

5. Design & Heritage

A photograph of a traditional stone building with a thatched roof, featuring several windows and a central door, overlaid with a purple gradient and the text '5. Design & Heritage'. The building is constructed from rough-hewn stone blocks. The ground floor has a central white door with the number '24' above it, flanked by two white-framed, six-pane windows. To the left of the door is a smaller, dark-framed door. The first floor has three white-framed, six-pane windows. The roof is thick and thatched, with a small dormer window visible on the left. The entire image is covered in a semi-transparent purple overlay.

5.1 Design and Heritage:

Key messages and aims

Context—A brief history of the town

Thomas Hardy was fascinated by Shaftesbury and, 'its three mints, its magnificent apsidal abbey, the chief glory of South Wessex, its twelve churches, its shrines, chantries, hospitals, its gabled freestone mansions' set within a 'limitless landscape'.

Almost a century after his death, Hardy would recognise a lot of the town he admired. To understand the present-day shape, design and style of Shaftesbury streets, open space and buildings, a quick reminder of the town's long history might be useful.

The history of Shaftesbury owes everything to its location on a promontory and can clearly be seen from (and enjoys views out towards) Glastonbury Tor and Hambleton Hill as well as other Neolithic

and Iron Age sites. Alone amongst them, and as a rarity in England, it has persisted as a town in part thanks to King Alfred.

Alfred founded a Benedictine nunnery around 880 AD. A hundred years later, Shaftesbury had become a major religious destination with pilgrims coming to visit the remains of King Edward the Martyr, which were kept at the Abbey. This influx of visitors saw the Saxon town, that was centred on Bimport, extend in the 10th and 11th centuries to an area to the east of the Abbey.

At this point Shaftesbury was so prosperous it had its own money mints and twelve parish churches.

The street pattern of an irregular grid of streets and lanes that we walk or drive around today was literally set in stone during the medieval period. By the 13th and 14th centuries, Shaftesbury's location on the Great West Road further added to its popularity and its influx of visitors.

The town had the largest population in Dorset—but this success was due almost entirely to the size and prestige of the Abbey.

When the Abbey was destroyed during Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries, Shaftesbury's importance declined.

Park Walk in Shaftesbury (to the south of the Shaftesbury Abbey ruins) is a locally listed park. This was originally open pasture for the Abbey.

It is notable for both the terrace and mature sycamore tree line, with exceptional views over the Blackmore Vale countryside and St James Park, with the winding path linking upper and lower town. The Jubilee steps were restored in 1937 to celebrate the 1935 Silver Jubilee.

Lord Stalbridge owned Shaftesbury and in 1918 he decided to sell his Dorset estates. Our town was bought by three prominent Shaftesbury residents in 1919. This is when the famous 'Sale of Shaftesbury' happened.

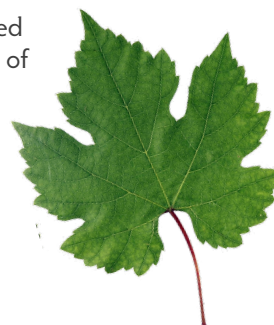


They sold over 300 individual buildings to the tenants and shopkeepers who occupied them, giving ordinary citizens control over their homes, their businesses and their futures. Importantly, these men donated Castle Hill to the town. We enjoy those special green spaces today because of their legacy and Robert Dyneley's gift.

The most recent notable event was the 1973 filming of a Hovis (bread) advert by the world-renowned film director Ridley Scott. It showed a boy in working Victorian dress pushing his bicycle up the steep cobbles of Gold Hill with the sweep of the green sandstone buttresses of the old Abbey on the right and the tiled and thatched roofs of the cottages on the hill to the left, all framed by the breath-



Abbey Gardens Statue of King Alfred



Abbey Gardens

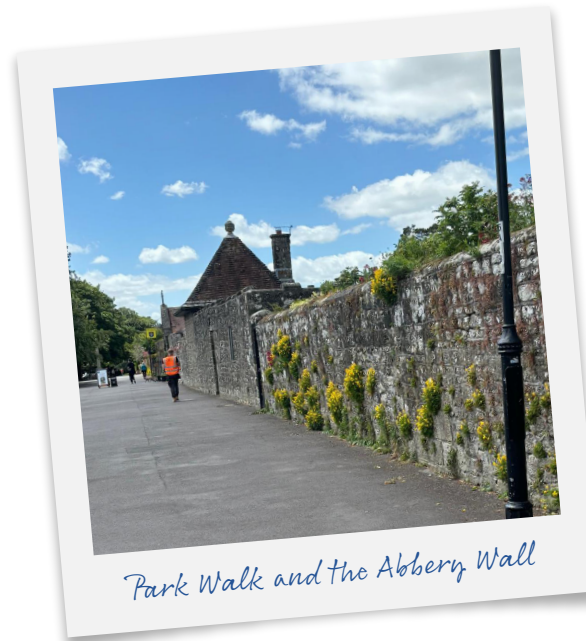
taking views of the valleys and downs beyond. A recent national press report described the Hovis advert as ‘the most noteworthy of all time.’

Today, the fame of Gold Hill and Shaftesbury’s outstanding views continue to attract a considerable number of visitors.

Together with a vibrant, independent High Street and many successful local businesses, Shaftesbury continues to thrive.

Our Neighbourhood Plan aims to address some of the challenges of life in an expanding market town without sacrificing the special qualities of a town that has evolved well over millennia.

Gold Hill



Park Walk and the Abberly Wall

Quick Read

What does this policy mean and why is it important?

History has shaped the appearance of our town.

The neighbourhood plan team wants to make sure that planners understand how each different area of Shaftesbury looks and feels. That will help them make informed decisions when they decide whether to give planning permission to a new development.

That development could be a single house, a business conversion or a larger housing estate, but the style and shape of the building must be appropriate for Shaftesbury and it must not look odd in its setting.

Development has to fit in.



Hovis Bike on Gold Hill

5.1 Design and Heritage:

Key messages and aims *(continued)*

Key feedback from consultation

Of 152 respondents to our Neighbourhood Plan survey in January and February 2019, 142 agreed that: We need to set clear design guidelines to preserve and enhance the different character areas throughout our town

- ▶ 98% of respondents agreed that they should include attractive open spaces and trees.
- ▶ 95% of respondents agreed that all new developments should be built using high quality materials in keeping with the historical context of the town.
- ▶ 92% of respondents agreed that the design of signage, benches, bins etc. should be consistent.
- ▶ 92% of respondents agreed that new developments should be accessible to people of all ages and abilities.
- ▶ 89% of respondents agreed that we should accommodate parking requirements.
- ▶ 88% of respondents agreed that new development should employ renewable and low carbon technology.

Key messages

The design of Shaftesbury's homes, shops, public buildings and landmarks give our town its character.

The combination of the height of buildings, the shape of roofs, the style of windows, the use of certain materials and even the road surfaces all play a part in creating our distinctive place to live or work.

This section of the Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan

identifies the design elements in our buildings and the spaces around them that make them special enough to save and conserve. We also set out design guidelines that we would like house-builders to meet when planning future housing developments in our town. We want Shaftesbury to remain special and distinguished.

Up until 2021, Shaftesbury was the only town in North Dorset that did not have its own adopted design guidance. The 2004 Eastern Development Masterplan, including a design statement, was agreed. However, this document has not been followed and the plan is very different to the reality.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to give clear guidance to the Planning Department of Dorset Council when they receive a planning application in Shaftesbury.

Our intention is to ensure that anyone reading the Neighbourhood Plan understands what residents consider is important to conserve, so that new ideas and development works in harmony with our historical Town Centre and our important conservation areas.

A French architect once said, 'Architecture is a very dangerous job; if a writer makes a bad book, people don't read it. But if you make bad architecture, you impose ugliness on a place for 100 years.'

This plan offers clear and concise guidance, including reference nationally accepted standards, to ensure undesirable architectural design and materials do not blight our beautiful town.



Traditional Cottages



Traditional Cottages

5.2 Shaftesbury Character Zones

Map of Shaftesbury Character Zones

1. Bimport
2. Shaftesbury Town Centre
3. St James
4. Grosvenor Road, Barton Hill and Cockram's Field
5. Layton Lane
6. Cann
7. Enmore Green
8. East of Christy's Lane

Shaftesbury Character Zones
Map Ref: SFDHZ

Based on the Dorset Historic Towns Survey 2011, with minor adjustments to the coverage of areas 4, 6 and 8.

 Town Council boundary

5.2 Shaftesbury Character Zones (continued)

1. Bimport

Description

Bimport contains the jewels of Shaftesbury's hilltop heritage—the ruins of England's first dedicated nunnery, the beauty of Pine Walk, the 15th century Edwardstowe, Shaftesbury's oldest house, and the incomparable views south and west from Park Walk and north from Castle Green.

This character area also includes Castle Hill at the western end of the spur and the common beneath it to the north, together with St James Park to the south, the distinctive tower of Trinity Church, the Westminster Memorial Hospital and Shaftesbury's most famous landmark, the stunning cobbled Gold Hill.

This area includes the site of Shaftesbury's first known Saxon burgh, or settlement. The plots still form the shape of the hilltop's residential layout, with all the charm of ancient lanes.

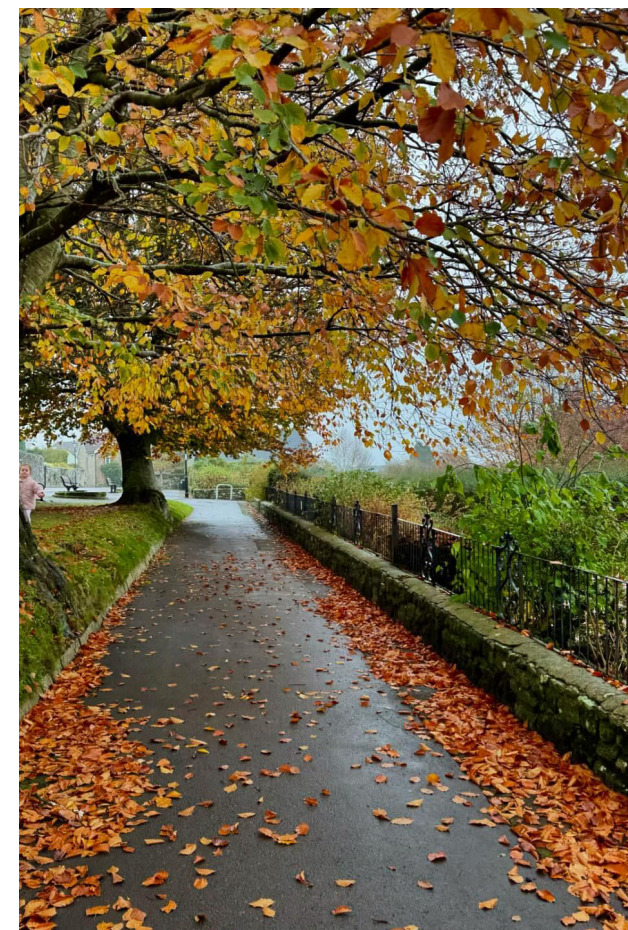
Key characteristics

- ▶ Distinctive hilltop location on green sandstone spur. The location of properties and public space located on high points in the landscape afford panoramic views of the extensive low-lying countryside of the Blackmore Vale.
- ▶ A historic area representing the initial settlement of the town. Includes former Saxon burgh and late Saxon and Medieval abbey and precinct. The architectural detailing on the surviving historic buildings is of high quality. The irregular street pattern and historic buildings provide intrigue and diversity.

- ▶ Relatively open settlement pattern including large building plots.
- ▶ Holy Trinity Church tower—a town landmark.
- ▶ Park Walk and The Park with wooded slopes provide a sense of openness and draw the rural landscape into the townscape.
- ▶ 12th century 'castle' earthworks at Castle Hill surrounded by public open space.
- ▶ Large gardens and mature trees strongly contribute to the leafy character of this area—the ancient yew tree is of pre-Christian time.
- ▶ St John's churchyard.
- ▶ Stone boundary walls.

Issues to be addressed

- ▶ Large areas of tarmacadam and a lack of consistency and quality of street furniture reduces the quality of the area of open space on Park Walk.
- ▶ Modern street lights are not in keeping with historical aspect of this area.
- ▶ Poor quality materials, hard surfaces and edging. Sunken and sinking areas of tarmacadam on Park Walk.
- ▶ In places the road edge is poorly defined.



2. Shaftesbury Town Centre

Description

One of England's highest market towns, Shaftesbury's Town Centre boasts an array of architecture through the ages, with 124 listed buildings, all set in the distinctive horseshoe layout of the original Medieval setting.

At the centre of the town is The Commons, the top of the horseshoe. The buildings in The Commons are mainly Georgian. It turns into the High Street as it skirts the top of Gold Hill going east. Here there is a mix of mainly Victorian architecture, apart from St Peter's, the only remaining example of Shaftesbury's twelve Medieval churches.

When you look back along the High Street to the west you see the highly distinctive roof tops of King Alfred's Kitchen silhouetted against the sunset. This is an iconic view.

The top of The Commons going east becomes Bell Street, where the individual shops soon merge into residential cottages of 17th and 18th century origins.

The horseshoe becomes a circular route at its eastern end as Angel Lane joins the High Street and Bell Street. All roads meet outside the highly distinctive building that has housed Shaftesbury's Post Office for over 70 years.

Key characteristics

- ▶ Historic commercial centre of Shaftesbury, possibly from late Saxon period onwards. Tightly developed street frontage is an important characteristic of this historic market town environment.
- ▶ Historic street grid of near parallel roads, with lanes linking them. The labyrinth of passageways, open public spaces and connections to larger open spaces provide permeability and interest through the area.
- ▶ Medieval and post-Medieval market areas at the High Street and The Commons. The marketplace is a focal area of the High Street.
- ▶ Land plots from the High Street to the south east have a unique characteristic, with gardens featuring burgage plots. A burgage was a town rental property owned by a King or a Lord, usually and distinctly

consisting of a house on a long and narrow plot of land.

- ▶ Large number of surviving historic buildings and intact street frontages. The Post Office is an example of a high- quality historic building and a reminder of the importance of Shaftesbury on the A30 Great West Road. This is the old post route however one of the best post war buildings in the town; it was built in the 1940s.
- ▶ Range of houses and cottages in the local style with varied building lines along some streets and lanes.
- ▶ Cottages and houses of 17th to 19th century in the local style are located along Gold Hill and Bell Street and contribute to the historic character of the townscape.



5.2 Shaftesbury Character Zones (continued)

- ▶ Georgian and Victorian buildings are widespread, but particularly evident along the High Street.
- ▶ Quality signage and detailing on shop fronts contribute to the character of the area.

Issues to be addressed

- ▶ Twentieth century houses and commercial properties that lack local distinctiveness are scattered throughout the area.
- ▶ Traffic and on-street parking reduce the quality of the area.
- ▶ The car park behind Bell Street is a large area of open tarmacadam which contradicts the tight spacing of buildings and quality of the rest of the area. There is an opportunity to introduce trees within the car park to soften the landscape in this area and create other environmental benefits.
- ▶ Shop frontages with modern additions and materials such as plastic signage reduce the quality of the area.
- ▶ Mixture of stone, concrete block and tarmacadam. Therefore, an uncoordinated mixture of surfacing.

- ▶ Poor quality of hard surfaces and utility apparatus covers e.g. Swan's Yard.
- ▶ Modern street lights are not in keeping with historical aspect of this area.
- ▶ Problem of two-way flow of larger vehicles along the narrower sections of the High Street causing congestion and fumes.



3. St James

Description

Arguably, St James Street defines Shaftesbury's best-preserved conservation area. It features 17th & 18th century cottages, many of them thatched. The cottages line each side of the narrow road.

To the west is St James Church and the narrow roads and lanes leading to the area known as Alcester, which looks west over the Blackmore Vale. The South side of St James Street offers wonderful views of the lower Shaftesbury slopes with the North Dorset downs behind them.

Running from halfway down Kingsman's Lane, towards open fields and the back of St James' last remaining pub, is the original Tudor wall of a former Elizabethan estate, the stones from which have been used to clad the four cottages that sit on the site. The Tudor coat of arms can still be seen to this day.

Key characteristics

- ▶ Distinctive position along the base of the southern side of the green sandstone spur.
- ▶ The linear route of the Medieval (or late Saxon) St James street sinuously follows the grain of the topography of the spur towards a triangular green and the church at its western end. The street is largely built up with small attached 18th and 19th century houses set directly on the street frontage. Occasionally the street frontage opens out into small courtyards or several houses set back from the street.
- ▶ High proportion of historic buildings, mainly 18th and 19th houses and cottages, built in the local style featuring cast iron casements. A small number of earlier houses dating from the 16th and 17th centuries are also present and there are relatively few modern houses.

- ▶ The consistency and quality in the scale of buildings and the use of local building materials provide a high-quality urban environment.
- ▶ The widespread use of local materials and a range of different building heights and slight variations in architectural details give coherence.
- ▶ The grassed and wooded slopes of the spur, together with the mature trees and gardens at the west end of the area, and the St James allotments, provide a significant green element to the character of the area. There are also small but significant green spaces in front of the church and at the Rolt Millennium Green.
- ▶ The underlying geology of the southern slopes below St James are formed of running green sandstone, which has always constrained development.
- ▶ A number of surviving stone boundary walls of 18th or 19th century date and cast-iron railings make a positive contribution to this area.

Issues to be addressed

- ▶ The inter-war and modern houses generally do not respect the earlier building lines. The small modern housing estates have a cul-de-sac arrangement running off the historic roads.
- ▶ St James is a rare English example of a 'suburb'. Its integrity has already been breached in a few places with culs-de-sac. It is very important to hold the development line to the south and west or the Continental feel of the high town and its 'underburg' will be lost.
- ▶ These houses are typical of their period and lack local distinctiveness.
- ▶ Loss of period windows in non-listed buildings erodes the character of the conservation area.



5.2 Shaftesbury Character Zones

(continued)

4. Grosvenor Road, Barton Hill and Cockram's Field

Description

Originally the ancient manor of Barton belonged to Shaftesbury's medieval abbey, but the modern Barton Hill boasts few architectural landmarks, having been extensively redeveloped over the years.

Situated due east of the town centre the area extending to Christy's Lane provides many key facilities for the town, having one of the oldest, open air swimming pools in the country, and a large recreational space with skate boarding and exercise areas, as well as the town's bowling club and two large supermarkets.

The area continues up along Grosvenor Road, with the houses in that area of a similar style and material to those found in the southern part of the character area.

Key characteristics

- ▶ The large recreational areas provide significant green open spaces within this area.
- ▶ The mature trees in the grounds of Barton Hill House and Christy's Lane contribute to the leafy character of the area.
- ▶ The importance of the large mature trees along the northern edge of Grosvenor Road contributing to the local skyline
- ▶ Inter-war and early post-war houses that predominate this area are mainly a mixture of semi-detached and short terrace suburban house types, typical of their time.
- ▶ The houses and layout have a welcome coherence. Houses are built in Gillingham bricks, produced in Dorset.
- ▶ The avenue of beech trees along Christy's Lane were planted for the Queen Mothers 80th birthday.

Issues to be addressed

- ▶ Commercial buildings with a lack of local identity on large plots are surrounded by large open car parks with extensively tarmacadam surfaces.
- ▶ The supermarket closest to the centre of the town (Tesco) is a large modern building, with brick and artificial stone banding. The other supermarket (Lidl) on part of the former Cattle Market site is a large red brick 'shed' with a grey metal roof, typical of such supermarket models and having little design relationship to the area. Both are served by large areas of tarmacadam car parking, and not designed to make it easy for pedestrians to get about.
- ▶ The remaining part of the Cattle Market site is available to be redeveloped (and received planning permission for retirement apartments in 2024).
- ▶ The potential loss of trees along would impact on the streetscape and skyline. There is an opportunity to extend the tree line further along Christy's Lane.



5. Layton Lane

Description

Layton Lane itself is an extension of St James Street, running east from the bottom of Gold Hill, while the character area extends up Hawkesdene Lane to the east and down Frenchmill Lane to the south.

The layout is more open with a variety of architecture that spans Georgian, Victorian, 1920s and modern.

A defining feature of the Layton Lane area is its proximity to the lower Shaftesbury slopes, with open fields and farmland.



There is one scheduled monument—the ancient fishponds of Shaftesbury Abbey. All that remains is a sea of briars, a perfect wildlife habitat which can be viewed from Snakey Lane.

Key characteristics

- ▶ Trees and hedges form a significant component in the semi-rural, leafy character of this area.
- ▶ Well preserved ancient lanes and boundaries—the street frontage is defined by a mixture of stone walls and hedges.
- ▶ Housing density is low with dispersed historic cottages and bungalows and large houses set on generally large plots along the road. The majority of buildings are set well back from the frontage.
- ▶ Distinctive position below the historic town.
- ▶ There are a number of open spaces within the area and good views of countryside to south.

Issues to be addressed

- ▶ Large scale properties out of proportion with historic properties in the area. This should not be seen as a precedent and further intensification of a similar nature would not be appropriate.



5.2 Shaftesbury Character Zones

(continued)

6. Cann

Description

Cann is a former medieval parish to the south-east of the main town, with 19 listed buildings, although Shaftesbury's main school and the Royal Chase Hotel are the most distinctive landmarks.

The Royal Chase roundabout dominates the area, with the character area extending out to include all the residential streets, lanes and farmsteads on the edge of town.

This area offers very mixed architecture, from modern infill to Victorian and Edwardian villas, old green sandstone houses, through to rural cottages, with beautiful views to the south, towards the Cranborne Chase National Landscape.

Key characteristics

- ▶ Formerly part of the medieval parish of Cann.
- ▶ The southern approach to the town along the A350 is wooded with no obvious development until Royal Chase roundabout.
- ▶ Along the Salisbury Road are several large villas and country houses, including the former parish church of St Rumbold's.
- ▶ Strong 'building line' and good example of early ribbon development along streets such as Lower Blandford Road.
- ▶ The Shaftesbury School and playing fields form an extensive part of the western side of this area.

Issues to be addressed

- ▶ Small Incremental changes to the post-war houses over time has reduced the overall character of those of the original design.
- ▶ The area is dominated by modern road developments, including the Royal Chase roundabout.
- ▶ Many of the larger historic houses have been significantly altered or have been obscured by 20th century suburban housing.
- ▶ The potential loss of the woodland approach to the town along the Lower Blandford Road would impact on the streetscape.



7. Enmore Green

Description

Enmore Green is situated on the lower Shaftesbury slopes immediately north of Castle Hill, with stunning views towards Motcombe and Gillingham and west towards the ancient Duncliffe Woods.

A charming jumble of ancient lanes, Enmore Green is famous locally for supplying Shaftesbury with its water, characterised by a procession called The Byzant Ceremony. The townsfolk would process down the very steep Tout Hill to meet the Enmore Green residents who would supply them with water from their individual wells.

From 17th century thatched cottages to small Victorian terraces, Enmore Green has its own very distinct charm.

Key characteristics

- ▶ Post-Medieval rural settlement site enclosed from former common. The settlement pattern is largely informal with low density, detached, rural cottages and short terraces mainly set back from the street, and a small triangular green in the centre of the village.
- ▶ Historically the site of Shaftesbury's town water supply.
- ▶ The 17th to 19th century historic cottages and houses in the village centre make a major contribution to the local character.
- ▶ The consistency and quality in the scale of buildings and the use of local building material provides a high-quality urban environment.
- ▶ Slight variations in architectural details provide diversity and interest to the streetscape.
- ▶ The area has a semi-rural character as a result of its location as a backdrop to the wooded green slopes

of the green sandstone plateau to the south, mature trees and hedges and network of ancient lanes.

- ▶ Views over the surrounding countryside.

Issues to be addressed

- ▶ Modern 20th century housing estates and infill development lack local distinctiveness and quality materials.
- ▶ Traffic and on-street parking on minor roads and rural lanes.
- ▶ Modern development is large in scale to small historic properties.
- ▶ Modern street lights are not in keeping with historical aspect of this area.
- ▶ The underlying geology of the southern slopes below St James are formed of running green sandstone which has always constrained development.



5.2 Shaftesbury Character Zones (continued)

8. East of Christy's Lane

Description

This part of Shaftesbury comprises modern, residential estates built over the last 70 years and is still the main focus for new development.

Together with the industrial estates of Wincombe and Longmead, this area provides the bulk of Shaftesbury's residential and commercial accommodation and is bordered to the east by rural fields and the border with Wiltshire.

Key characteristics

- ▶ Some modern residential developments show reference to the local vernacular and use high quality materials, making a positive contribution to the area.
- ▶ Some 19th century cottages at Little Down, together with a small amount of late Victorian and inter-war suburban housing, represent earlier development in this area.
- ▶ Areas of open green space, the cemetery, allotments and linear woodland strips provide relief to the built settlement.

Issues to be addressed

- ▶ Many of the 21st century housing estates are comparatively high-density and developed to a standard design, providing little or no reference to the local character or vernacular.
- ▶ Poor quality detailing and management of residential developments, including low quality surfaces and edges, poor design of external spaces and limited

pedestrian network.

- ▶ The loss of front gardens to hard surface has a negative impact on the streetscape.
- ▶ Inappropriate boundary treatments, particularly on front lawns of residential developments, restrict the appearance of open green spaces which surround key roads through the area.
- ▶ Most of the open space is typical featureless grassed areas within the modern estates—green infrastructure corridors have not been created or enhanced.
- ▶ Community facilities are sparsely spread through the residential estates and as a result there is no central community hub within this area.
- ▶ Modern industrial and commercial estates contain typical steel-framed units and warehouses.



5.3 Shaftesbury Conservation Area

Map of the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area is shaded in **light orange**.

Local Planning Authorities have the authority to designate as Conservation Areas, 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

This designation gives control over the demolition of buildings, trees and other alterations.

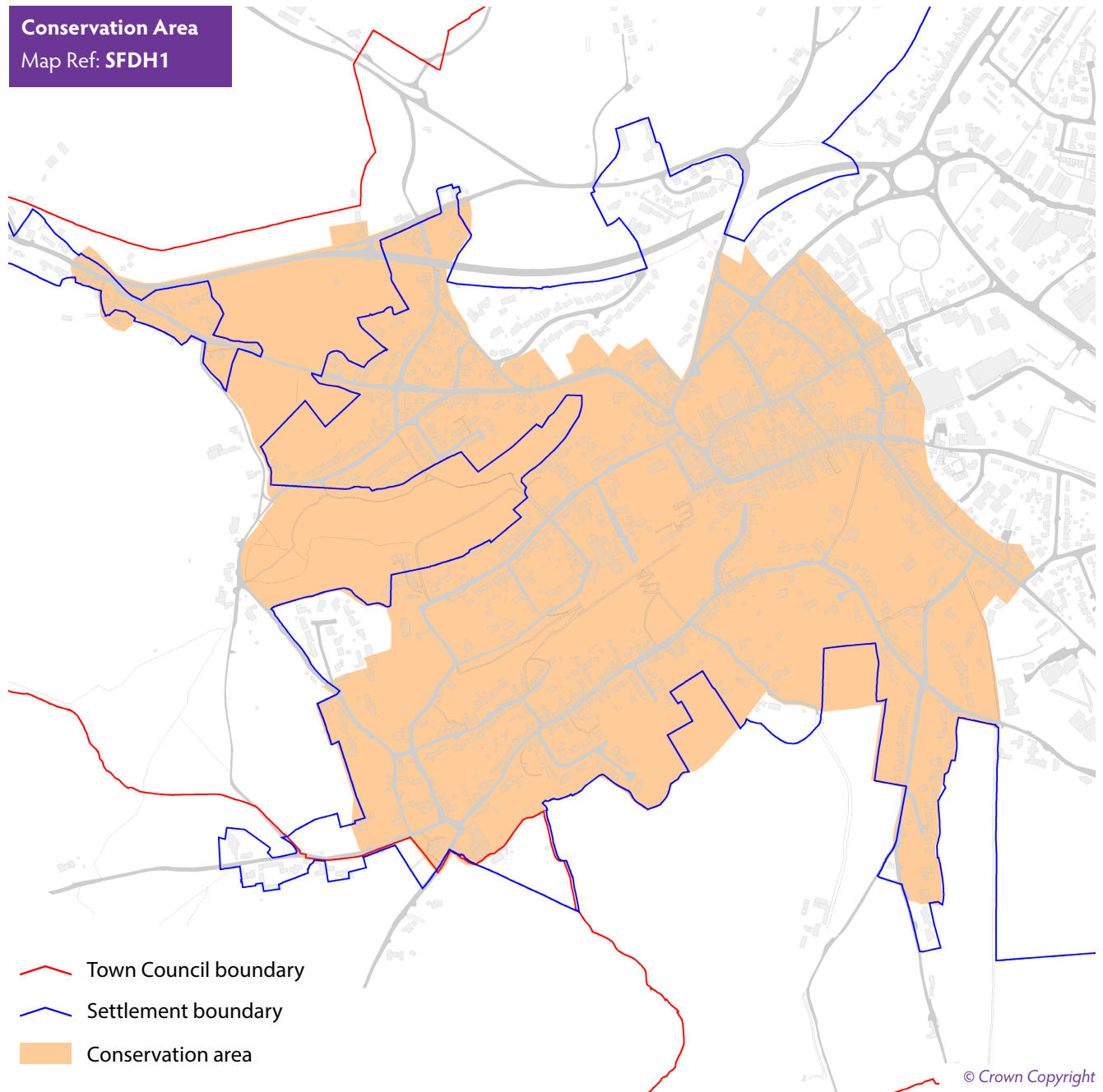
Conservation Areas have additional protection under the law from the normal planning controls.

The Shaftesbury Conservation Area is located within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Whilst the Historic Towns Survey provides a wealth of useful information, a Conservation Area appraisal has not yet been produced.

Development, including both new buildings and alterations to existing buildings, must not negatively impact on:

- ▶ a listed building or its setting;
- ▶ the conservation area or its setting;
- ▶ non-designated heritage assets including locally listed buildings and structures and their settings;
- ▶ a Scheduled Monument and its associated setting.



5.4 Policies SFDH1 to SFDH7

What do Policies SFDH1 to SFDH7 set out to do?

To preserve and enhance the character and design of our historic town and the different character areas.

To encourage high quality design that ensures development complements and contributes positively to Shaftesbury's character and engenders a sense of civic pride and social inclusion.

To make sure the natural environment is properly considered in the design process.

Respecting Local Character in Designs

The character of, and the issues associated with, each area of the town are described in the sections above, with more detail provided in the Historic Towns Survey and 2019 Shaftesbury Design Guidelines. By taking into account what aspects help underpin an area's character, and opportunities to remove or reduce those elements that weaken the character, we can be sure that Shaftesbury and its constituent parts will have a strong and positive identity.



Bell Street



Rooflines

POLICY SFDH1

Development in a Character Zone (as shown on [Map SFDHZ](#)) will respect and respond to the positive aspects of character associated with the specific area of Shaftesbury where the development is planned and not repeat (and where possible reduce) the negative issues as set out in section 5.2.

Incorporating sustainability in designs

Since the Neighbourhood Plan was first made, the Government has updated its Building Regulations. As of June 2022 any new homes that have been approved have had to be built to a higher standard to produce 30% less carbon dioxide than previous (2013) standards. Further changes to Building Regulations are proposed, through the Future Homes and Buildings Standards, increasing this reduction to 75–80% by 2025 and ensuring all new homes will be 'zero-carbon ready'. The consultation on how this achieved, launched in December 2023, is considering matters such as whether and under what circumstances solar panels should be required—balancing the costs and benefits and taking into account that, in due course, all electricity supplied by the National Grid will be zero carbon. So, whilst it is not appropriate for this Neighbourhood Plan to set different standards, we continue to encourage developers to challenge themselves to deliver zero carbon designs sooner if at all possible.

i The Home Quality Mark is an industry standard that looks in detail at the design of new homes, including aspects such as air circulation, insulation and ventilation, energy and water resources, responsible sourcing of materials (including their wider environmental impacts and their durability), practical living arrangements (such as drying space and accessible and adaptable designs), quality assurance and aftercare.

i Building for a Healthy Life is another industry-recognised standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. To be eligible for accreditation under this scheme, developments have to achieve nine of the twelve design requirements, which cover aspects such as:

- ▶ A locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character based either on contemporary architecture or local traditions in building materials and landscaping.
- ▶ Good connections (footways and paths) to the surrounding area.
- ▶ Welcoming, well managed and attractive streets and spaces, with low traffic speeds.
- ▶ Easy to find your way around.
- ▶ Uses the existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates.
- ▶ Includes adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles.
- ▶ Personal space (such as private garden areas) are protected and respected.

A number of these principles have been incorporated into the following Neighbourhood Plan policies, so that in meeting these standards, developers may well be able to promote the quality of their developments during sales and marketing activity.

Dorset Council now require a sustainability statement and checklist to accompany planning applications involving new buildings. Our policy has been updated to reflect the information this covers in relation to those elements that will impact most on the appearance of the building and its on-going affordability. New dwellings are encouraged to exceed the target emission rates of the current Building Regulations in place at that time, and to achieve Building for Life accreditation and a Home Quality Mark rating to demonstrate their sustainability credentials. BREEAM assessments are encouraged to demonstrate sustainability for non-residential development.

POLICY SFDH2

Development should be sustainable, safe, inclusive, and accessible in design. The following measures should be incorporated into new buildings and extensions where practicable to do so and in keeping with local character:

- ▶ air or ground source heating;
- ▶ solar panels on southerly-facing roofs in a manner in keeping with the colour and symmetry of the roof;
- ▶ collection of surface water to reuse, either through a water butt or rainwater harvesting system;
- ▶ shading to avoid overheating;
- ▶ features to support wildlife such as the incorporation of swift bricks, bird, bat and bee boxes.

The above features should be clearly annotated on the plans or justification for their omission provided.

The scale, positioning and orientation of buildings

The height and positioning of new buildings can make a real difference to how a place feels to the person on the street. Important buildings or structures with cultural or historic importance should be integrated into the visual appearance of the town to reinforce a strong 'sense of place' or Shaftesbury's identity. Whilst new or replacement buildings may be taller than typical for that area (to make good use of the building land available), it is important that they don't overshadow or block views of local landmark buildings that help define the area.

Poorly defined corners, high walls and narrow alleyways can make pedestrian routes and links difficult to find, dank and miserable. There should be regular breaks in the built-up areas to enable views and connections to public rights of way.



5.4 Policies SFDH1 to SFDH7 (continued)

Sometimes the character of the area is very much defined by a strong pattern of regular buildings—particularly some of the Victorian, Edwardian and early 20th century suburbs. Where this is the case, the way in which building layouts have been planned, either set back from the road or built against the pavement, should be respected. Development that deviates from this pattern can otherwise jar with, and diminish, that area's character.

In new developments, there will be more opportunity to focus on how the layout and orientation of buildings can maximise the potential benefits from solar energy and insulation and create pleasant outdoor spaces (both private gardens and public areas).

Entrances will benefit from being on north or east sides, with gardens to south or west sides, roofs designed for solar panels, and windows with suitable shades to make the most of sunlight without overheating.



Seating on Park Walk

There are also likely to be more opportunities to include taller buildings in these areas, to make more efficient use of land, and this is particularly important in places where there is good access to local facilities and jobs. However, bulky and unimaginative designs will not be supported.

Given Shaftesbury's hilltop location, the impact of wind on buildings and people also needs to be considered, in addition to the potential benefits in terms of orientation for sunlight and shade. In particular, the scale and orientation should avoid the creation of public areas that may act as wind tunnels. The resulting microclimates may also impact on the success or otherwise of any planting schemes.

POLICY SFDH3

The scale, positioning and orientation of buildings will:

- ▶ Respect the scale of adjoining development.
- ▶ Allow for views of buildings that are important in the street scene (due to their function or landmark characteristics).
- ▶ Create a safe and attractive public realm (taking into consideration the legibility and surveillance of the main pedestrian routes.)
- ▶ Maximise the potential benefits from sunlight and shading to reduce the consumption of energy in heating and cooling new buildings, unless this would significantly harm local character.
- ▶ In new areas, seek to create visual interest within a more cohesive character, and consider including some taller buildings in locations where there is very good access to local facilities, provided that this would reinforce and add interest to the area's character and legibility.



Public Street Art

The design of outdoor spaces

Although the way we design buildings impacts on how public spaces feel, there are many other factors that also need to be considered, which we touch on here. The design of these spaces should not, as a rule, be left to be conditioned, but should be an integral element of the initial design.

An important consideration is the need to avoid unintended clutter, whilst incorporating those features that make public areas safe, accessible and practical. For example, street lighting should be fixed to buildings to reduce the clutter of lamp posts. Litter bins should be provided adjacent to recreation spaces and at intervals so as to be convenient for use and waste collection. New developments should include Royal Post boxes and community noticeboards unless these exist nearby, to encourage social interaction. The Town Council should be involved in the design of street furniture to ensure that these reflect and reinforce the town's branding/image.

Surfacing materials are also important. Whilst in historic quarters traditional materials should be considered, the surfacing needs to be suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs (and where allowed, bicycles and scooters).

Consideration should also be given to the practicality of further works (for example accessing underground utilities or installing new street furniture).

Boundary treatments facing the street and public areas should reflect the best examples in Shaftesbury—walls made of green sandstone, ironmongery (wrought iron railings are typical) or hedgerows in semi-rural areas and some estates (such as The Maltings), or a combination of these. Bin stores should be located to be convenient for the intended users, close to the refuse collection points yet screened from the street.

The inclusion of planting areas within the design should also be considered at an early stage, as some elements (such as trees) will require space, and there may be



Traditional Stonework

opportunities to link a series of green corridors together for wildlife and sustainable drainage benefits. Over recent years there has been increasing recognition of the multiple benefits of street trees. Formal avenues are not common in Shaftesbury, St Rumbold's Road being an exception, but there are clusters of trees along many of our roads and further tree planting is encouraged. The 80 beech trees planted along Christy's Lane to mark the Queen Mother's 80th birthday are intended to form an avenue of trees. Car parking areas should also be landscaped with planting.

Standards of workmanship can have the greatest impact on the quality of public spaces. Therefore, it is vital that surface treatments and street furniture are installed with care and attention to detail.

For most applications involving a new building, a 10% increase in biodiversity is required by law, and even where development are exempt, the Council still expects applicants to achieve net gain and other biodiversity enhancements, in line with the relevant development plan policy. Wherever possible this biodiversity net gain should be achieved on-site, and if this is not possible then as close to the site as reasonably possible. How this biodiversity net gain is achieved may vary, but should be influenced by the local landscape character where possible. A new project has been added to help identify local opportunities for off-site biodiversity gains.

Street furniture, surface and boundary treatments should be of high quality, designed to endure and easy to maintain. Designs and materials should respect the area's historic character, where possible reinforcing this through a consistency of approach. The installation of new street furniture should be located so as to avoid clutter, with measures put in place to ensure that superfluous or redundant items of street furniture are removed.

i Please also refer to **Policy SFCL3** in relation to improvements to the footpath and cycle path network

POLICY SFDH4

A range of open areas and enclosed public and private spaces, including areas designed to encourage play and social interaction within an attractive, uncluttered environment, should be incorporated into the design of new places. Street furniture, including waste bins and signage, should be designed to be in keeping with the street furniture designs found in Shaftesbury, and the Town Council can be approached to advise on how to help achieve this.

Pedestrian routes should be convenient, lit, safe and pleasant. They should be designed to cater for all users, including wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

Attention should be paid to the inclusion of sufficient planting, including street trees, to enhance biodiversity, provide opportunities for shade and promote clean air (particularly near trafficked areas). Outside of the town centre, soft landscaping should be of equal importance (to built elements) in the overall design, reinforcing local character and providing attractive green corridors for pedestrian/cycle links.

5.4 Policies SFDH1 to SFDH7

(continued)

Parking provision

While this plan places a lot of emphasis in improving opportunities to walk, cycling and for public transport to work, many residents and visitors will continue to rely on their cars for at least some of the trips they make. Electric cars and other low-energy fuels are likely to become more widespread, and with this the need for charging points (and in recognition of this, Building Regulations now require charging points to be provided for all new houses).

Communal parking areas can make more efficient use of land, but large expanses of parking are not attractive. More thought will also need to be given as to how users might access vehicle charging points in such areas.

Car charging points installed on buildings will need to be close to the parking spaces.

As cars have become larger, parking spaces and garages need to be wider. As a guide, parking spaces need to be 2.8m in width, unless there is a 0.4m clearance immediately to the side of the space, when the width can be reduced to 2.4m (with slightly greater clearance in the case of parking spaces for disabled people) and garages 3m (internally) and ideally 6m deep to allow for some storage, such as cycle/mobility scooter storage (which will also need to be provided), and motorcycle parking also considered.

POLICY SFDH5

Provision must be made for cars, motorcycles and bicycles in line with the adopted parking standards and taking account of Chapter 11 of LTN 1/20 guidance on cycle parking provision, where appropriate.

Communal car parking areas, if proposed, should not result in extensive areas of uninterrupted parking, and will need to be landscaped with planting including provision for mature trees. Similarly, continuous areas of uninterrupted car parking in front of buildings should be avoided.

Parking spaces must be of adequate size for the range of vehicle types and users (including disabled drivers). Car charging points should also be clearly shown on the plans, to demonstrate sufficient provision will be available for both occupants and visitors.



St James Street

Scale, design and detailing of buildings

Building styles and detailing should reflect the intended use and status of the building within the street scene. Not every building can or should be a local 'landmark', but they all contribute to the overall character of an area and how it is perceived. Design ideas can be taken from local buildings that clearly and positively contribute towards the enhancement of that area's character.

Consideration should be given to key aspects, such as elevations, symmetrical layout, detailing, use of materials and proportions. However, although they may be designed within local traditions or with sustainable building credentials in mind, a complete imitation (pastiche) or a broad eclectic mix (from all styles and periods) is not what is needed.

Architectural detailing in new development should typically display elements that balance with those of existing traditional buildings in terms of interest, scale, texture and form. For example, Shaftesbury has a strong tradition of 450mm wide cast iron casements set into timber frames, which generates window widths a little narrower than the national standard sizes.



Architectural Detailing

Windows in new buildings should complement the vertical pattern, dimensions and scale of windows reflected in local architectural detailing. The style and proportions for any new or replacement dwellings and extensions should respect local styles and traditions. Wrought iron work to window box cradles is typical.

Consideration should also be given to supporting local wildlife and other opportunities to increase the environmental credentials of the buildings. For example, roof overhangs with exposed rafters offer the possibility of roosts for birds. Openings to roof spaces where bats can roost can be designed into the plans. Rainwater harvesting can reduce water consumption. These features are included in **Policy SFDH2**.

All of these considerations need to work alongside improvements in energy efficiency and our ambition for a zero-carbon future. It is important that these are shown in the plans rather than assuming that they can be added at a later stage.

i Traditional elements used in new and existing buildings include:

On formal buildings:

- ▶ Detailing around windows including lintels and sills
- ▶ Quoins and masonry detailing
- ▶ Door surrounds and porches
- ▶ Timber sash windows with small panes
- ▶ Symmetrical facades
- ▶ Windows and doors set back from brick face
- ▶ Stonework at entrances including classical pillars, pediments and porches
- ▶ Decorative iron railings

- ▶ Shallow pitched roofs and defined eaves
- ▶ Decorative mouldings

On informal buildings:

- ▶ Timber sash or casement windows with small panes
- ▶ Wide door frames with canopy porches
- ▶ Asymmetrical facades
- ▶ Windows set closer to the wall face
- ▶ Steeper pitched roofs, possibly with accommodation in the roof with modest dormer windows—casements 450mm wide, dormer roofs with minimal fascias detailed to avoid a heavy appearance.



POLICY SFDH6

Development should be designed with attention to architectural quality and detailing, reflecting the level of detail typically found in traditional local buildings of similar form and function.

As a general principle, proposed building façades should be designed to indicate the importance of each storey through a combination of composition of building elements. There may be increased height for the most prominent floor and the level of architectural detailing used. The scale and design of entrances should be appropriate to the function—commercial properties will be grander in design than individual residential properties.

The design and access statement (if required) should clearly explain the design rationale and how local building traditions and sustainability benefits have influenced the design. Windows (including their positioning within their reveals), doors, eaves and ridgelines (including associated gutters and flashing), chimneys and flues should be clearly detailed in the submitted plans and elevations. Where alarm boxes, meter boxes, flues and other paraphernalia are intended to be installed, these should be shown clearly on the plans and care taken to ensure that these do not unduly detract from the building's appearance.



5.4 Policies SFDH1 to SFDH7

(continued)

Building materials

Materials proposed for use in new development and building extensions should match or be guided by those used in the existing buildings, taking into account how these vary subtly by street.

i A typical materials palette in the Shaftesbury area includes:

- ▶ Green sandstone—'prepared' before use either as ashlar, squared rubble, coursed rubble or random rubble. Mortar joints need to be kept under 10mm using a white sand and lime to provide a satisfactory appearance.
- ▶ Bricks matching those made by the Motcombe brick works (which are of a warmer multi-colour than the stark orange appearance of Gillingham bricks).
- ▶ Timber painted windows.
- ▶ Slate or plain tiles, or pantiles for single storey buildings.

It goes without saying that alterations to a listed building must respect its character and preserve its features of special architectural or historic interest. Extensions may match or contrast, depending on the character of the building being extended, its relationship (in form and function) to the extension, and how important it is to be able to distinguish the original building from more recent changes. Even where developments may not be listed, the historic character of Victorian,

Edwardian, or 1930s buildings have merits which should be respected. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the character of the original building is not needlessly harmed. For example, replacing slate roofs with modern concrete tiles tends to destroy the character and should be avoided. Low quality UPVC front doors with poor proportion and detailing should be avoided.

As mentioned earlier, Dorset Council now require a sustainability statement and checklist to accompany planning applications involving new buildings. This includes a requirement to consider whether existing materials on-site could be re-used, whether materials are locally produced and sourced, and their overall sustainability (for example with reference to the BRE Green Guide Specification).

Care should be taken in the preparation and use of the materials, as details such as the preparation of the stones and the mortar joints can dramatically alter a building's appearance. In particular, consideration should be given to the prevailing wind direction (particularly on exposed sites) and associated weathering, as well as how materials may react to strong sunlight (when orientated in a southerly direction).

Timber sash windows that perhaps have lasted over 100 years may eventually be beyond economic repair, but their replacement with (for example) low maintenance UPVC windows can still be well designed so that the building retains the character created by the original sash windows.



Green Sandstone

POLICY SFDH7

Development should use materials that respect the area's heritage, are high quality, are appropriate to the building and its setting, and are durable and, where possible, local or recycled. Attention should be paid to the sustainability and embodied carbon of the materials used, favouring options that will conserve energy and other resources taking into account the lifespan of the building, and minimise risks from the impacts of climate change, such as through appropriate insulation qualities to avoid overheating.

Quick Read

What does this policy mean and why is it important?

These policies encourage developers to adopt good design principles. They need to consider the impact on the environment and the overall appearance of the properties when they work on their plans.

What may appear to be minor aspects of a building project, such as gutters and flues, and meter boxes, are just as important as windows and chimneys in adding to the overall appearance and positive impact of the development. Developers should pay attention to these elements.

5.5 Archaeological assessment and preservation

What does Policy SFDH8 set out to do?

To ensure that thorough archaeological assessments are undertaken for developments taking place on any sites of potential historic interest and, where possible, we preserve Shaftesbury's unique and fascinating past that lies hidden beneath our houses, gardens, shops and streets.

History is important for our sense of local community as well as tourism. Shaftesbury has more Scheduled Monuments (6) than any other town in North Dorset, including the ruined Abbey, a nationally significant Royal nunnery founded in Saxon times by Alfred the Great.

But much still remains to be discovered, including where buildings stood, and where underground tunnels may lie. Every development proposal involving surface or subsurface works could put at risk archaeological assets, but, properly managed, this is an opportunity to find out more.

 Of 154 respondents, 145 agreed that archaeological assessments should be made for developments on sites of potential historic interest, so that we can preserve and learn more about Shaftesbury's history.

Details:

Shaftesbury is rich in historic sites. They form part of the town's distinctiveness. Our six

Scheduled Monuments are protected in law. They are:

- ▶ Castle Hill mound
- ▶ Site of St John's Church (Bury Litton)

- ▶ Shaftesbury Abbey ruins including Park Walk
- ▶ Fishponds south of Layton Lane
- ▶ Gold Hill—the Abbey precinct wall
- ▶ Castle Green

With over 1,000 years of settlement there may be archaeological riches that we do not know about under our town. That's why we believe it is important to highlight the need to preserve elements of our, as yet undiscovered, past.

The Historic Towns Survey concludes that there is much still to learn about the origins of Shaftesbury and how it developed. We still don't know how the town was planned and we don't understand the full impact of the Abbey and its later dissolution. The following character areas as shown on **Map SFDH8** were considered to have high archaeological potential:

- ▶ Bimport
- ▶ Town Centre
- ▶ St James
- ▶ Barton Hill and Cockram's Field

The Abbey's SAVED project has been trying to get answers to some of the questions that remain. They have been using equipment that sends radar pulses down into the ground to see whether they can identify buildings, structures or street patterns below the surface. More information about this project can be found in the Shaftesbury Abbey Museum and online <https://www.shaftesburyabbey.org.uk/saved-project>.

The survival of pits, buildings, boundaries and other features, particularly in back plot areas behind town centre buildings, has the potential to reveal more about the economy, diet, craft industry and other aspects of life in the centre of historic Shaftesbury, according to the Historic Towns Survey.

There are some well-established procedures that developers must follow when their works uncover items of potential historic interest.

Not all planners and project managers may be aware of Shaftesbury's significant Saxon and Medieval heritage, including what is believed to be a network of underground tunnels. It is important that any finds are reported to Shaftesbury Abbey Museum who hold a lot of valuable information on the early origins of the town, and may wish to record relevant findings.

This policy makes sure that there is an understanding of the potential for archaeological finds.

POLICY SFDH8

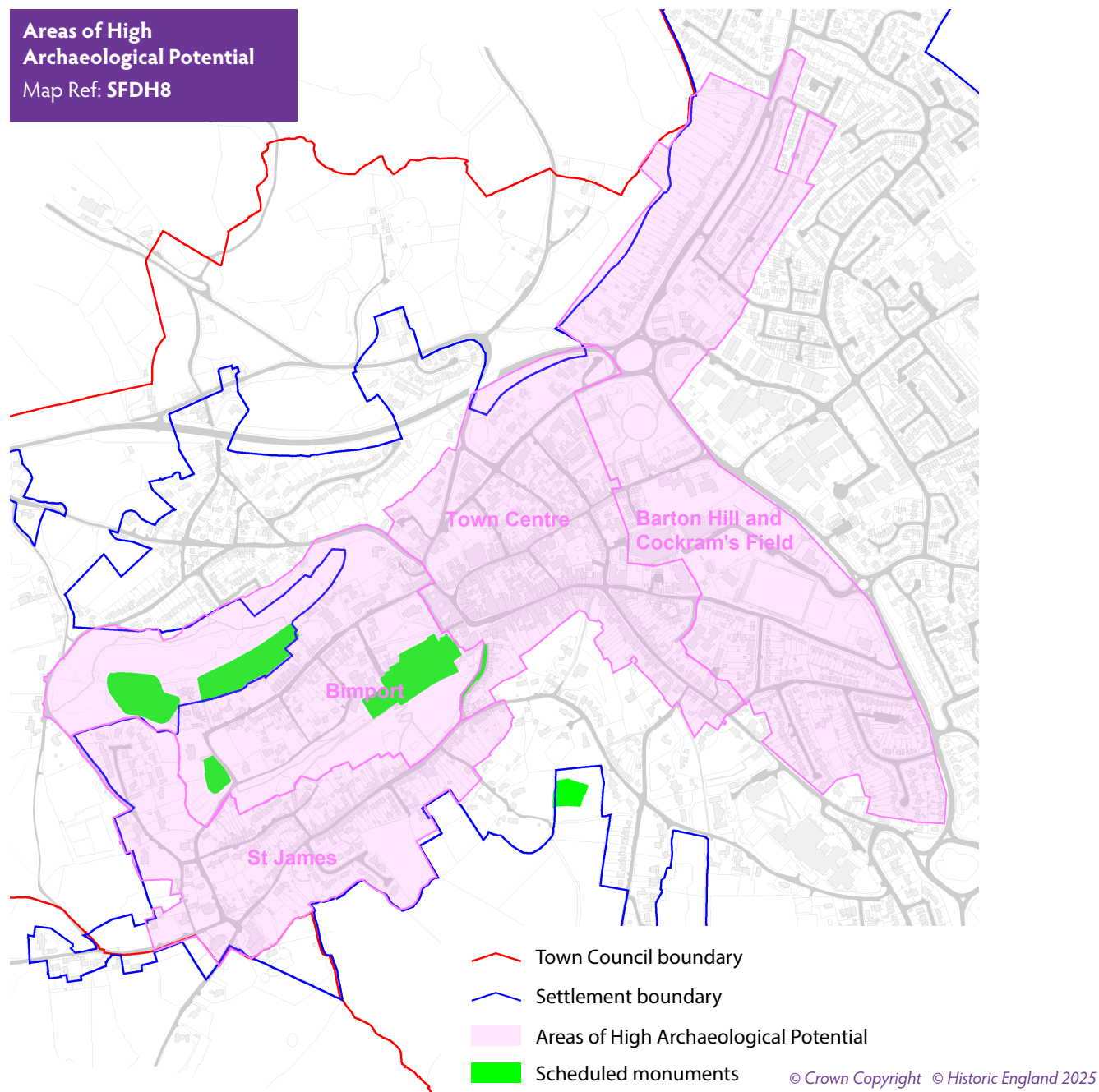
Archaeological assessment shall be required for sites where historic remains may be present, prior to the determination of a planning application, if the development would disturb or prevent future access to such remains.

Appropriate procedures will be required to ensure preservation of the remains in place or the recording of the find prior to development. Where a site is identified as being of archaeological interest during the course of works, Dorset Council's Archaeological department and the Shaftesbury Abbey Museum must be notified, and further works that would impact on those finds paused to allow agreement to be reached with Dorset Council as to how these finds should be recorded. Proposals to sensitively manage archaeological finds for education (including as a visitor/ tourist attraction) will be supported.

5.5 Archaeological assessment and preservation *(continued)*

Map of Areas of High Archaeological Potential

The *Shaftesbury Historic Towns Survey* identifies the Town Centre and adjoining areas of Barton Hill and Cockrams, Bimport, and St James as having high archaeological potential. These are shown here, but with minor revisions to the boundaries included in the survey to incorporate the area of land to the east of Christys Lane and the western end of Grosvenor Road which was developed around the same period.



5.6 Locally important historic buildings

What does Policy SFDH9 set out to do?

To ensure locally important historic buildings are given proper consideration in how development is planned and how views are considered.

Trinity Tower



Details:

There are 275 listed buildings within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

A locally listed heritage asset is a building, structure or designed space that is deemed to be of local architectural or historic interest and is included on the local heritage list drawn up by Dorset Council. Whilst Dorset Council started the process of establishing a Dorset-wide local heritage list in early 2022, this work is still on-going and there is no such list as yet for Shaftesbury.

Local Listing is a local designation and completely separate from national listing (which is undertaken by Historic England on the government's behalf). Local listing does not affect the requirements for planning permission. However, by identifying locally important historic buildings, and where possible adding these to the Local Heritage List, it is more likely that any impacts on that building or its setting will be more carefully considered because of their local importance.

It is possible for communities preparing Neighbourhood Plans to identify buildings of local importance and these can be added to a 'local listing' held by Dorset Council in due course. This doesn't offer the powerful protection of being on the National Heritage List but does mean that their local importance will be considered in planning decisions.

Having reviewed the Historic Towns Survey, which identifies many 'key buildings', and working with Shaftesbury Civic Society, we identified 116 buildings that would merit local listing. The list can be found in **Appendix K** and these are shown on **Map SFDH9** on the following page. As part of the review, Barton Hill House has been added to this list.

POLICY SFDH9

Locally important historic buildings, identified in this Plan, should be conserved and enhanced.

Quick Read

What does this policy mean and why is it important?

Historic England keeps a database of structures that are special because of their architecture or historic nature.

Special permission is required to undertake work on listed buildings, because they are considered so important. Most of the listed buildings in Shaftesbury are grade 2 listed. Park Walk and the Abbey remains are grade 1, meaning that they are of exceptional interest.

It is also possible to include buildings of local importance on a 'local list' held by Dorset Council. This doesn't offer the powerful protection of a national listing but does mean that their historic importance is considered in planning decisions.

We have identified 116 buildings that would merit local listing.

5.5 Archaeological assessment and preservation *(continued)*

Map of locally-important and listed buildings

Appendix K lists all of the locally important buildings that have been identified.

A map for each zone has been produced and can be found within **Appendix K**

