



Okeford Fitzpaine

A Vision for a Sustainable Future 2023-2038

Produced by Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council

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Executive Summary

Neighbourhood plans enable communities to set out their strategy for future developments within a parish including housing. Although they are interdependent on local authority and government policy, they also enable communities to plan future infrastructure in addition to housing.

Okeford Fitzpaine is experiencing recent and rapid developments within the parish such as increased housing and the closure of the local primary school. This document sets out options for future funding to both protect and grow the infrastructure and to support the community.

The population of Okeford Fitzpaine is set to double over the next five years, largely due to a 25-30% increase in houses. Significant financial resource is anticipated from development funding.

The cost of living crisis has impacted the demand for social and affordable housing. As of August 2023, there are 53 applications for social housing in Okeford Fitzpaine. Six percent of Okeford Fitzpaine village use a food pantry.

Okeford Fitzpaine has community facilities. However, they need innovative design, radical upgrades and support to be sustainable, viable, and fit for purpose. There are benefits in working across organisations within the parish to get the best out of the infrastructure.

The Dorset Local Plan will be published in 2023. Strategy is under consultation for the Northern Division, separating out plans for Blandford Forum and Sturminster Newton, the main towns to Okeford Fitzpaine from the rest of the Northern Division. Therefore, Okeford Fitzpaine needs a robust planning statement to meet the needs of its population. Policy statements affecting Okeford Fitzpaine from the Dorset Local Plan have been highlighted in this document.

Okeford Fitzpaine is a thriving parish about to experience a significant increase in population through developments. However, there is a critical but exciting opportunity to collaborate within the community, to design and use existing and new resources so they serve the parish and are fit for purpose.

Purpose

This document is a discussion paper designed to promote discussion on the future of Okeford Fitzpaine Parish. It follows the decision by the Parish Council in 2017 to suspend the production of a Neighbourhood plan for Okeford Fitzpaine. Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council has produced this document to generate discussion about a future vision for our community. Its scope is far wider than a Neighbourhood Plan but does contain some elements of planning direction based on the Dorset Local Plan which should be referred to by current and future developers to reflect the wishes of the community.

Discussion and strategic planning for the future is needed at this time primarily because the housing stock of the village will increase by up to 172 new dwellings based on planning consents already granted. As a consequence of this growth in a relatively short timeframe, the facilities and infrastructure of the village may at best be under strain and at worst, wholly not fit for purpose both now and the near future. Therefore, planning for any need, enhancement, or replacement, must also complement the developments. In addition, the parish council will receive significant funds from developer CIL / S106 levies from new housing developments and consensus on those projects to be funded will be needed.

The Population of Okeford Fitzpaine

According to the 2021 Census, there are 997 people living in Okeford Fitzpaine Parish. The Commerwick development has since been completed and the Shillingstone Fields development is due to complete early in 2024 and housing stock is forecast to increase by 25-30 percent in the next five years due to a planned increase in building. Therefore the population could increase by as much as 50% in Okeford Fitzpaine parish.

Okeford Fitzpaine



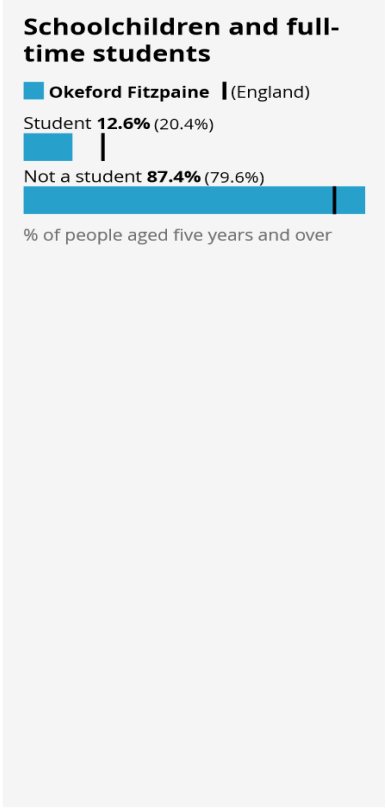
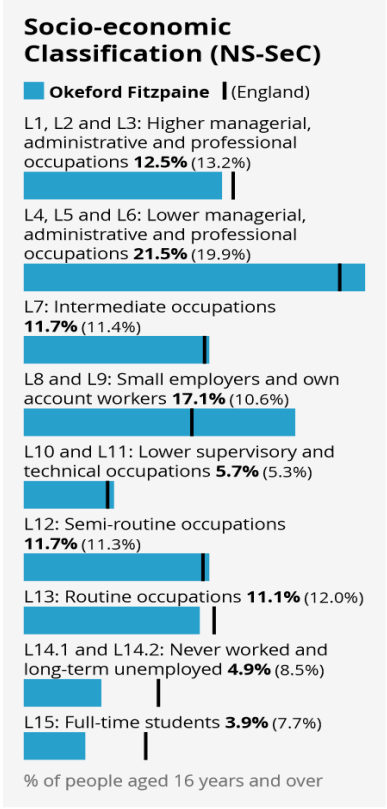
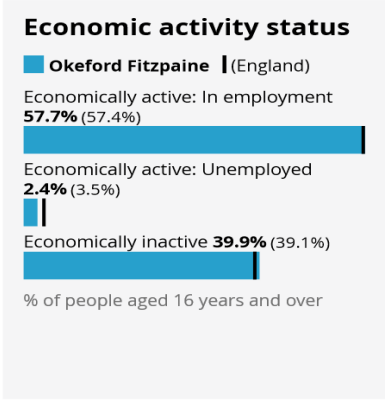
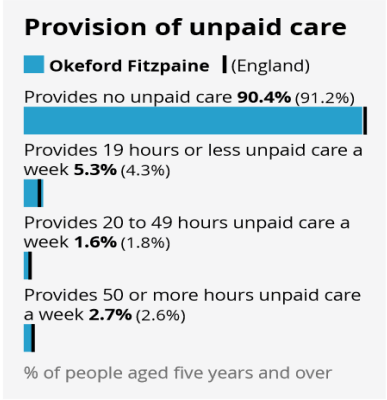
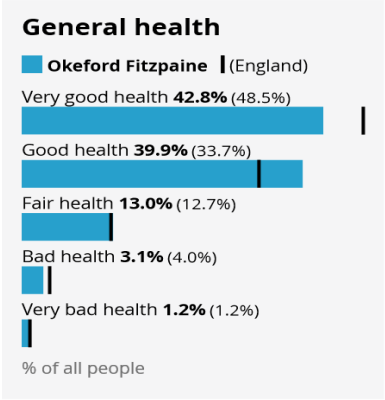
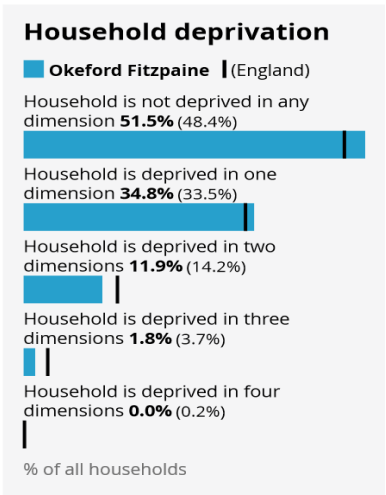
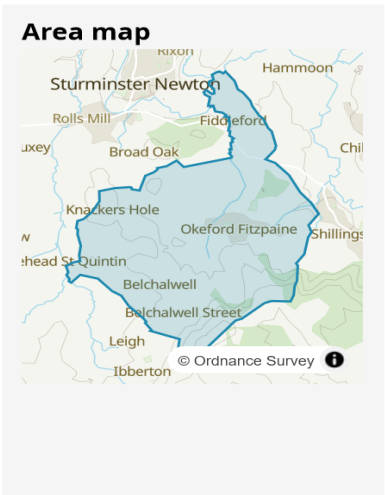
Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Okeford Fitzpaine also has one of the highest densities of social housing in North Dorset. The parish has no primary care services co-located in the community, and no school. There is limited local employment within the parish which means most people of working age need to travel. As public transport is limited, especially for shift workers, this means an increase in car journeys.

The demographic of Dorset and specifically Okeford Fitzpaine is an older population than England as a whole and the population of over 65s is projected to increase by 28% in the next five to ten years. Therefore, there will be an increased need for adapted housing and community support to ensure people can stay healthy and independent for longer.

Half the population of Okeford Fitzpaine has identified as having at least one level of deprivation. This affects access to services, employment opportunities and can be indicative of rural poverty. For example, local food banks have seen a significant increase in households using their service. 6% of Okeford Fitzpaine households currently use a food bank or pantry.

Okeford Fitzpaine



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Current Housing Need

Data obtained from Dorset Council indicate there are 53 people on the housing register. Of these, 16 have a local connection and for 37 applicants, it is a preferred option.

Okeford Fitzpaine - Local Area Connection housing need:				
Count of Band	Bedrooms			
Row Labels	1	2	3	Grand Total
Submitted online	2	1	1	4
Band A - Urgent Housing Need			1	1
Band B - High Housing Need	1	1		2
Band C - Medium Housing Need	2	1		3
Band D - Low Housing Need	5	1		6
Grand Total	10	4	2	16

Okeford Fitzpaine - Preferred Area housing need:				
Count of Band	Column Labels			
Row Labels	1	2	3	5
Submitted online	6			
Band A - Urgent Housing Need		1		
Band B - High Housing Need	4	1	1	1
Band C - Medium Housing Need	5	6		
Band D - Low Housing Need	6	3	2	
Grand Total	21	11	3	1

Current Infrastructure

Public Spaces

The increase in parish population and changes in demographics will create a need for flexible multi-use public space . Such usage can include indoor sports, exercise classes, youth groups, work hubs, entertainment, family parties, and community organisation meetings. They can also be used as satellites to existing health, social care, and voluntary sector services. These uses may be concurrent and require a building that is divisible or multi-room. The village is fortunate to have three buildings that are currently available for public use for events and meeting and social occasions. However, while all three have their value and historical place in the community, each has challenges that may make it less suitable for the future.

Village Hall – Reading Room.

The Reading Room was gifted to the village in the 1950s and exists as a Charitable Trust. It stands on land owned by the Parish Council. The village hall has been subject to a number of small piecemeal extensions on the past, most recently a kitchen. In addition, the village hall runs at near full capacity with clubs and groups so with an increase in population may require additional facilities.

The village hall has the following issues that limit its expansion in the future:

- The hall has a running cost of around £8k per annum with a significantly lesser letting income requiring donations and significant fund raising annually to make up the shortfall.
- While centrally located, the hall has limited car parking with a narrow access road and is closely surrounded by housing, limiting its use because of potential noise disturbance. Expansion of this building is therefore also limited.

Recreation Ground and Pavilion

The original Pavilion building was constructed many years ago and in recent years an extension was added. However this is not accessible from within the original building. The building is also used to house the Parish Council's grass cutting machinery and the council office.

It has the following issues that may limit its development in the future:

The old half of the building is semi derelict, with dormant showers and lavatories and is used only by one village organisation.

The in-use half of the building is a single small room currently only used for the football club as a licenced bar on match days and also for Parish Council meetings.

St Andrews C of E Church

The village Grade 2* listed parish church is in the heart of the village and is currently used primarily for Christian worship. The current congregation is small and the costs of maintaining the building places strains on its funding. Access to the church is up a steep path, with a lower inclined path for wheelchairs to the side.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has commenced a project to reorder the building to make it more a useable, multiuse community space in addition to its religious purpose. The first step of removing the majority of the pews has taken place. Funding of around £250,000 is currently required to complete the Reordering Project which is being carried out in separate phases, each phase being commenced once the funds have been obtained for that phase. The next phase is the electrical rewiring, new lighting and the provision a new power supply. The other later phases include replacement of rotten wooden flooring, relocation of the Font, installing a lavatory and servery and a boiler upgrade. Funding of around £250,000 is needed and progress is being made in raising funds. The time frame within which the Reordering Project should be completed is set by the the Salisbury Diocese Faculty' authorisation. This Faculty currently expires on 11 June 2025.

Summary

Recreation Ground and Pavillion and Village Hall – Reading Room

The Recreation Pavillion and the Village Hall buildings have differing challenges that may make them unsuitable for the future and are managed by two different organisations with widely differing objectives. The Parish Council will create a working group with representation from the two existing building and other interested organisations with a view to either adapting the existing spaces for the future or creation of a single new multi-use village hub using pooled assets and any funding such CIL/S106 that is available. Possible sites for a replacement building are the recreation ground or Bowey Field. The Recreation Ground has extensive space for visitor parking and development of the Pavilion however its remote location from the village centre and lack of safe pedestrian access from the village may be a challenge. Bowey Field in the village centre but close to existing housing also has space for a building but no facilities for visitor parking.

St Andrew's C of E Church

As the Church is owned by the Church of England, the Parish Council has no direct authority to determine its future use. The Parish Council will approach the St Andrew's PCC and invite representatives from the PCC to be included in its working

group as it is the PCC's intention for the Church to be used more widely once the Reordering Project is completed.

School Building and Playing Grounds

The Parish Council is also looking into the purchase of the School Building which closed in 2022. See below.

Sports and Recreation Facilities

The Village is well served with open space for sport but their actual usage is currently limited.

Recreation Ground

This large open playing field is on the edge of the village on Castle Lane. It has a well maintained football pitch which is currently only used by Okeford United Football Club. There is also space for a second pitch although this is not currently laid out. In lieu of rental of the Recreation Ground facilities, the Football Club provide labour to use the Parish Council's mowing and other equipment to maintain the Recreation Ground, Bowey Field and Mary Gardens open space. This arrangement may be unsustainable if there is any increase in the Parish Council's assets or the Club is unable to provide volunteer labour. There have been recent stalled projects to provide a Multi Use Game Area and tennis courts in the currently unused space at the Recreation ground but the population increase drives a need to revisit these projects. This could be combined with a project to redevelop the pavilion as a multi-use village hub building.

Bowey Field

The Bowey field is in the centre of the village and provides a secure children's play equipment area, netball posts and table tennis. There is scope for further equipment such as an outdoor gym to be installed. A major project overseen by the parish council is in development to design and upgrade the play areas in Okeford Fitzpaine. This is led by local parents with support from the parish council.

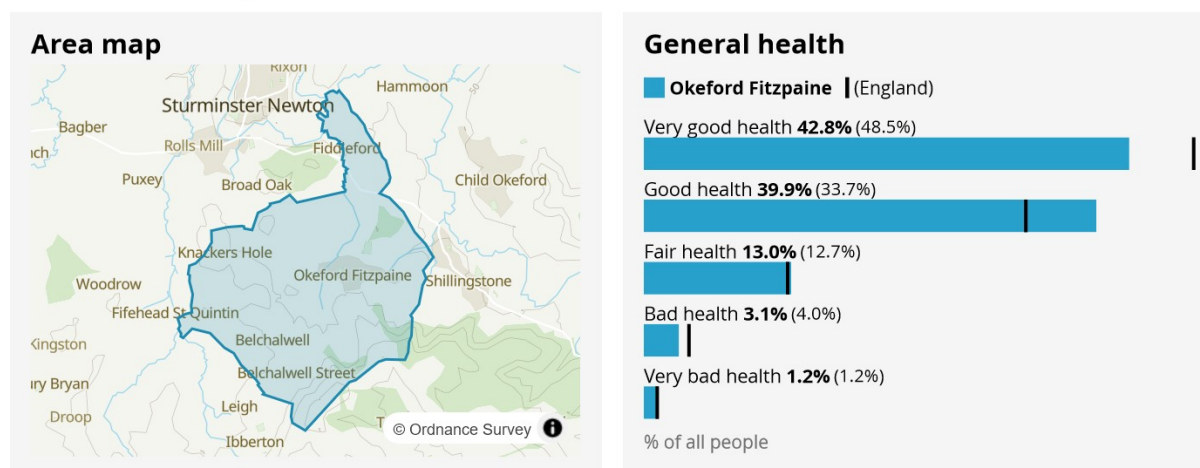
Mary Gardens open space.

This open space was transferred to the Parish by North Dorset District Council after numerous planning applications by NDDC were strongly opposed by the community.

School Building playing fields?

Healthcare

Okeford Fitzpaine



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Dorset Integrated Care Board is responsible for commissioning healthcare services for the county including NHS dentistry. Primary health care is provided by GP Practices in Child Okeford, Sturminster Newton and Blandford Forum. Historically a weekly surgery was held in a centrally located house in the village. The Primary Care Networks in North Dorset have highlighted in housing plans that although there is funding for healthcare in development monies, they are unable to recruit to healthcare posts which will limit access to care. There is currently no access to new NHS dental registrations in North Dorset. However, the creation of a village hub building could provide a room for some healthcare services such as talking therapies or podiatry to be delivered in the village and closer to home. A clinic room can also generate income through rental charges for the parish.

With an increase in older people in the North Dorset population, there will be a rise in needs for social care to keep people independent for longer.

Transport and sustainable travel

The 2021 Census data shows that 63% of people in Okeford Fitzpaine use a car to get to work, well above the national average. Although this is a rural area and to be expected, it also indicates a need to include road infrastructure into any major planning developments and transportation plans. There is also an above average number of households with two or more cars, again reflecting the rural nature of the parish and employment opportunities but supporting a requirement to have adequate and safe parking spaces to minimise on street parking. The data was collected during the Coronavirus pandemic and therefore numbers of people who were previously working from home may have decreased, placing more pressure on the

roads. However, the data also shows a need to encourage local businesses to the area.

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Okeford Fitzpaine

Area map



Population

1,000

people

56,490,000 people in England

Rounded to the nearest 10 people
(nearest 100 for England)

Household deprivation

Okeford Fitzpaine (England)

Household is not deprived in any dimension **51.5%** (48.4%)

Household is deprived in one dimension **34.8%** (33.5%)

Household is deprived in two dimensions **11.9%** (14.2%)

Household is deprived in three dimensions **1.8%** (3.7%)

Household is deprived in four dimensions **0.0%** (0.2%)

% of all households

General health

Okeford Fitzpaine (England)

Very good health **42.8%** (48.5%)

Good health **39.9%** (33.7%)

Fair health **13.0%** (12.7%)

Bad health **3.1%** (4.0%)

Very bad health **1.2%** (1.2%)

% of all people

Number of cars or vans

Okeford Fitzpaine (England)

No cars or vans in household **7.6%** (23.5%)

1 car or van in household **33.2%** (41.3%)

2 cars or vans in household **37.2%** (26.1%)

3 or more cars or vans in household **22.0%** (9.1%)

% of all households

Distance travelled to work

Okeford Fitzpaine (England)

Less than 10km **20.9%** (35.4%)

10km to less than 30km **20.7%** (14.4%)

30km and over **10.4%** (4.3%)

Works mainly from home **27.0%** (31.5%)

Other **21.1%** (14.5%)

% of people aged 16 years and over in employment

Economic activity status

Okeford Fitzpaine (England)

Economically active: In employment **57.7%** (57.4%)

Economically active: Unemployed **2.4%** (3.5%)

Economically inactive **39.9%** (39.1%)

% of people aged 16 years and over

Occupation

Okeford Fitzpaine (England)

1. Managers, directors and senior officials **13.5%** (12.9%)

2. Professional occupations **16.0%** (20.3%)

3. Associate professional and technical occupations **11.4%** (13.3%)

4. Administrative and secretarial occupations **7.4%** (9.3%)

5. Skilled trades occupations **16.2%** (10.2%)

6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations **11.5%** (9.3%)

7. Sales and customer service occupations **7.0%** (7.5%)

8. Process, plant and machine operatives **6.7%** (6.9%)

9. Elementary occupations **10.2%** (10.5%)

% of people aged 16 years and over in employment

The village is served by a regular bus services to Blandford Forum and Sturminster Newton. It is lightly used and depends on subsidy from local and national government to make it viable. There is no weekend or night service, making it impractical for shift workers. Belchalwell has no bus service.

The Little Lane (Mill Lane) project sponsored by the Parish Council provided a safe pedestrian and cycle route from the village to the A357 adjacent to the North Dorset Trailway. The promised road improvements to allow safe passage from the lane to the Trailway is still in the planning stage and the Parish Council will push for its completion.

Darknoll Lane that runs towards Sturminster Newton and if upgraded and improved could provide a sustainable pedestrian and cycle route from the village. The Parish Council will engage with Dorset Council to progress an upgrade to Darknoll Lane.

Footpaths are currently maintained by volunteers supported by rangers. Several footpaths are linear only and are in poor condition, limiting their use. Upgrading footpaths could bring visitors to the area, and improve health through better use.

Pub and Shop

Okeford Fitzpaine is fortunate to have the Royal Oak Pub, Fiddleford Arms, and Okeford Fitzpaine Village Shop and Post Office. All three businesses provide an essential service to the community, but have experienced challenges with lockdown and the cost of living crisis. It is essential the community supports the local businesses so they remain viable.

Digital and Utilities

The village currently has 'Fibre to the cabinet' broadband services that can provide good connectivity. Works to install a mobile telecommunications phone mast in the tower of Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Church are currently being undertaken and are due to be completed in 2023. This will improve the currently poor or absent mobile phone signal currently experienced in the village. The village is also connected the main sewage, water and gas networks. It is unclear whether these facilities will need an upgrade to avoid stress caused by the planned developments.

Roads and Public Safety

There is a long-standing problem of excessive traffic speed through the village, particularly on the approach roads of Higher St and Castle Lane. Traffic flow will worsen due to the Pleydells Farm development in the middle of the village, the Shillingstone Fields development on Shillingstone Lane, and the potential development on the old Wessex Homes site on Shillingstone Lane (if planning permission is granted for the latter). The Parish Council has applied to Dorset Highways for a reduction in the speed limit from 30 mph to 20 mph within the village and the Parish Council has approved the purchase of a Speed Indicator Device which will be installed on Shillingstone Lane and Castle Lane in 2023 to ensure speed limit enforcement. Observation has shown that the instance of

speeding increases further in the hours of darkness and this combined with the lack of footpaths on parts of the main thoroughfare of Higher St and Castle Lane and the lack of street lighting poses a significant risk to pedestrians and other road users.

In addition, road infrastructure has not been improved by Dorset Council, despite the significant housing developments in the Okeford Fitzpaine and Sturminster Newton areas. Examples include not gritting Okeford Hill in winter and the narrowed gap between Castle Lane and New Cross. Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council expects developers to work in partnership with Dorset Council to improve road access when proposing new developments.

Okeford Fitzpaine has no dedicated car park or public electric charging points. Limited car parking at the village hall and recreation ground are for the use of those facilities only. There is significant kerbside parking, particularly in the conservation area which creates issues with road safety. This is likely to worsen what with the construction of a 27 further houses on Pleydell's Farm,

Footpaths and pavements

Okeford Fitzpaine has a historic grade 2 listed high pavement. However, most footpaths and pavements around the residential areas are not fit for purpose by being too narrow or with no lowered access. This means that some of the most vulnerable members of the community such as those in wheelchairs or pushing prams are unable to get around safely, often using the roads. The 2021 Census data shows that 17% of the current population are registered as disabled reflecting a need to make places more accessible. Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council expects all future pavements and footpaths to be accessible. Upgrades of existing pavements should be reviewed.

Education

Okeford Fitzpaine C of E Primary School closed in April 2023 as a consequence of parish infrastructure being underutilised by the community. Secondary education is proved in both Sturminster Newton and Blandford Forum. Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council expects education authorities to work collaboratively with developers and Dorset Council to ensure there is access to appropriate local primary and secondary education places and that there is public transport available to schools.

The school building and adjacent hard standing ground has reverted to Salisbury Diocese who intend to sell the premises. The playing fields are owned by Dorset Council who has been approached to determine whether it is willing to sell the land. In early 2023 the parish council submitted an application for an asset of community value which was rejected by Dorset Council. The Parish Council is in talks with the Salisbury Diocese and Dorset Council about the potential purchase of the School and Playing Fields, on behalf of the parish and is undertaking a Feasibility Study. It intends to open a public consultation with the village to determine whether it should

proceed with the purchase utilising S106 funding and included in that will be a survey of what uses the School building and its playing fields could be put to.

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The Dorset Council Local Plan and Okeford Fitzpaine

The Dorset Local Plan is in development, with anticipated publication in 2023. It contains several Policies that are applicable to Okeford Fitzpaine and this section of the document seeks to define more fully their application to our parish as guidance for developers.

Planning

Neighbourhood Plan History and Background

The current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides for communities the develop Neighbourhood plans to assess housing need and allocate development land to fulfil these needs. These plans are subservient to and should complement Local Plans that are developed by Local authorities for them to provide to housing to meet local and nationally allocated housing supplies. The local planning authority in our case is now Dorset Council.

In 2014 the Parish Council initiated the Neighbourhood planning process for Okeford Fitzpaine civil Parish, which includes Belchawell and Fiddleford and produced the first version of a plan in September 2015. Following feedback from the then North Dorset District Council (NDDC) that one of the sites allocated for development (former Poultry Farm)could not be taken forward as it was designated as employment land in the then current Local Plan. Based on this feedback the Neighbourhood Plan was revised and second version was published for review December 2017. Both versions proved very divisive within the community however the Parish Council agreed that the plan should be continued with some modification. At that point NDDC announced that they were not in a position to meet their 5 year housing supply target which meant that their Local plan was no longer valid and planning was now under the guidance of the NPPF which in turn gave a '*presumption to approve*' for all valid planning applications. This prompted outline planning application to be submitted by the promoter of four sites – Former Chicken farm, Pleydells Farm , former Wessex Park Homes and the land North of Castle Lane. The Parish Council voted to suspend work on the Neighbourhood plan until the outcome of these application had been decided by NDDC.

Based on advice from consultants in early 2022 the Parish Council has voted to not proceed further with Neighbourhood planning at this time.[Is this statement correct?!]

A major objective of the draft Neighbourhood plan was to ensure that the evolution of the village would take place in a sustainable way have due regard to and protection of its heritage and natural environment . The Parish council remains committed to these objectives and policies from the Neighbourhood plan draft policies are contains in **Appendix A**.

Dorset Local Plan Policies that may impact our village

DEV1:

The housing requirement and the need for employment land in Dorset In the period 2021 to 2038 provision is made for:

a deliverable supply of housing land to accommodate a minimum of 30,481 dwellings, which will be delivered at a minimum average annual rate of 1,793 dwellings per annum; and

a minimum of 131 hectares of employment land.

DEV4:

Growth in the northern Dorset functional area In the northern Dorset functional area housing growth will be delivered: at the market towns of Gillingham and Sherborne, including through major urban extensions to the south of Gillingham and the west of Sherborne; through the more modest expansion of Shaftesbury and the smaller market towns of Sturminster Newton and Stalbridge; and *through windfall and infilling within existing settlements defined by local plan or neighbourhood plan development boundaries.*

Across the northern Dorset functional area, employment growth will be delivered through: infilling and intensification within existing employment sites; the southern extension of Gillingham and existing undeveloped land at Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton; and development of land within the west of Sherborne development.

The draft local plan calls for an addition 172 homes within the Okeford Fitzpaine neighbourhood plan area. The figure should be viewed as minimum requirement figures and, therefore, can be exceeded. However there is no requirement for neighbourhood plans to allocate sites or identify any additional land to meet the overall Local Plan housing need figure.

Based on existing permissions the Parish Council's position will be to oppose any further large developments either within the revised settlement boundary after all existing permissions are complete.

In addition, Okeford Fitzpaine requires timely engagement with all organisations where infrastructure impacting the community is involved. This includes building developers, education officials, issues affecting roads, and other key infrastructure.

DEV7:

Development outside local plan and neighbourhood plan development boundaries in rural Dorset In rural Dorset beyond the South East Dorset Green Belt and outside any local plan or neighbourhood plan development boundary, development will be strictly controlled, having particular regard to environmental constraints and to the need for the protection of the countryside. Development will be restricted to:

- agriculture, forestry or horticulture or related enterprises such as farm diversification and equestrian development;
- alterations and extensions to existing buildings in line with their current lawful use, including their subdivision or replacement;
- new employment, tourism, educational / training, recreational or leisure-related development;
- rural exception affordable housing;
- rural workers' housing;
- the re-use of existing rural buildings;
- sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople;
- the replacement of properties affected by coastal change;
- proposals for the generation of renewable energy or other utility infrastructure;
- flood defence, land stability and coastal protection schemes;
- local facilities appropriate to a rural area or close to an existing settlement; and
- landscape and / or green infrastructure requirements associated with specific allocations in a development plan document.

Based on existing permissions the Parish Council's position will be to oppose any further developments outside the revised settlement boundary which are non-compliant with Policy DEV7.

DEV8:

Reuse of buildings outside settlement boundaries The reuse of existing buildings within the south east Dorset Green Belt and outside settlement boundaries elsewhere will be permitted provided that: in relation to the existing building / site:

- a. the existing building is permanent, of substantial construction and merits retention;
- b. the continuation of any current use or activity on the site, would not give rise to a future need for another building (or buildings) to accommodate that use or activity;
- c. where residential reuse is proposed, the existing building would readily lend itself to residential conversion, in terms of its scale, height, depth and the number and location of existing openings;
- d. where residential reuse is proposed and the existing building is in an isolated location, there are special circumstances, as set out in national policy, which would justify residential reuse in such a location; the reuse is for one of the following uses:
 - e. housing;
 - f. affordable housing;
 - g. essential rural workers' housing;
 - h. employment;
 - i. community uses;
 - j. built tourist accommodation;
 - k. other tourism uses, where there is a justifiable need for a rural location; in relation to the scheme for reuse;
- l. the intended reuse can be achieved without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction of the existing building or any extension of the curtilage other than exceptionally, a small-scale extension;
- m. any proposed extension to the existing building is modest in scale; ancillary in nature; subordinate to the main building; and necessary to meet the essential functional requirements of the intended reuse; and
- n. the scheme for reuse should make a positive contribution to local character and include the retention of any features of historic or architectural importance on, or associated with, the existing building

The Parish Council's position will be to oppose any further re developments of existing buildings outside the revised settlement boundary which are non-compliant with Policy DEV8

DEV9: Neighbourhood plans

Neighbourhood plans should be prepared: to positively contribute to the local plan vision and strategic priorities and be in general conformity with its strategic policies; to identify the infrastructure needed to support development; and to ensure that the policies and proposals are deliverable. Where provision is made for housing, the housing requirement figure for a neighbourhood plan area set out in the local plan should be met and where possible exceeded.

The timescale for the completion of a Neighbourhood Plan on average is in excess of 2 years and requires considerable resource both financial and with workforce. The existing planning consents will fulfil the villages (village's?) requirement from the Local plan and if Dorset Council's 5 year housing supply obligations are met and their planner ensure strict compliance with Policies DEV4 DEV7 DEV8 then the requirement for a neighbourhood plan should remain on hold.(why are we producing a neighbourhood plan then?)

ENV1:**Green infrastructure: strategic approach**

The primary function of any element of the green infrastructure network will be protected from the adverse impacts of development and, where appropriate enhanced by relevant policies in the development plan. Developers will be expected to incorporate enhancements to any element of the green infrastructure network which performs, or could perform, other functions to deliver multifunctional green infrastructure benefits in accordance with relevant Local Plan Policies. Any strategic development site should include provision of sufficient green infrastructure to serve the site itself and, where suitable opportunities exist, strengthen the existing green infrastructure network for example by:

- enhancing and connecting cycling and walking provision between local facilities, local open spaces and where appropriate, the countryside;
- connecting together and enriching biodiversity and wildlife habitats; and
- improving connections, green corridors and links between different components of the green infrastructure network. Any new green infrastructure provided as part of a development scheme, or any new elements of green infrastructure identified in neighbourhood plans (including local green spaces), will form part of the green infrastructure network. Development proposals must make adequate provision for the long-term management and maintenance of the green infrastructure network.

The Parish Council will seek to work with developers and other organisations to maximise the value of green infrastructure in the parish and in any proposals for development.

Okeford Fitzpaine also has limited street lighting so any new developments need to be low level to avoid light pollution. Light pollution is increasingly seen as detrimental to health.

ENV3: Biodiversity and net gain

Proposals for development should avoid harm to biodiversity. If significant harm cannot be avoided proposals must incorporate adequate mitigation or (as a last resort) compensation. Where harm cannot be avoided and adequate mitigation or compensation is not proposed, permission will be refused. Development (other than that exempt under the terms of the Environment Bill) must deliver a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity through the restoration and re-creation of habitats forming part of the existing and proposed Ecological Network. Wildlife enhancements will be secured where appropriate within the built environment for all scales of development. Developments will provide for the long-term monitoring and management of biodiversity features retained and enhanced within the site and for features created off-site to compensate for development impacts or to enable delivery of net gain. All new, enhanced and restored biodiversity provision should seek to be an exemplar of best practice and innovation in its design and on-going management. Proposals where the primary purpose is to conserve or enhance biodiversity and deliver a net gain for such objectives will be supported in principle where this accords with other policies in the Local Plan

Potential Use of Development Funding

Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council has a significant opportunity to upgrade and improve vital infrastructure with access to forthcoming development funds (Section 106). The anticipated funding from housing developments are outlined in the table below. There is a dedicated allocation for primary and secondary school funding.

Indicative Section 106 Money Anticipated by Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council

Development	No of Houses	Section 106 allocation	Infrastructure allocation	TOTAL
Comerwicke	27	£213,174	Education: £169,681	£382,855
Faccenda	45	£346,868	Education: £183,465	£530,333
Pleydells	27	£247,702	Education: £169,681	£417,383
Wessex	48	TBC	TBC	TBC
TOTAL	147	£807,744		

Allocations are currently placed against the following:

Allotments	£30,507		
Village Hall/ Pavilion	£198,690		
Playgrounds	£146,732	Open spaces	£228,428

The amount of development funding gives Okeford Fitzpaine Parish a unique opportunity to significantly plan for future infrastructure and community facilities. Opportunities include:

- a chance to design a community building for the future. For example, a major restructuring and upgrade of the recreation ground pavilion with multi use facilities and improved access.
- an opportunity to consider the future of the primary school buildings
- upgraded and improved play facilities for children and young people.
- improvements to rights of ways
- improved community spaces such as an orchard
- a clinic room that can be used by a range of professionals.

- sports facilities for all ages eg a MUGA or tennis courts

The parish council will, through development of a strategic plan, recommend and decide the final allocation of this funding for infrastructure improvements.

Conclusion

Okeford Fitzpaine is a thriving parish about to experience a significant increase in population through developments. However, there is a critical opportunity to design and use existing and new resources so they serve the community and are fit for purpose.

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Appendix A

Policies extracted from the Okeford Fitzpaine Neighbourhood plan -May 2017 version

Strategic Objectives

- To progressively grow the village through sustainable housing development that meets the needs of all age and social groups, and promotes balance in the Parish demography.
- To ensure that new housing developments are on previously identified potential sites in or adjacent to the existing settlement boundary
- To evolve the Parish infrastructure to support the progressive growth in the community.
- To protect and where possible enhance the built heritage and its surroundings, for the benefit of current and future generations.
- To recognise that our rural environment and greenspaces are highly valued by all the community and to enhance them and protect them from inappropriate development.
- To invest in infrastructure that provides opportunities for more sustainable means of getting about in, around and beyond the Parish, and promotes better health and well-being of all.
- To strive to support the local economy through its existing businesses and encourage new enterprises and facilities, which enhance employment opportunities.

Settlement Boundary Policy S1

WITHIN THE REVISED SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

Provided that it is in compliance with national and local plan policies, residential development within the revised Okeford Fitzpaine Settlement Boundary, will be allowed :

- on allocated housing sites, as set out in policy HP1;
- on sites for limited residential infilling and extensions in accordance with North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 Policy 7;

OUTSIDE THE REVISED SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

Any development outside of the revised settlement boundary is subject to Dorset Local Plan Part 1 Policy 20 The Countryside.

Heritage Policy CP1:

Development within and adjacent to the Conservation Area should reflect the scale, massing, density and building materials of the heritage assets of that part of the Conservation Area in accordance with North Dorset Local Plan Policy 5 and the 'Guidance on alterations to historic buildings in North Dorset' October 2007.

Heritage Policy CP2

The regeneration of sites within or adjacent to the Okeford Fitzpaine Conservation Area which enhance the existing character and appearance of the area through sensitive design will be encouraged.

Heritage Policy CP3-

No development will take place within the settlement boundary in areas designated as Local Green Spaces listed below (see Appendix 1 OFNP Proposals Map) except where such development demonstrably enhances the use of the space:

- (1) Playing Field to the rear of 34 Lower Street
- (2) Land to the rear of 29 Nether Mead
- (3) Land adjacent to 11 Mary Gardens

Housing Policy HP1:

The Okeford Fitzpaine Housing Needs Assessment confirms a need for 105 additional dwellings during the plan period between 2011- 2031. In order to facilitate sustainable phased growth, the following sites are allocated for development during the plan period:

- (Site 1) Faccenda Chicken Factory: 37 (2015-2020) at 47 Dwellings Per Hectare(DPH) [planning permission already granted and in build]
- (Site 2) Pleydells Farm: Up to 27 (2020- 2025) at 38 DPH (site area comprises 0.78 hectares)
- (Site 3) Land to the North of Okeford Fitzpaine : Up to 31 (2026-2031) at 35 DPH site area comprises 1.065 hectares)

Housing Policy HP2:

All new housing development will provide an adequate mix of dwellings in terms of size, type and tenure in accordance with the findings of the Okeford Fitzpaine Housing Needs Assessment. Development will be expected to provide:

40% to be either two bedroom houses or one or two bedroom flats subject to the design of the flats being wholly in keeping with the character of the village

45% three bedroom houses OR two-bedroom bungalows

15% four-bedroom plus houses OR live-work unit OR three-bedroom bungalows

Affordable Housing in accordance with North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 and any future adopted Local Plan Policy.

Housing Policy HP4

The requirement for Rural Exception sites within the Plan period 2011-31 will be monitored against a nil requirement as at 2015.

Housing Policy HP3:

New development within the Settlement Boundary of Okeford Fitzpaine should deliver high quality sustainable design in accordance with National and Local Plan Policy. In addition, it must adhere to the following development principles:

Contribute positively to the areas character, scale, layout, height and form and conform with national and local plan design and heritage policies as well as other policies in this neighbourhood plan;

Provide an adequate amount of car parking spaces within the site to ensure that there will be limited additional on-street parking on the adjacent highway network, in accordance with The Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Residential Car Parking Study, 2011 or any subsequent adopted policy documents;

Incorporate landscaping schemes with associated maintenance and management plans which include a net gain in native species of trees, and burying utility supplies underground;

Incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems within each site and make provision for their ongoing maintenance ;

Set aside areas for strategic landscaping and amenity space on any areas of the site which are greenfield, AONB or have never been built upon;

Any infilling within the settlement boundary must be in strict accordance with the layout and density of the immediately adjoining properties especially in relation to density, front, rear and side garden areas size and character and appearance and sufficient gaps should be left between buildings;

Full detailed planning applications will be encouraged in preference to outline planning applications due to the environmental and heritage significance of the parish and the need to consider detailed design and layout issues at an early stage;

Infrastructure Policy IP1:

The provision of a viable safe and direct route for pedestrian and cycles (all ages and abilities) to the North Dorset Trailway is a priority improvement project which may be funded from S106 money received from the Old Dairy Development together with grants from other organisations in order to mitigate against any potential impact on the existing highway network and ensure that the village is developed in a sustainable manner. The following issues should be addressed as a priority:

- The provision of a safe route to Little Lane
- Upgrading of Little Lane
- The provision of a safer crossing across the A357 at the junction with Little Lane

Environmental Policy EP1

The Parish will continue to adhere to the relevant European, national and local environmental policies.

Environmental Policy EP2

For any development of a site that is not designated as 'brownfield', additional habitat mitigation measures will be required to be set out in a Habitats Mitigation Plan. This will set aside a part of the development area as an ecological asset supporting the 'green corridors' within the revised Settlement Boundary.

Further opportunities to support indigenous flora and fauna should be sought within the Local Green Spaces and other Green Infrastructure Assets to support these 'green corridors'.

Economy Policy EN1 –

The conversion of barns and redundant farm buildings for business and tourist related uses only, will be supported. Suitable uses include holiday-lets, office, light industrial (B1) and live-work units.

Implementing the plan: IM1

In accordance with the Okeford Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Plan, Proposals Map, Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council will work with North Dorset District Council and all relevant partners to ensure that up to 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section.106 monies raised in the Parish is spent on priority improvements projects as follows:

- the creation of direct pedestrian and cycle access to the North Dorset Trailway at Shillingstone including any trail routes.

- Further leisure Facilities projects as determined by the Parish Council

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