PM2, PM4 & PM6** would secure these changes and ensure that the Plan meets the Basic Conditions. Subject to the above modifications, I conclude that the CCANP will take an appropriately positive approach towards future new housing development.

Issue 2 - Policies for: (i) business development, (ii) the town centre, (iii) transport, and (iv) community facilities

- 4.17 Section 6 begins with two Main Aims for employment and enterprise in the area. These are to broaden the employment base enabling enterprises to flourish, and to ensure that employment growth is supported by necessary infrastructure and is consistent with new housing growth. I consider that these aims have had regard for the NPPF's objective to ensure that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth, and to create jobs and prosperity. Paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2 of the CCANP refer to the Local Plan target for 19 hectares of new employment land to be provided in Ansford/Castle Cary between 2006 and 2028. Just under 9 hectares has been added, principally at the industrial estate north of Torbay Road, and a further 2 hectares received outline planning permission in 2016. SSDC observed that the amount of employment land and floorspace created so far at Ansford/Castle Cary is amongst the highest in the District. Paragraphs 6.3 & 6.4 of the Plan express support for small and medium-sized enterprises across a range of industries, and highlight opportunities for new employment land at the former BMI site north of High Street, and on land adjacent to the railway station.

- 4.18 Policy EMP1 is supportive of the delivery of new employment land, provided that significant visual or environmental harm or adverse impact on the local road network does not result. In view of the rural setting of Ansford/Castle Cary and its historic town centre, as well as the state of the local transport infrastructure (with some narrow and bendy rural roads), I consider Policy EMP1 to be appropriate and to meet the Basic Conditions. SSDC commented that Policy EMP2 replicates national policy

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in the NPPF and is unnecessary. However, its inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan could provide some encouragement to local businesses unfamiliar with the NPPF, so I shall not recommend its removal.

- 4.19 Section 7 aims to promote tourism and Policy TOU1 supports the development of new or enhanced tourist facilities and visitor accommodation. As I saw at my site visit, Castle Cary has an attractive town centre with many distinctive and original old buildings and structures, and a strong rural character reflecting the importance of farming to its history and development. Policy TOU1 includes the aim to promote sustainable modes of travel (rail, cycling and walking) when new tourism facilities are developed, which should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 2.5 of the Plan describes Castle Cary and Ansford as "*slightly more 'self-contained' than the national average (58% working at home or within 20kms)*". I consider that the policies for Employment & Enterprise and Tourism should enable continuing self-containment, with employment growth in a future period of anticipated housing and population growth. I am satisfied that sections 6 and 7 of the Plan meet the Basic Conditions, including general conformity with the strategic Local Plan Policy SS3: Delivering new employment land.
- 4.20 The town centre is a key feature defining the character of Ansford/Castle Cary. As paragraph 8.1 of the CCANP states, the town centre is at the social heart of the town and forms an important part of the local economy. I saw at my site visit the range of niche and independent retailers, as well as more basic food shops, hardware, post office and chemists' shops, alongside cafes and public houses. Also, there is a library, museum and galleries. The Plan advises that the weekly Tuesday market was revived in 2014, which also enhances the vitality of the centre. Free car parking at both the southern and northern ends of the town centre increases footfall in the centre, benefiting visitors from outside the area.
- 4.21 I am aware that many high streets and shopping centres are currently experiencing decline and shop closures, and appreciate the desire to maintain the town centre of Ansford /Castle Cary. New housing development is expected to increase spending in the town centre, and the South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017, identified scope for an additional 737sqm food retail space in Castle Cary. However, I recognise the difficulty of specifying sites to expand the existing town centre, especially to provide for larger modern retail outlets in this historic town. I consider that Policy TC1 to resist the loss of existing retail or similar floorspace is conservative but does not breach the Basic Conditions. The off-street public car parks and public conveniences next to the town centre are assets for shoppers and other visitors. I note SSDC's observation that the policy could enable a scenario where

commensurate car parking was provided in an alternative town centre location. The existing wording of the policy would not rule it out in my opinion. However it is applied, I consider that Policy TC2 to preserve town centre parking should support the vitality and viability of the area and aligns with the NPPF, paragraph 23.

- 4.22 Castle Cary and Ansford are located beside the A371 which connects Shepton Mallet to Wincanton and the A303. The A371 carries much through traffic as well as vehicles travelling to and from Ansford/Castle Cary. On my site visit, I observed significant numbers of HGVs as well as private cars and saw the risks to highway safety and smooth traffic movement posed at the 'local highway hotspots' named in paragraph 9.1 of the CCANP, on the A371 and B3153.
- 4.23 Paragraph 9.3 of the Plan confirms that no firm alignment has yet been approved for the new road between Station Road and Torbay Road in the Direction of Growth, which is required by Policy LMT1 of the Local Plan. Paragraph 9.9 of the CCANP states that the road should be aligned so as to remove the need for HGV traffic to use Clanville and Blackworthy Road to reach the industrial estate. SSDC observed that the input of Somerset County Council as the highway authority would be helpful in this section, and it highlighted potential problems with funding and delivery. The County Council has not commented on this part of the CCANP, but I consider that the need for further discussion between the Parish Councils and highway authority should be referenced. The absence of progress on this important piece of infrastructure strengthens my support for the proposal to postpone granting any more planning permissions for housing growth in the Direction of Growth in the short-term. **PMS** to modify paragraph 9.9 should be made to aid delivery of new housing and a link road in the area, in general conformity with the strategic Local Plan.
- 4.24 Pitcombe Parish Council requested that due consideration be given to the management of additional traffic on roads in its Parish, especially between Hadspen and Cole, as a result of new housing development in Ansford/Castle Cary. In my view, this is a matter for Somerset County Council as highway authority to address.
- 4.25 I consider that section 9 of the Plan sets out clearly the challenges which exist in Ansford/Castle Cary for the transport system. The NPPF promotes sustainable transport, and the Actions in this Neighbourhood Plan seek to secure an improved network of pedestrian and cycle routes, and maximise the potential to use public transport. These Actions fall outside the remit of my examination, in so far as they are community aspirations, but I nonetheless note they have had regard for the NPPF and would promote the achievement of sustainable development. Policy TRA1 is focused on improving safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists within the built-up area, and to the countryside with its rights of way network. I agree that this is

an area where improvements are needed to promote more sustainable travel behaviour. Many of the residential areas of Castle Cary and Ansford are relatively hilly, with cul-de-sacs which deny through movement. Walking or cycling to the railway station is not straightforward for many residents, partly because of the road layout. In addition, the railway station is separated from the northern edge of the built-up area of Ansford, and is reached on foot along a narrow tarmac path between open fields which is hilly and unlit.

4.26 SSDC observed that, unfortunately, a connecting bus service from the town centre to the railway station is unlikely to prove viable, primarily because of the diverse nature of terminal points and because the actual population is unlikely to provide the critical mass for services. Nevertheless, I see no reason why the Parish Councils should not investigate the scope to improve bus services as the local community wishes (paragraph 9.4 c.) or pursue the action set out in paragraph 9.8. The latter includes improved car parking capacity at the railway station, which could also contribute to more sustainable travel in the wider area. I consider that Policy TRA1 of the CCANP is in general conformity with the Local Plan's strategic Policies TRA1: Low carbon travel and TRA5: Transport impact of new development. I support the thrust of CCANP Policy TRA2 and consider it to be in general conformity with the strategic Local Plan policy for transport. However, I recommend modified wording to the first sentence because SSDC, and not Castle Cary and Ansford councils, will be determining the planning applications for employment and related development. As long as **PM9** is made, Policies TRA1 and 2 will meet the Basic Conditions.

4.27 Section 10 of the Plan concerns education, social and community assets. Paragraph 10.5 refers to building a new primary school in the Direction of Growth as part of outline planning permission, 15/02347/OUT. Even if this is only an outline permission with detailed matters requiring further approval, this does not provide justification for identifying an alternative site for the school. Although paragraph 10.5 of the Plan sets out the preference of the local community and Parish Councils to expand the existing site on Church Street, Somerset County Council with responsibility for schools and education does not agree and requires the removal of the proposal. The County Council's schools' commissioning team has undertaken feasibility studies and found that the existing school site will not be satisfactory to accommodate all primary school children in the future. The proposed new site would be reasonably connected to the built-up area of Ansford/Castle Cary in my opinion. Located in the Direction of Growth, an appropriate sized school with adequate hall, sporting and other facilities should be achievable. In order to secure general conformity with Policy LMT1 and its supporting information in paragraph 7.121 of the Local Plan, which expect delivery of a new primary school in the Direction of Growth, modifications to Policies INF1 & INF2,

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and paragraphs 3.1h., 10.4, 10.5, 10.8 and 10.10 should be made, as in **PM3, PM10 & PM11**.

- 4.28 The working group expressed concern that closure of the primary school would have a negative effect on the vitality of the town centre. Although I have seen no supporting evidence, I appreciate that some parents and teachers are likely to combine trips to school with use of the shops and other community facilities. The CCANP supports improvements to the highway network, including direct and safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists to the town centre through Policy TRA1; it also supports retention of the town centre car park. These measures should contribute to good access between a new primary school and the town centre, and I see no need for additional references to be made.
- 4.29 The first sentence in paragraph 10.2 should be modified to have regard to national policy, as not all planning permissions for housing and other developments will be accompanied by planning obligations. The figures quoted in this paragraph refer to the amounts already agreed with developers where permissions for significant development have been granted. This needs to be clarified, as in **PM10**. Somerset County Council provided more up-to-date information on the methodology and formula for funding education when new housing development is permitted. I agree that paragraph 10.4 should be modified to include the updates to the formula. Also, paragraph 10.8 and Policy INF2, as well as the Policies Map, should be modified to remove the references to providing new youth facilities on the site north of Torbay Road where planning permission has been granted for a new primary school. The working group advised that it wished to see new youth facilities within the wider area north of Torbay Road or alternatively within the existing primary school, following its closure. I consider that these preferences should be referenced in paragraph 10.8. **PM10 & PM11** are necessary to secure this outcome and for general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.
- 4.30 SSDC was critical of Policies INF2 and INF3 as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds are not tied to specific local projects, and it would not necessarily be the Parish Councils' decision as to where they are allocated. Although the Parish Councils would receive 25% of funds collected locally once the Neighbourhood Plan is made, the amounts are likely to be low in the short-term, as many of the allocated sites already have planning permissions. I recognise that the policies are aspirational but consider that they should be retained in the modified form of **PM11 & PM12**, which should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.31 Regarding Policy INF4, Protection of important social and community facilities, I agree with SSDC that there does not appear to be any objective assessment as to what makes the features listed in Appendix A special. Without such an assessment, there may be unreasonable

constraint on some of the facilities to adapt their usage or modernise themselves. I recommend that Policy INF4 is amended so that it is an "Action" rather than a policy, and that the Parish Councils seek to carry out further investigation and have some, if not all, facilities listed on the District Council's register in future. **PM13** should be made so that this part of the Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

- 4.32 As long as all the above modifications are made, I conclude that the Plan will include suitable policies which meet the Basic Conditions for: (i) business development, (ii) the town centre, (iii) transport and (iv) community facilities, notably school provision, having regard for planned new housing development.

Issue 3 – Natural and Built Environment

- 4.33 Section 11 of the CCANP sets out policy for the natural and built environment. I fully support the Main Aim "to maintain and enhance the urban green spaces and the natural environment within the countryside surrounding both parishes, for the enjoyment of all." Policy ENV1: Protection of Green Corridors and Natural Environment has regard for section 11 of the NPPF, is in general conformity with Policies EQ2, EQ4 & EQ5 of the Local Plan, and should contribute to sustainable development.
- 4.34 Quoting from the NPPF, in paragraph 11.4 the CCANP explains that seven Local Green Spaces (LGS) have been designated in Castle Cary and Ansford. I saw them at my site visit and noted that the majority are well-used by the local community, are well-related to residential areas or the town centre and are well-managed. None are unreasonably extensive tracts of land. However, as the NPPF cautions that LGS designations will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space, and as development management within LGSs should be consistent with policy for Green Belts, the tests for designation should be strictly applied. The Playing Field, Ansford, is east of Ansford Hill and outside the built-up area, bordered by countryside to the south and east. Its use as a playing field should be maintained especially as it is the home of junior sections of the local football club. However, in my opinion, it is not so special that it should be designated as LGS. Paragraphs 11.4 and Policy ENV2 should be modified to remove it from the LGS list as in **PM14** so that full regard is had to the NPPF. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map on Page 47 should be modified to remove the LGS, as in **PM16**. Otherwise, I am content that the remaining sites should be designated as LGS.
- 4.35 The CCANP deals with the built environment very succinctly in paragraphs 11.5 to 11.8. The community's strong desire to protect the local historic environment and setting of Castle Cary and Ansford is noted in Section 3 and in the Main Aim at the start of Section 4 of the Plan. Paragraph 7.103

of the Local Plan refers to Ansford/Castle Cary's rich historic environment recognised by the town's four designated conservation areas and many listed buildings including the Grade II* listed All Saints Church. The area around the settlement has high archaeological potential and the remains of a motte and bailey castle. Although neighbourhood plans should not replicate Local Plans, I consider that users of the CCANP should be made aware of the existence of these heritage features. Their presence could have significant implications when development management decisions are made in the area. The reference to these features in paragraph 2.20 should be expanded, and a new map added to the Plan to illustrate the location of the Conservation Areas as well as the motte and bailey castle. **PM1** should be made to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and having regard for national policy.

- 4.36 Policy DP1 expects all new development to be designed to the highest standards and to respect the unique character of the area. This approach has due regard for section 7 of the NPPF, which begins by stating that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, and views good design as a key aspect of sustainable development. In my view, the policy is in general conformity with Policies EQ1, 2 & 3 of the Local Plan on Addressing Climate Change, General Development Design and the Historic Environment. However, Policy DP1 refers the reader to a series of design principles to be used when assessing development proposals which, in my view, will require some modification. It would also assist if the criteria on Pages 14-18 were headed by the title "Design Principles".
- 4.37 Wessex Water advised that, as a utility company, it will need to undertake maintenance and improvement works over the Plan period. Such works will need to be functional and consideration of security, health and safety may have to override good appearance. Another party commented that it goes beyond national planning policy to require all new housing to be carbon neutral. Government's standards for energy efficiency are set through Building Regulations. As the criterion describes a carbon neutral outcome as ideal, I consider that it is not overly restrictive. However, a reference to Building Regulations could usefully be added. I accept that Policy DP1 and the subsequent design principles require modification to ensure that they are not too onerous. I have put forward modifications to paragraph 4.1 in **PM5**, having regard for paragraphs 59 and 60, as well as 173 of the NPPF. This states that plans should be deliverable, and the scale of development identified in a plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that the ability to be developed viably is threatened.
- 4.38 The wording of the first criterion under Security and Safety should be changed, as it could be too restrictive of rear garden provision. The third criterion should relate to "*housing suitable for people of varied ages ...*" as

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the age of residents cannot be specified in planning policy. Criterion a. under Access and Movement could prevent development alongside existing main roads, and the reason for avoiding cul-de-sacs could usefully be explained. As SSDC, rather than Castle Cary and Ansford councils, will be determining planning applications, criterion d. should be modified. **PM5** should be made having regard for national policy and for the achievement of sustainable development. Providing **PM1, PM5, PM14 & PM16** are made, I conclude that the Plan will seek to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment appropriately and meet the Basic Conditions.

Issue 4 - Monitoring and Reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.39 Respondents to the Regulation 16 consultation exercise expressed concern that the CCANP did not indicate how monitoring will be undertaken, and when the Plan will be reviewed. Local Plans are now subject to a statutory requirement to be reviewed at least every 5 years⁶ and, in practice, this will be likely to have a consequential impact on the need to review neighbourhood plans. Furthermore, NPPF paragraph 47 requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable housing sites. In essence, this necessitates monitoring of site availability and delivery, and ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of local planning policy. As SSDC is currently reviewing its Local Plan and looking forward to 2036, I consider that given these particular circumstances, the CCANP should include a commitment for monitoring and review, having regard to paragraph 184 of the NPPF which advises the ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.
- 4.40 The working group commented that the primary responsibility for monitoring development should lie with the SSDC and its annual reports. However, the Parish Councils will be well placed to observe the rate of housing and other development in the Direction of Growth, and elsewhere (eg. on brownfield sites). Depending on the new housing target for SSDC taken forward in the forthcoming Local Plan, and any revised policy for the distribution of new housing development across the District, Ansford/Castle Cary may need to accommodate additional housing growth. The Parish Councils should also monitor progress on plans for the provision of a new link road and primary school, as well as employment land, in the Direction of Growth. A new section 12 should be added to the Plan to address Monitoring and Review. I have taken account of the working group's suggested text in putting forward **PM15**. This modification will ensure that the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and addresses monitoring and future Plan review adequately.

⁶ Regulation 10A(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

5. Conclusions

Summary

- 5.1 The Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard for all the responses made following consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, and the evidence documents submitted with it.
- 5.2 I have made recommendations to modify a number of policies and text to ensure the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

The Referendum and its Area

- 5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates. The CCANP as modified has no policy or proposals which I consider significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary, requiring the referendum to extend to areas beyond the Plan boundary. I recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Overview

- 5.4 I appreciate the hard work which has been carried out by the working group of local people appointed by Castle Cary and Ansford Parish Councils to prepare this Neighbourhood Plan, over a number of years since Summer 2014. This historic market town is projected to grow significantly in size over the coming years, and the working group has been challenged to find an appropriate approach to manage that growth, whilst not preventing a boost in housing supply, as required by national and local plan policy. I congratulate the working group on producing a Plan which seeks to balance the competing requirement to accommodate sustainable growth whilst conserving the assets of the existing town and its community. I hope that the CCANP will be made and will contribute to effective and beneficial development management within Castle Cary and Ansford in the near future.

Jill Kingaby

Examiner

Appendix: Modifications

| Proposed modification number (PM) | Page no./ other reference | Modification |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| PM1 | Page 9 paragraph 2.20 | <p>Last sentence should read:</p> <p>The NP has 2 scheduled monuments (<i>the Motte and Bailey Castle and Round House lock-up</i>), 4 Conservation Area, <i>as illustrated on Map ...</i>, and some 112 Listed Buildings and structures.</p> <p>Add a map to illustrate the location of the key heritage assets, principally the 4 conservation areas and 2 scheduled monuments within Ansford/Castle Cary.</p> |
| PM2 | Page 10 paragraph 3.1b. | <p>while we accept the need for some additional housing and any further release of greenfield sites for housing is not welcomed while <i>and</i> there is a good supply of available brownfield sites. <i>Any further release of greenfield sites for housing should be paused pending a review of recent permitted development and longer term housing requirements.</i></p> |
| PM3 | Page 11 paragraph 3.1h. | <p>The primary school is at capacity ...its existing site., as it is centrally located and its presence here supports the town centre economy. <i>However, opportunities for expansion there are very limited and a new primary school is planned within the Direction of Growth.</i></p> |
| PM4 | Page 12 | <p>Main Aims – second bullet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support the level of new dwellings priority to the <i>sites committed for development within the Direction of Growth</i>, the re-development or re-use of brownfield sites |
| PM5 | Pages 13 to 18 | <p>4.1 The NP councils ... developers on all such matters. <i>Good design is essential for good planning and making places</i></p> |

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| | | <p>better for people. However, development can take many forms, and should not be subject to an onerous set of requirements that may hold back necessary and affordable development. The following principles will be applied to secure high quality in the built environment, but also having regard for development to meet functional requirements, achieve secure and safe environments, and be viable.</p> <p>New heading at the top of Page 14</p> <p>Design Principles</p> <p>Security and Safety</p> <p>a. Private, semi-private ... Rear gardens New housing adjoining public spaces and footpaths should be avoided laid out with as these do not provide regard to securing good surveillance particularly whereParking courts should, where possible, be overlooked.</p> <p>b. ..</p> <p>c. Developments should provide for housing suitable for people of a variety of ages and types of residents, where the scale and site characteristics allow, to encourage 'passive surveillance'</p> <p>Access and Movement</p> <p>a. The road network should not necessarily be the dominant factor in any layout design: roads should be designed as to provide open spaces as well as routes to give access.....Cul-de-sacs especially those without through access for pedestrians and cyclists are to be avoided.</p> <p>b. ..</p> <p>c. ..</p> |
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| | | <p>d. All such foot and cycle routes are to be agreed between discussed by developers, SSDC and the NP councils before ...</p> <p>Environmental Footprint</p> <p>c. We expectmethods and function, but as a minimum complying with Government Building Regulations.</p> |
| PM6 | Page 20, 21 & 22 | <p>5.6 This situation, of an apparently excessive a very high number</p> <p>5.8 ...This reinforces concerns that there are 'excessive' over high numbers of</p> <p>5.11In the light of; and for the time being, to resist pause further release .. can be shown. The delivery of housing schemes listed in Table 5.1 within Ansford/Castle Cary will be monitored. A review of the neighbourhood plan within the next five years will include assessment of the impact of ongoing development on the town's infrastructure and role as a smaller local market town. The review will consider the need for additional development within the DofG, for example to compensate for any non-delivery of the schemes in Table 5.1.</p> <p>5.14The NP councils will work with SSDC and local landowners to monitor progress on the delivery of new housing in Castle Cary and Ansford, and monitor compliance with emerging housing policy in the South Somerset Local Plan 2016-36.</p> |
| PM7 | Page 23 | <p>Policy HOU2</p> <p>HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE DIRECTION OF GROWTH</p> <p>While there remains within the direction of growth will be strongly resisted paused unless ...met elsewhere. Whilst</p> |

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| | | additional sites to those already committed for development are available within the Direction of Growth, these will not be brought forward for development unless the emerging South Somerset Local Plan requires their release, and it can be demonstrated that further housing development would not have a significantly adverse effect on the character of this modest market town and its infrastructure. |
| PM8 | Page 35 paragraph 9.9 | The NP councils will continue to press for a link road between Torbay Road and Station Road, liaising with SCC as local highway authority and SSDC, to deliver Policy LMT1 of the Local Plan which expects a link road to be provided prior to the completion of growth in housing, employment and education in the area. on an The alignment of the new road such as to should remove the need for HGV |
| PM9 | Page 36 | Policy TRA2 HGV TRAFFIC AT LOCAL HIGHWAY HOTSPOTS The NP councils will require that t Transport assessments associated |
| PM10 | Pages 37 to 40 | 10.2 Planning permissions granted for significant housing and other developments are have all been accompanied 10.3 Education is criticalalready provided in town. 10.4 Castle Cary Community Primary School a Additional accommodation... that has already been approved; a guideline formula for providing new school places when new houses are built suggests that approximately ...new houses built. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years 5 pupils per 100 dwellings |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary 32 pupils per 100 dwellings • Secondary 14 pupils per 100 dwellings <p>(Source: Somerset County Council 2019)</p> <p>In virtually all cases school education.The issue which arises is how and where such funds should be used.</p> <p>10.5 One option, to build The provision of a new primary school to the west of the town, is included as a possibility in the form of a reserved site in the outlineHowever, Even though provision in that location is not supported by all the local community as it would lead to increasedwould enable further expansion. Somerset County Council schools commissioning team has undertaken feasibility studies which demonstrate that the current school site will not be satisfactory for the future. The proposed new site in the Direction of Growth, granted planning permission in June 2016 (Ref: 15/02347/OUT), will accommodate an appropriate sized school with adequate hall, sports facilities and other requirements. Any suggestion that primary school strongly resisted.</p> <p>10.8 There is an urgent need any other activities. The site earmarked for a new primary schoolall weather play area. Our preferred option is for a site to be found within the Torbay Road development area, as indicated on the policies map. Alternatively, in the event of the existing primary school being vacated, consideration should be given to use of part or all of the building for youth and community facilities. Planning obligations already</p> |
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| | | 10.10 The District Council ... Although LP policy LMT1 allows ... Direction of Growth, the preferred option ... existing primary school site, and therefore that is provided under the following policy. |
| PM11 | Page 41 | <p>Policy INF1 EXPANDING PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION</p> <p>The NP councils will seek to ensure that future growth of the Castle Cary ... to the town centre. primary school provision takes place at the selected site in the Direction of Growth to meet the needs of the Ansford/Castle Cary community.</p> <p>Policy INF2 YOUTH FACILITIES PROVISION</p> <p>The NP councils will press for liaise with SSDC and seek funding where possible from relevant s106 and CIL funds within the NP area sources to be allocated towards appropriate youth facilities,7 giving priority primary school.</p> |
| PM12 | Page 41 | <p>Policy INF3 COMMUNITY HALL PROVISION</p> <p>The NP councils will press for liaise with SSDC and seek funding where possible from relevant s106 and CIL funds within the NP area sources to be allocated towards</p> |
| PM13 | Pages 40 and 41 | <p>10.11 The LP includes Policy INF3 and a Appendix A makes clear the current facilities to which this policy should be applied within the NP area The facilities listed represent those which the local community sees However, the NP councils will take action to see that these are maintained and protected.</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>The NP Councils will continue to work on the identification of important social and community facilities, and seek their listing on the SSDC register of Assets of Community Value where appropriate. The NP Councils will</p> |

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| | | <p>seek to ensure that important facilities are maintained and protected.</p> <p>Policy INF4 should be deleted.</p> |
| PM14 | Page 45 and 46 | <p>Paragraph 11.4 f. Playing field, Ansford —the home of the junior sections of the local football club</p> <p>Policy ENV2 LOCAL GREEN SPACES</p> <p>The following locations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing field, Ansford • Jubilee |
| PM15 | Page 46 and 47 | <p>New section 12: MONITORING AND REVIEW</p> <p>12.1 The NP will run concurrently with the South Somerset Local Plan and apply until March 2028. It is, however, a response to the needs and aspirations of the local community as understood today, and it is recognised that current challenges and concerns are likely to change over the plan period. It is, therefore, essential for the long term success of the Plan that developments in the NP area are monitored and reviewed against the Plan’s Aims and Policies.</p> <p>12.2 It is expected that SSDC will continue to monitor progress relating to the number of dwellings including affordable homes which are delivered during the Plan period. Hence, monitoring of Policy HOU2 will be achieved by reference to SSDC’s series of annual monitoring reports and housing land availability reports.</p> <p>12.3 The NP Councils will liaise with SSDC and other stakeholders to monitor progress on employment and other development, as well as housing, in Castle Cary and Ansford. In particular, progress on a new link</p> |

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| | | <p><i>road and primary school in the Direction of Growth will be monitored.</i></p> <p><i>12.4 The NP Councils will liaise with SSDC and SCC to monitor the impact of new development on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• The self-containment of the area (which may be eroded if new housing development outstrips the creation of new employment space and jobs);</i> <i>• Transport infrastructure, bearing in mind the identified hotspots on the A371 and B353 and the limitations to public transport in the area;</i> <i>• The vitality of the town centre with its diversity of retail outlets and other community facilities;</i> <i>• The historic character and appearance of the old market town in a rural setting.</i> <p><i>12.5 The NP Councils in liaison with SSDC will consider the case for further development within the Direction of Growth following review of the current NP.</i></p> <p><i>12.6 At a more general level, the NP Councils will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance to current community needs. It is intended that a review of all the issues and needs of the community will take place every 5 years. However, SSDC are in the process of preparing a Local Plan Review to cover the period up to 2036, and in order to achieve general conformity with strategic policies, it may be necessary to review the NP before the end of the 5 year timescale. The NP councils will monitor progress on the revised LP, particularly once it has become a material consideration in</i></p> |
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| | | <p><i>the determination of planning applications, and will commence review of the NP if it becomes clear that updating is required. We note that SSDC currently anticipate the following timescale for preparation of the revised LP:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public consultation on preferred options: mid-2019</i> • <i>Public consultation on publication plan: early 2020</i> • <i>Submission to Sec of State: late 2020</i> • <i>Examination of plan: 2021</i> • <i>Adoption of plan: 2021.</i> |
| PM16 | Page 47 | <p>Map of Neighbourhood Plan Policies</p> <p>This should be modified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To show the Preferred location for a new primary school, and not the Preferred location for youth facilities. • To omit the Playing field Ansford as a Local Green Space. |