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# **Report on Martock Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2028**

**An Examination undertaken for South Somerset District Council with the support of Martock Parish Council, on the January 2020 submission version of the Plan.**

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Date of Report: 21 January 2021

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## **Main Findings - Executive Summary**

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

I have also concluded that:

- The Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – the Martock Parish Council;
- The Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – Martock Parish as illustrated in Map 1 of the Plan;
- The Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – 2018-2028; and
- The policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

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

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

## **1. Introduction and Background**

### *Martock Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2028*

1.1 The Parish of Martock is a rural area in South Somerset, on the southern edge of the Somerset Levels and Moors. The A303 trunk road forms the southern boundary of the Parish and provides access towards the town of Yeovil, some 7 miles to the south-east. The Parish's main settlement is Martock which is separated from the village of Bower Hinton by Madey Mill Stream and Hurst Brook. The main road extending from north to south (the B3165) through Martock, Hurst and Bower Hinton is aligned by many historic buildings which are at the heart of the Joint Conservation Area. Martock and Bower Hinton are situated in a bowl surrounded by undulating hills in an attractive landscape. Smaller villages of Coat and Stapleton are located in the north of the Parish, and Coat includes a designated Conservation Area.

1.2 The River Parrett marks the Parish's western boundary, and a significant part of the Parish is susceptible to flooding. Land close to the Parrett, to Madey Mill Stream and Hurst Brook is shown on the South Somerset Local Plan Policies Map as at high risk of flooding, being located in Flood Zones 2 and 3. Martock accommodates many small businesses, principally on Martock Industrial Estate, and at the Parrett Works on the Parish's

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western edge. Designated as a Rural Centre in the South Somerset Local Plan, Martock/Bower Hinton includes a range of shops and community facilities including places of worship, a primary school, post office, library, farmers' market, doctors and pharmacy. An extensive footpath network gives good access for local residents across the Parish to the surrounding countryside. Facilities for sports and recreation and children's play are available, notably along the eastern side of Bower Hinton and Martock.

- 1.3 The MNP has been prepared by a Steering Group comprising members of the local community and Parish councillors, on behalf of Martock Parish Council. The Parish was formally approved as a Neighbourhood Area by South Somerset District Council (SSDC) on 7 April 2016. The MNP was developed with the participation of local people in working groups, and through regular community consultation. The Plan was framed around a number of aims and objectives, identified as important by the local community. These cover the matters of natural environment, built environment and heritage, housing, local economy, transport and travel, and community wellbeing.

#### *The Independent Examiner*

- 1.4 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the MNP by SSDC, with the agreement of Martock Parish Council.
- 1.5 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector, with prior experience of examining neighbourhood plans. I am an independent examiner, and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the draft Plan.

#### *The Scope of the Examination*

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

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

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

#### *The Basic Conditions*

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

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

1.10 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of

## 2. Approach to the Examination

### *Planning Policy Context*

- 2.1 The Development Plan for this part of South Somerset, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, is the South Somerset Local Plan, adopted in 2015. SSDC is currently undertaking a review of the Local Plan, and consultation on Preferred Options was carried out in 2019. The Local Plan Review, initially covering the period 2016-36, is expected to relate to 2020-40 at its next iteration. The MNP confirms that the Parish Council has been mindful of the Local Plan Review's contents and has "*striven to ensure that the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the new emerging Local Plan as well as the adopted Local Plan*".<sup>2</sup> Although I shall not test the MNP for general conformity with the policies in the emerging Local Plan Review, the reasoning and evidence informing that Plan is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the Basic Conditions for this MNP.<sup>3</sup> It is on that basis that I have taken account of the emerging Local Plan.
- 2.2 The planning policy for England is set out principally in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) offers guidance on how this policy should be implemented. A revised NPPF was published on 19 February 2019, and all references in this report are to the February 2019 NPPF and its accompanying PPG.

### *Submitted Documents*

- 2.3 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I regard as relevant to the examination, including those submitted which comprise:
- the draft MNP 2018-2028, January 2020;
  - Map 1 of the Plan, which identifies the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan relates;
  - the Consultation Statement, January 2020;
  - the Basic Conditions Statement, January 2020;
  - all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation;
  - the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Screening Report prepared by SSDC, May 2019;

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<sup>1</sup> This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Martock Parish Neighbourhood Plan paragraph 3.5.

<sup>3</sup> Planning Practice Reference (PPG) ID: 41-009-20190509.

- Martock Local Green Space Assessment Report, November 2020; and
- the requests for additional clarification sought in my letters of 11 and 12 November 2020 and the response of 19 November from the Parish Council.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Site Visit*

2.4 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 3 November 2020 to familiarise myself with it, and visit relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

#### *Written Representations with or without Public Hearing*

2.5 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. I considered hearing sessions to be unnecessary as the consultation responses clearly articulated the objections to the Plan and presented arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum. In addition, Martock Parish Council provided answers to questions which I raised in my letters of 11 and 12 November 2020, and I have taken account of these in my examination.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Modifications*

2.6 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. The numbering of the PMs follows the sequence in which the changes are recommended relating to the Plan's pages. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

### **3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights**

#### *Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area*

- 3.1 The MNP has been prepared and submitted for examination by Martock Parish Council, which is a qualifying body for an area that was designated by SSDC on 7 April 2016.
- 3.2 It is the only Neighbourhood Plan for Martock Parish, and does not relate to land outside the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

#### *Plan Period*

3.3 The Plan specifies clearly the period to which it is to take effect, which is from 2018 to 2028.

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<sup>4</sup> View at: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/your-council/your-council-plan-and-strategies/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>

<sup>5</sup> Examiner's letter of 11 and 12 November 2020 and Martock Parish Council's reply of 19 November 2020.



## *Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation*

- 3.4 Martock Parish Council agreed to produce a neighbourhood plan in December 2015. A drop-in event in March 2016, the Parish newsletter, social media, and a Martock Plan website were used to publicise the proposed Neighbourhood Plan and engage local people in its preparation. The Parish Council then established a steering group of community volunteers alongside Parish councillors. An initial survey was carried out and a launch event held to establish the scope and issues to be addressed. Some 200 questionnaires were distributed and 87 were completed and returned, providing information as to what people most liked and disliked about Martock, how frequently they used local facilities, and their views about transport provision and aspects of the environment.
- 3.5 In October 2017, the steering group approved a set of draft aims and objectives for consultation with the Parish community. A public event, coinciding with the local farmers' market, and publicity on the Parish website, via a newsletter, social media and posters, were used to inform the community of the MNP vision, aims and objectives. Based on the comments received, the steering group considered revisions and refinements to the draft aims and objectives, which were agreed at the group meeting on 6 November 2017.
- 3.6 In April 2018, the steering group carried out a "call for sites" to engage the attention of all landowners and gain an understanding of the availability of local land for development and options. A policy approach for future development was put to the steering group in September 2018, and informal consultation on a first draft version of the MNP was carried out between September and November 2018. The Plan, and key evidence documents, were publicised by way of a newsletter, email, social media and posters; they were available on the MNP website or in hard copies. 16 written responses were received, with 3 submissions from task group spokespersons, and additional verbal comments from the Farmers' Market. Landowners whose land was proposed for designation as either Local Green Gap or Local Green Space in the emerging Plan were consulted, as described on Page 9 of the MNP Consultation Statement.
- 3.7 Consultation in accordance with Regulation 14 of the 2012 Regulations was carried out on the Pre-Submission version of the MNP between 13 July and 13 September 2019. All residents and businesses within the Parish, SSDC and a range of statutory bodies were notified of the consultation exercise. Online and hard copies of the Plan were made available, and responses were received by email, post or drop-off at the Market House. A total of 57 relevant comments were received from members of the general public and businesses, including returns from agents of landowners or developers. Changes were made to the MNP resulting from the Regulation 14 exercise and agreed by the steering group on 11 November 2019. The Submission Version of the Plan was submitted to SSDC on 28 January 2020, and consultation in accordance with Regulation 16 was conducted between 13 August and 1 October

2020. Sixteen responses were received, and I have taken these into account in my examination. I confirm that the consultation process has met the legal requirements i.e. procedural compliance and has had regard to the advice in the PPG on plan preparation.

#### *Development and Use of Land*

- 3.8 The Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with s.38A of the 2004 Act.

#### *Excluded Development and Human Rights*

- 3.9 The Plan does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development'. In its Basic Conditions Statement, the Parish Council explains that the Plan's contents and preparation process have had regard to Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998). From my independent assessment of the MNP, I see no reason to disagree.

### **4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions**

#### *EU Obligations*

- 4.1 The MNP was screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) by SSDC, which found that it was unnecessary to undertake full SEA. Consultation with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency was carried out. Although the Environment Agency initially questioned whether Policy No. Mart13 could potentially impact on the natural environment, a further assessment led it to accept the SSDC decision that a SEA was not necessary. Having read the SEA screening report, I support this conclusion. The MNP was further screened for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).<sup>6</sup> Natural England agreed with the findings of SSDC that there were unlikely to be significant environmental effects on European sites from the proposed Plan, and therefore the MNP did not require an HRA.
- 4.2 However, in November 2020 SSDC issued a briefing to Parish and Town Councils on the issue of phosphates, following a letter it had received from Natural England about the high levels of phosphates in the Somerset Levels and Moors, which represents a risk to the designated Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site. Natural England provided updated advice to guide the approach to future development in the Ramsar site catchment area. The catchment area covers most of South Somerset District, including Martock Parish. Natural England advises that certain types of development proposal in the catchment area will need to be subject to a HRA, proceeding to an Appropriate Assessment, before they

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<sup>6</sup> SSDC – Martock Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2018-34 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Screening Report May 2019.

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are submitted as planning applications. Developments which will result in a net increase in population served by a wastewater system or increased nutrient loading from agriculture will be affected. SSDC is working with other Councils across the County to develop a Nutrient/Water Quality Strategy, so that water quality issues are fully understood, mitigation measures to offset phosphate pollution are devised, and mechanisms to deliver future housing growth in a sustainable way are set out. In response to my question to the Parish Council of 12 November 2020 on this matter, the Parish Council indicated its willingness for modifications to be made to Policy No. Mart1 Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity, and to its Flood Guide. Alterations to the Flood Guide document are not a matter for me, but I propose to modify the supporting text to Policy No. 1 Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity so that developers are alerted to the phosphate issue. **PMs 4 & 6** should be made to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. I note that Natural England has not amended its earlier conclusion that HRA is not required for the MNP. As the Plan does not propose allocations for new development in the Parish, I agree with this conclusion.

### *Main Issues*

- 4.3 Having considered whether the Plan complies with various procedural and legal requirements, it is now necessary to deal with whether it complies with the remaining Basic Conditions, particularly the regard it pays to national policy and guidance, the contribution it makes to the achievement of sustainable development and whether it is in general conformity with strategic development plan policies. I test the Plan against the Basic Conditions by considering specific issues of compliance of all the Plan's policies.
- 4.4 As part of that assessment, I consider whether the policies are sufficiently clear and unambiguous, having regard to advice in the PPG. A neighbourhood plan policy should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence.<sup>7</sup>
- 4.5 There are two overarching, principal issues relating to the MNP's general compliance with the Basic Conditions which I wish to deal with before considering the other specific policies in the Plan. These are:
- The role and use of companion documents in support of the Plan's policies (Policy Nos. Mart2-Mart4, Mart8, Mart9 & Mart11); and
  - The proposed settlement area boundary and its effect on the ability of the MNP to meet requirements for future new housing and other development (Policy Nos. Mart13 and Mart17).

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<sup>7</sup> PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306

*The Role and Use of Companion Documents (Policy Nos. Mart2-Mart4, Mart8, Mart9 & Mart11)*

- 4.6 Paragraph 5.8 of the MNP refers to the Flood Guide, Village Design Statement and Environment Manual, to aid developers and help ensure that development proposals will satisfy the Plan's requirements. SSDC pointed out that these documents have not been "submitted" under Regulation 15 and cannot form part of a statutory neighbourhood plan. SSDC advised that the Village Design Statement is wrongly described (on its Page 2) as a "Supplementary Planning Document". SSDC commented that the appendices to the document were incomplete but acknowledged that relevant contents of the documents could be translated into specific policies in the Plan. In themselves, the documents carry limited weight and it should be clear that they offer guidance only. I have no authority to recommend modifications to the wording in the Village Design Statement. However, I consider that paragraph 5.8 of the MNP should be modified to clarify the status of the background documents, having regard for national planning policy, as in **PM2**.
- 4.7 Policy No. Mart2 aims to protect established landscape and wildlife corridors from development, and where possible enhance or extend them. Paragraphs 7.11 and 7.14 advise that the Martock Environment Manual identifies and analyses the important wildlife corridors, but no information is given in the MNP as to their location within the Parish. I am concerned that users of the Plan may not appreciate what are the "important established Landscape and Wildlife Corridors". The policy could, in my view, be perceived as onerous, and likely to hold back sustainable development due to this lack of precision. The supporting text advises that the Martock Environment Manual identifies the established wildlife corridors of the Parish. Page 10 of the Manual includes a map without a title, but which shows five areas described as distinct from each other in their landscape and biodiversity. It refers to two important corridors that bisect the Parish, the disused railway line and the Hurst Brook Valley.
- 4.8 As paragraph 7.12 of the MNP states, the NPPF requires protection and enhancement of biodiversity where possible. I consider that Policy No. Mart2 has appropriate regard for this aspect of national planning policy, but more information is needed so that readers and users of the Plan understand more precisely which parts of the Parish are important or vulnerable, in terms of landscape and wildlife. I therefore propose that the map, on Page 10 of the Environment Manual, with its descriptive notes, is included in the MNP and titled "Landscape and Biodiversity Areas and Corridors". A reference to it should be added to paragraph 7.11. The Parish Council advised me, in response to my preliminary questions, that work is ongoing on identifying significant wildlife corridors, so I recommend that the map should include a note stating that it is "illustrative only". Then, this map with its descriptions of the areas and its existing footnote entitled "Martock Diversity", should assist readers and users, and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Paragraph 7.14 should also be modified to explain the map's relationship to Policy No. Mart2, as I recommend in **PM5**.

- 4.9 Policy Nos. Mart3 & 4, which address flood management and flood risk, similarly provide the reader with limited detailed information as to where flood risk is most acute, although the supporting text explains that flooding is a matter of great concern in the Parish. However, I note that the SSDC Local Plan and the MNP Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Screening Report include maps showing broad areas at risk of flooding in the Parish. Also, the Parish Council advised me, in its November 2020 response to my preliminary questions, that the Environment Agency's flood maps are complex and would require "constant updating". The Martock Parish Flood Guide for Developers, referenced in paragraph 7.23 of the MNP, directs readers to links for up-to-date flood maps, and to relevant management authorities. I am satisfied that the Flood Guide provides readers with access to useful technical information which should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. I consider that the Plan gives due attention to flood risk in Martock from future development and therefore Policies Mart3 & 4 meet the Basic Conditions and need not be modified.
- 4.10 Policy No. Mart8 states that key panoramas, views and vistas should not be compromised. The Key Views shown on Map 4 are described in the Martock Environment Manual and referenced in the supporting text. SSDC questioned Policy No. Mart8 – Views and Vistas - because it offers no detail as to the scope and extent of the views and the principal features requiring protection. Moreover, viewpoint 1, south from Coat Road, faces a construction site for 120 new dwellings, as was evident at my site visit. I agree that, as written, the policy could be difficult to implement in a consistent and transparent fashion. As the Parish Council advised, the Martock Environment Manual includes more detailed information on the views and vistas. I consider that some of this should be included in the supporting text of the MNP, to describe the significant features at each of the key views on Page 24, which appear below Map 4. View 1 should be removed from Map 4. **PM7** is needed for the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.11 Page 25 of the MNP provides a helpful overview of the history of Martock and its architectural heritage, noting that there are some 200 listed buildings and structures in the Parish. Paragraph 8.6 refers to the Martock and Coat Conservation Areas, and more recent work to review the Martock Conservation Area boundary and its special character. SSDC, in its Regulation 16 consultation exercise response stated that "*no such review has taken place to date*". The Parish Council explained that a re-appraisal involving the Parish Council and Conservation Team at SSDC was interrupted by staffing changes at SSDC. I understand that the Parish Council wishes the re-appraisal to start again but recommend that the reference to the 2018 exercise in paragraph 8.6 be removed.

- 4.12 A reference to the designated conservation areas, as shown on the Local Plan's Policies Map and in the Martock Village Design Statement, should be added to paragraph 8.6. It would also be helpful to remind readers that conservation areas are designated by local planning authorities, under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, because of their special architectural or historic interest; the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The Parish Council's willingness to take part in any future appraisal of the local conservation areas could be mentioned too. Modifications to paragraph 8.6 should be made as in **PM8**, having regard for national planning policy and for general conformity with strategic policies in South Somerset Local Plan.
- 4.13 In relation to Policy No. Mart9 – Heritage Assets – SSDC suggests it pays insufficient attention to the significance of particular heritage assets and could be read to give undue weight to locally designated heritage assets. I consider that some clarification of terminology and the hierarchy of assets is needed. Designated heritage assets are defined in the NPPF as including scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas. These must be distinguished from any locally recognised assets (non-designated heritage assets), which will carry less weight in decision-making on planning proposals. A schedule of Locally Listed Buildings is a matter for local planning authorities, and SSDC has not yet compiled one. I agree with SSDC that the inference in paragraph 8.13 (and 8.11) that the Parish Council will establish its own local heritage schedule, and apply Policy No. Mart9 to development proposals which might affect them, does not have regard for national planning policy.
- 4.14 It seems to me that many buildings and other features which have local significance in the Parish will have protection because of their location within the Martock Conservation Area, and Policy No. Mart9 would be strengthened by the addition of a reference to the Parish's conservation areas. I have had regard for the Parish Council's response to my preliminary questions and its suggested policy re-wording. I recommend modifications to Policy No. Mart9 and the supporting text, so that regard is had for national planning policy (NPPF section 16) as in **PM8**.
- 4.15 Policy No. Mart11 – Local Character and Design – appropriately, in my opinion, seeks high quality design in new development and has regard for section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF. However, I consider that the policy and its supporting text should be modified in two ways. Firstly, paragraph 8.37 should be re-written to provide confirmation that the Martock and Coat Conservation Areas are existing designations of significance. The policy itself should refer to the requirement to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of its two conservation areas and have regard for the presence and setting of the Parish's listed buildings. Secondly, the policy expectation for proposals to demonstrate how they have followed the Martock Design Statement should be softened. As SSDC pointed out, it does not form part of the statutory Neighbourhood Plan with which proposals must

comply and should be referenced for general guidance only. **PM10** is necessary to meet the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood planning.

- 4.16 As long as the above modifications are made, I conclude that the MNP will comply with the Basic Conditions in relation to the role and use of companion documents in support of the Plan's policies.

*The Proposed Settlement Area Boundary (Policy Nos. Mart13 and Mart17)*

- 4.17 I turn now to the second issue of general compliance: The proposed settlement area boundary and its effect on the ability of the MNP to meet requirements for future new housing and other development. Policy No. Mart13- Accommodating Growth - supports proposals for development within the settlement area boundary for Bower Hinton/Martock, and the settlement area boundary is illustrated on Map 6. The supporting text explains that Policy No. Mart13 is designed to control growth so that it is gradual, incremental and safeguards the unique character of the area, including the local countryside. I consider that the thrust of this approach is in general conformity with the adopted South Somerset Local Plan's strategic policy for Rural Centres. The MNP policy allows for small-scale development on land adjoining the settlement boundary which has regard for national policy on rural housing (paragraphs 77-79 of the NPPF). Policy No. Mart13 implies that any major development must take place within the settlement boundary. Major development is defined in the NPPF as housing development of 10 or more homes or an area of 0.5 hectares or more. In view of the tightness of the settlement area boundary, I am uncertain how Martock would meet its future requirements for new development over the Plan period, especially for new housing provision.
- 4.18 The supporting text to Policy No. Mart13 explains that the Local Plan required Martock to provide for some 230 new dwellings between 2006 and 2028. The supporting text to Policy No. Mart17 provides additional information about the adopted Local Plan housing policy, indicating that the "*housing target for Martock/Bower Hinton has already been exceeded (by completions and commitments) by 2019*" and "*It is felt inappropriate to set an alternative target.....*". However, the text following Policy No. Mart13 states that the emerging Local Plan Review seeks 330 new dwellings for Martock/Bower Hinton for the period 2016-36. With 45 completions between 2016 and 2018, and 75 new units committed for development, there is a residual housing requirement of 210 dwellings. I recognise that the Parish Council does not wish to allocate specific sites in the MNP. However, the Plan should not block the provision of new housing development to meet the SSDC's calculation of housing requirements. Some housing development of a major scale (10 or more dwellings) should be feasible for Martock in future if it is to meet SSDC's targets.
- 4.19 SSDC pointed out that its emerging Local Plan Review includes three land allocations in Martock, in its Policies MB1, MB2 and MB3. None of these

are referenced in the MNP, and two of the sites are outside the settlement area boundary. Paragraph 8.45 of the MNP states that community consultation has established little support for large scale development in Martock. The Parish Council, in reply to my preliminary questions, advised that the community is divided in its opinion about individual sites. In my experience, the need for new housing is not always appreciated by established communities, but this does not invalidate it. I consider that the MNP should set out a clear policy position for accommodating growth, especially in the light of national planning policy to boost housing supply. Comment on the MNP at the Regulation 16 stage included the observation that recent closure of the Parish's bank and a village pub, the limited selection of shops, and strained capacity at the school and surgery are matters of local importance. I agree that developer contributions could secure investment in affordable housing, education and other necessary infrastructure, whilst a growing population should increase footfall for shops and other community facilities.

- 4.20 SSDC contends that all the three areas subject to emerging Policies MB1, 2 & 3 should be included in the settlement area boundary to avoid the need for an early review of the MNP when the new Local Plan is adopted, most likely in 2022. Having read the section on Martock and Bower Hinton in the Local Plan Review (paragraph 8.36 onwards), I note the finding that the western edge of Martock seems to be the most sustainable and unconstrained location for growth. The appeal decision, Ref APP/R3325/W/16/3143789, and dismissal of a proposed housing development on land at Ringwell Hill, provides evidence of poor accessibility to community facilities for some land at the southern end of the settlement. Having regard for major constraints in the Parish, including flood risk along the Hurst Brook and Madey Mill streams, the designated conservation areas, and areas of high landscape sensitivity, I understand the line of argument in the Local Plan Review.
- 4.21 Summerfield Developments advised, in their Reg 16 consultation response, that a revised scheme for 25 new dwellings at Ringwell Hill is being drawn up. Although the dwellings could be provided within the Settlement Area Boundary, Summerfield requested that the boundary be amended to include all its site in order to secure a viable development. The Parish Council, in answer to my questions in November 2020, confirmed its view that the site is not a sustainable one for residential development. It observed that the site was not included in SSDC's latest land supply document. I am satisfied that the MNP should not amend its Settlement Area Boundary or allocate land at Ringwell Hill for future housing development.
- 4.22 I recognise that the site north of Coat Road (Policy MB1) is included in the proposed Local Green Gap between Martock and Coat in the MNP, where Policy No. Mart14 would prohibit development. However, paragraph 8.44 of the Local Plan Review comments on Policy MB1 that "*The separation to Coat would be retained by a substantial field and long gardens remaining undeveloped*". I have taken account of the Regulation 16 response from



Martock LVA LLP, and the illustration indicating how a defensible buffer between Martock and Coat could be preserved, and the land used for drainage, public open space and landscaping if necessary. I am satisfied that separation between the two settlements and the character of the setting to Coat Conservation Area should be appropriately protected if the MB1 site were developed for housing.

- 4.23 The Parish Council stated that it had defined the settlement boundary to include sites with planning permission, and this would explain the inclusion of the land south of Coat Road (Policy MB2). However, I conclude that Map 6 should show, in addition to the existing settlement boundary, the land north of Coat Road (Policy MB1), and land south of Hills Lane (Policy MB3). These should be named as potential development sites outside the settlement boundary. Also, Policy No. Mart13, its supporting text as well as the supporting text for Policy No. Mart17, should be modified so that current housing requirements and how they might be met through new development are explained more fully. These modifications, in **PM12 & 15**, should be made having regard for national planning policy to boost housing supply, and to minimise any conflicts between policies in the MNP and those in the emerging Local Plan Review. Both existing and future Local Plans define Martock/Bower Hinton as a Rural Centre capable of growth.
- 4.24 As long as the above modifications are made, I conclude that the MNP will be in general compliance with the Basic Conditions in relation to the proposed settlement area boundary and its effect on the ability of the MNP to meet requirements for future new housing and other development.<sup>8</sup>

### *Specific Issues of Compliance of the Plan's Remaining Policies*

#### Plan Context

- 4.25 Paragraph 2.3 of the MNP states that the population of the Parish is approximately 4,200 whereas paragraph 12.1 cites a figure of 4,766 from the 2011 Census. The Parish Council advised that the most recent South Somerset Local Plan Review gave a figure of 4,188, as a 2018 estimate. Clearly, the Parish population has been fluctuating over time. I recommend that a footnote is added to Page 5 to clarify the source of the figure in 2.3, as in **PM1**.
- 4.26 Section 6 of the MNP sets out a vision, aims and objectives for the Parish over the Plan period. SSDC argued that the vision in this case "Living in harmony with our surroundings" was perhaps a little ambiguous with no clear physical outcomes described. However, the aims and objectives which follow the vision are set out under six specific topic headings, and these form the subsequent chapters and policies in the MNP. It is clear that the vision, aims and objectives are the result of extensive

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<sup>8</sup> There is a supplementary issue with Policy No. Mart17, which I deal with below in paragraph 4.39.

engagement with the community and assessment by the steering group. I consider that they provide the framework for a clearly structured Plan, with policies related to physical outcomes.

- 4.27 Paragraph 7.3 of the MNP refers to Map 2, stating that three landscape character areas are delineated on it, and paragraph 7.1 describes those areas. Although Map 2 shows areas of high and moderate landscape sensitivity, it does not show the landscape character areas. The Martock Neighbourhood Plan Local Evidence Report includes at Figure 2 a map showing four local landscape character areas, and I consider that these character areas should be added to Map 2, with amended wording to paragraph 7.1. The Parish Council advised, in its response to my preliminary questions about Map 2, that it had omitted the areas of low landscape sensitivity so as not to imply that, in the context of the “natural environment”, areas of low sensitivity have no value worth protecting. I accept that position but conclude that Map 2 should be modified to show the landscape character areas, as in **PM3**, to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Policy No. Mart1

- 4.28 I am satisfied that Policy No. Mart1 has regard for the NPPF’s aim to protect and enhance biodiversity. The supporting text identifies two designated local wildlife sites, and a number of other areas with interesting habitats and wildlife features, which should assist the achievement of sustainable development.

Policy Nos. Mart5–Mart7

- 4.29 Policy No. Mart5 seeks to improve accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists and enhance the green infrastructure network. It will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and have regard for national policy on sustainable transport. Policies Mart6 & Mart7 support development in the countryside and farm diversification subject to specified criteria. These policies have regard for paragraph 83 of the NPPF, which supports sustainable business growth in rural areas. I queried whether Policy No. Mart7, requiring converted business space to be marketed for 2 years before a change of use would be allowed, would be overly restrictive. However, the Parish Council explained its concern that conversion to business space should not be a temporary device for change of use to residential or inappropriate use, and the need for any short-term inertia in the market to play out. I accept this position and consider that the policies contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Policy No. Mart10

- 4.30 The MNP proposes to designate 14 areas as Local Green Space (LGS), in line with paragraphs 99-101 of the NPPF. Paragraph 8.18 of the MNP helpfully sets out the NPPF criteria which LGSs should meet, and 8.19

provides a useful summary of the grounds for designating each site. SSDC pointed out that several of the proposed sites are situated within Martock Conservation Area and are already afforded protection from inappropriate development. The Council queried whether it was necessary, therefore, to designate them also as LGSs. The PPG, to which the Plan should have regard, advises that if land is already protected by designation, then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space.<sup>9</sup> I appreciate the Parish Council's concern that omitting sites B, E, F, H, M & N from the list of LGSs could imply that their significance as green areas to the community was being downplayed. However, I consider that their status as sites within the conservation area, and in some instances within the setting of listed buildings, should ensure their protection. I propose, therefore, to omit the above sites from the list of LGSs, but to make reference to their position and importance as green spaces within the conservation area. **PM9** to Policy No. Mart10 and supporting text in paragraphs 8.16 to 8.33, and to Maps 5a and 5b should be made, having regard for national planning policy.

- 4.31 I have taken account of the comments which were made at the Regulation 16 consultation stage with reference to Middle Street Field (site N). I saw at my site visit the fence which has been erected adjacent to the highway, and which residents advise me has been the subject of a request for a Lawful Development Certificate from SSDC. I note the comment that this fence is "unsightly and unnecessary" and out of place in the Conservation Area. However, the matter of a Lawful Development Certificate is not for me to consider. I have also been informed that a planning appeal for housing development on the field was dismissed in April 2014 (APP/R3325/A/13/ 2206348), when the Inspector concluded that the field makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, being considered by the Council to be the last remaining open field space in Bower Hinton.
- 4.32 Those opposed to the designation of a LGS on the field referred to the LGS Assessment Report Nov 2019, arguing that the site is not in proximity to the community it serves, because a gate and walls, and now a boundary fence, prohibit access; it was suggested that it therefore fails criterion a) in paragraph 100 of the NPPF. The site includes a parking area and gateway to paddocks, and the owner of this patch contests its inclusion within the proposed LGS site. I accept that LGS designation of Middle Street Field is not perceived as demonstrably special to the local community by everyone. However, the Field is not such an extensive tract of land, within the context of Martock and Bower Hinton, that it should fail criterion c) of paragraph 100, in my opinion. I conclude that Middle Street Field should not be designated as an LGS because it has appropriate protection due to its position within the Conservation Area. Map 5a should be modified in accordance with **PM9**, and the boundary to

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<sup>9</sup> PPG Reference ID: 37-011-20140306.

Middle Street Field should not include the access and parking area of 123 Middle Street.

Policy No. Mart12

- 4.33 SSDC explains that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) took effect in South Somerset in April 2017, and is used when planning permission is granted, alongside s106 agreements, to provide infrastructure and mitigate harm from developments. I agree with SSDC that the supporting text to Policy No. Mart12 – Infrastructure should refer to the role of CIL in funding infrastructure projects. **PM11** should be made so that Policy No. Mart12 contributes to the achievement of sustainable development and has regard for national planning policy.

Policy No. Mart14

- 4.34 I have already described modifications which should be made to Policy No. Mart13 and Map 6<sup>10</sup>, to refer to a potential development site on land north of Coat Road. This would conflict with Policy No. Mart14 and the proposed Local Green Gap as illustrated on Map 7. I support the aim of Policy No. Mart14 to prevent the coalescence of Martock with Coat and/or Stapleton but recommend that Map 7 is modified to exclude the land covered by Policy MB1 of the Local Plan Review. **PM13** is necessary for the achievement of sustainable development and so that the MNP minimises any conflicts with the strategic policies in the SSDC Local Plan Review.
- 4.35 I have considered the arguments advanced by those with interests in the land in the proposed Local Green Gap to the north and east of Martock. I appreciate their concerns that the policy would restrict the scope for new development, but this is land in the countryside with landscape of high and moderate sensitivity, where national planning policy expects planning policies to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. I shall not propose modifications to the Local Green Gap to the north and east of Martock. I am satisfied that the wording of Policy No. Mart14 meets the Basic Conditions and should remain as written.

Policy No. Mart15

- 4.36 Policy No. Mart15 supports renewable energy proposals for micro-regeneration installations within settlement areas. In view of the importance of the need for measures to tackle climate change, I support the Parish Council's aim. SSDC drew my attention to paragraph 154 of the NPPF and footnote 49, and argued that the policy should not enable the development of on-shore wind energy, unless it is within an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in the Development Plan. Then, following consultation, it must be demonstrated that identified planning impacts can be addressed; the affected local community should give its full backing. Chapter 13 of the SSDC Local

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<sup>10</sup> See PM12.

Plan (2006-28) addresses climate change and the promotion of renewable energy and low carbon energy. Policy EQ1 fully supports the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy, consistent with national policy. However, it cautions that there may be unacceptable impacts such as large wind turbines impeding bird flight paths in or around the Somerset Moors and Levels (SPA)/Ramsar site; visual harm to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; or designated heritage areas. The presence of airfields in South Somerset means that large wind turbines could cause electromagnetic interference and be harmful to radiation radar.

- 4.37 The supporting text to Policy. No Mart15 refers to a Sustainable Development Plan “adopted” by the Parish in 2013. This document includes sections on highways, education, water supply, flood risk, drainage and sewerage, health and welfare, employment and emergency services. Whilst these are important topics related to sustainable development, there is no detailed assessment of renewable energy infrastructure. I have also read South Somerset’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016 but have been unable to find any specific analysis of renewable energy infrastructure and its suitability for the Martock area. I consider that Policy No. Mart15 should remain, in order to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. However, paragraphs 8.54 & 8.55 should be modified having regard for the NPPF and to achieve general conformity with the Local Plan. I have also amended the reference to the Parish’s Sustainable Development Plan so that readers are clear as to its status as guidance and not adopted planning policy. **PM14** should be made accordingly.

Policy No. Mart16

- 4.38 Policy No. Mart16 – Sustainable Design – also has my support. It should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and is in general conformity with policies in the South Somerset Local Plan on Environmental Quality. I recommend modified wording to the first sentence of paragraph 8.56, as in **PM14**, to clarify the status of the Martock Sustainable Development Plan, having regard for national planning policy.

Policy No. Mart17 (Supplementary)

- 4.39 I have dealt with Policy No. Mart17 above in the context of examining the proposed settlement area boundary. However, in addition, SSDC stated that it would be helpful if the MNP provided a standard or referred the reader to some guidance as to what constituted “adequate external amenity space, refuse and cycle storage”. A reference to the Martock Village Design Statement should be added to the supporting text to assist readers and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, in my opinion. I have already recommended modifications to the supporting text so that it aligns better with the text following Policy No. Mart13. **PM15** should be made accordingly. However, the wording of Policy No. Mart17 need not be modified.

Policy No. Mart18

- 4.40 SSDC requested that Policy No. Mart18 – Housing Mix – should make very clear what is meant by small dwellings. I agree that this is necessary for the achievement of sustainable development and recommend that the first sentence is extended to explain that “small” means 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes. I also consider that it would be onerous to expect every developer to carry out individual surveys of housing requirements, as implied in paragraph 9.14. The text, as well as the policy, should be modified as in **PM16** so that the Basic Conditions are met.

Policy No. Mart19

- 4.41 Regarding Policy No. Mart19, Affordable Housing, I consider that this sets out the expectations for affordable housing to meet local needs on major development schemes in the Parish. However, the supporting text should be modified in two ways. Firstly, it should explain the recent change in national planning policy exempting non-major development and the relationship to Policies HG3 & 4 of the adopted Local Plan more clearly. Secondly, it should make reference to the Local Plan Review and the South Somerset Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016. The latest estimated need for affordable housing is 29%, which is lower than the target in the adopted Local Plan of 35%. However, SSDC monitoring showed that in 2017/18, only 14% of new housing provision was affordable. A plan-wide viability assessment will be undertaken prior to the Local Plan Review being adopted, and this is expected to secure 29% as affordable housing. Paragraphs 9.16 onwards should be modified, as in **PM17**, to provide the most up-to-date information on affordable housing, having regard for national planning policy, and to minimise conflicts with the emerging Local Plan Review.

Policy Nos. Mart20 & Mart21

- 4.42 SSDC proposed changes to the wording of Policies Mart20 and Mart21, on Community Housing and Self-Build Housing. I propose modifications **PM18** and **PM19** so that ambiguities are avoided, and so that regard is had to national planning policy on the definition of major development and the avoidance of isolated homes in the countryside.

Policy No. Mart22

- 4.43 Policy No. Mart22 Energy Efficiency meets the Basic Conditions.

Policy Nos. Mart23 & Mart24

- 4.44 Section 10 on the Local Economy gives a brief overview of Martock’s significant economic base with some 250 businesses employing almost 1,000 people. The four principal business areas are shown on Map 8, although Sparrows Works and Stoke Road are shown as C and D, when they should be D and C. SSDC commented that paragraphs 10.6 and

10.16 contain references to the Local Plan Review at the “Issues and Options” stage, whereas more recent information is available in the Preferred Options document. The latter sets a requirement for 3.0 hectares of new employment land in the Parish over the Plan period, in Policy SS3, and does not allocate the site at Ringwell Hill for this purpose. Concern was expressed through the Regulation 16 consultation responses that the settlement area shown on Map 6 does not include part of the land owned by William Sparrow Ltd, previously allocated for industrial use. However, land at Sparrow Works outside the settlement boundary is not precluded from business development by Policy Nos. Mart23 & Mart24. I am satisfied that no modification is needed to address this point. However, I consider that Policy No. Mart23 (describing sites C and D) and the supporting text to Mart23 & 24 should be modified, as in **PM20**, so that the text better reflects the emerging new Local Plan policy, and will contribute to achieving sustainable development.

Policy No. Mart25

- 4.45 Policy No. Mart25 supports the development of high speed broadband and meets the Basic Conditions.

Policy Nos. Mart26–Mart30

- 4.46 Section 11 gives a helpful overview of Transport and Travel in the Parish, highlighting problems associated with (i) through traffic on the B3165, which runs north-south through the linear settlement of Martock/Bower Hinton, and (ii) the proliferation of on-street parking. The scope for more sustainable travel with increased walking and cycling is also discussed. Policy Nos. Mart26, Mart27 & Mart28 seek to encourage better Public Transport, more Off-Road Parking and wider and safer Footpaths and Cycleways. They have regard for the NPPF (section 9 Promoting sustainable transport) and should be retained. I am also satisfied that Policy No. Mart30, Disabled Access, meets the Basic Conditions. In response to my preliminary question as to how the second criterion of Policy No. Mart29 could be met, the Parish Council put forward some revised wording for the policy and paragraph 11.16. New traffic management measures would require consultation with the community and the backing of the Parish Council. I consider that the revised wording would give greater clarity to developers, and should be made to contribute to sustainable development, as in **PM21**.

Policy Nos. Mart31–Mart33

- 4.47 Section 12 Community Wellbeing describes the community facilities and services available in the Parish, including sports’ and recreational facilities which contribute towards health and wellbeing. Policy Nos. Mart31, 32 & 33 have regard for national policy (sections 7 & 8 of the NPPF), and are in line with paragraphs 8.48 to 8.52 of the Local Plan Review Preferred Options document, on planning for retail and infrastructure in Martock and Bower Hinton. The Government introduced changes to the Use Classes

Order in England on 1 September 2020, notably with the introduction of a new E class, incorporating the old A1, A2, A3, B1 and some D1 uses. These changes will mean that, for example, change of use from shop or clinic to office will no longer require planning permission. I appreciate the Parish Council's wish to protect all its community assets and facilities as long as they are needed and agree with their suggestion that it should suffice to add the phrase "where planning permission is required" to Policy No. Mart31. Reference to the changes in the Use Classes should be added to paragraph 12.9. Then, with **PM22** in place, regard will be had for current national planning policy.

- 4.48 Providing all the above modifications are made, I conclude that all the MNP policies, maps and text will meet the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood planning.

### *Monitoring*

- 4.49 The final section of the MNP concerns monitoring and advises readers, correctly, that there is no statutory requirement for the Parish Council to carry this out. However, I consider that "plan, monitor and review" is one of the keys to good planning and achieving sustainable development, and I commend the Parish Council for setting out its intended approach within the Plan.

## **5. Conclusions**

### *Summary*

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

### *The Referendum and its Area*

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



## Overview

- 5.4 I appreciate the hard work that has been carried out over a number of years by the Parish Council and its Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to prepare the Plan for submission. It is clear that much technical work has been undertaken to produce the background evidence on matters as diverse as flood risk, village design and the environment. In addition, a number of consultation exercises have taken place so that the local community could be actively engaged and supportive of the Plan. I have put forward some modifications to the MNP, but these are designed to strengthen and build on the strong base which forms the submitted Martock Parish Neighbourhood Plan. Following adoption, the Plan should provide an effective tool for managing development and enhancing the attractiveness of Martock Parish.

*Jill Kingaby*

Examiner

## Appendix: Modifications

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Page 5	<p>Paragraph 2.3</p> <p>The population of Martock is approximately 4,200.</p> <p>Add a footnote as follows:</p> <p><b><i>The 2011 Census recorded a population of 4,766 in the Parish of Martock. More recent estimates for 2018 give a population of 4,188.</i></b></p>
PM2	Page 10	<p>Paragraph 5.8</p> <p>Add a new sentence at the end:</p> <p><b><i>These documents represent guidance only but are specific to Martock Parish and are based on local evidence and knowledge.</i></b></p>
PM3	Pages 14-15	<p>Paragraph 7.1 Despite having a dense residential core .....the Parish comprises three <b>four</b> distinct landscape character areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>Silts and Marls ....</del></li> <li>• <del>Northern Escarpments.....</del></li> <li>• <del>River Corridor.....grazing pasture.</del></li> <li>• <b><i>A - Shallow hillsides North and North East of Martock</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>B - The Hurst Brook Vale</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>C - Bower Hinton Low Hills</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>D - Parrett Vale</i></b></li> </ul> <p>Modify the map on Page 14 so that it shows four distinct character areas, as described in paragraph 7.1, as well as areas of high and moderate landscape sensitivity. Figure 2 – Landscape Sensitivity Martock in the Martock Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Report June 2017 should be used.</p>

		7.3 The <del>three</del> <b>four</b> landscape character areas ....
PM4	Page 16 Policy No. Mart1	<p>Add to the end of the policy:</p> <p><b><i>Due to the high levels of phosphates in the Somerset Levels and Moors, which represent a risk to the designated Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, Natural England advises that, within certain types of development area, proposals will need to be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), proceeding to an Appropriate Assessment, before they are submitted as planning applications. Developments which will result in a net increase in population served by a wastewater system or increased nutrient loading from agriculture will be required to undertake an HRA at an early stage, and to put forward mitigation measures to offset any anticipated phosphate pollution.</i></b></p> <p>Add a new paragraph after 7.10 as follows:</p> <p><b><i>As Martock lies within the catchment area of the Somerset Levels and Moors, a designated SPA and Ramsar site, development proposals should respond to current guidelines from SSDC, Natural England and the Environment Agency on preventing pollution from phosphates. Developers should investigate the need for, and carry out HRA/Appropriate Assessment, before submitting a planning application. Developments which will result in a net increase in population served by a wastewater system or increased nutrient loading from agriculture will be affected. SSDC is currently working with other Councils across the County to develop a</i></b></p>

		<b><i>Nutrient/Water Quality Strategy, so that water quality issues are fully understood, mitigation measures to offset phosphate pollution are devised, and mechanisms to deliver future housing growth and other development in a sustainable way, are set out. Natural England has provided updated advice to guide the approach to future development in the Ramsar site catchment area. The catchment area covers most of South Somerset District, including all of Martock Parish.</i></b>
PM5	Page 17	<p>Paragraph 7.11 Wildlife corridors ..... railway line. Those considered important <b>are</b> identified and analysed in the Martock Environment Manual. <b><i>The Map labelled 'Martock Biodiversity' from that document provides an overview of landscape and biodiversity and locates the important corridors.</i></b></p> <p>7.14 second sentence should read:</p> <p>Policy Mart2 places emphasis ....in the Martock Environment Manual, <b><i>and shown on Map xx of this Plan</i></b>, which should be protected ....</p> <p>Insert Map labelled 'Martock Biodiversity' from Page 10 of the Martock Environment Manual and add a title <b><i>Landscape and Biodiversity (illustrative only)</i></b>.</p> <p>Retain the footnote: Martock Biodiversity. Map showing five different areas around the village and the two important corridors that bisect the parish, the disused railway line and the Hurst Brook valley.</p>
PM6	Page 18	<p>Add a new paragraph following 7.17:</p> <p><b><i>In the light of the new guidance from Natural England, regarding the concern of phosphate effluent from new developments affecting the Somerset Levels and Moors, which is</i></b></p>

		<p><b><i>a Ramsar site, each development should now include a Habitats Regulations Assessment, carried out by a competent authority (eg. the local planning authority), proceeding to an Appropriate Assessment. This has to be addressed prior to submission of a planning application; it will not be acceptable simply to impose a condition on a planning permission to address the issue.</i></b></p>
PM7	Pages 24	<p>Remove View 1 from Map 4</p> <p>Modify the text below the map as follows:</p> <p>Key Views (shown on Map 4 above)</p> <p>Modify the description of these views to highlight their main features as follows:</p> <p><del>1 South from Coat Road</del></p> <p>2 South west from East Street Drove towards Hurst and Bower Hinton</p> <p><b><i>Views towards Hallett’s Hill of open countryside and higher ground around the village of Martock. The church tower; row of 4 mature oak trees in front of the Blackdown Hills.</i></b></p> <p>3 East from Moated Manor Field towards Old Village centre</p> <p><b><i>View of Grade 1 listed church with mature trees in foreground.</i></b></p> <p>4 West from the low land around and east of Madey Mill towards the church</p> <p><b><i>Flat grassland around Madey Mill (Grade II* LB).</i></b></p> <p>5 South west from Foldhill across the village towards Burrow Hill</p> <p><b><i>Spire of Wesleyan Chapel; wooded hills in middle distance beyond village; Blackdown Hills on distant horizon.</i></b></p>

		<p>6 North from Ringwell Hill towards east edge of Martock village</p> <p><b>Whole village in green and rural setting; old railway line marked by row of trees and bushes; Mendip Hills on distant horizon.</b></p> <p>7 North from Cripple Hill towards Parrett Vale</p> <p><b>Extensive flat area of rural landscape; Victorian Parrett Works chimney; Kingsbury Episcopi church tower.</b></p> <p>8 West from Ham Hill, with Martock largely hidden in the foreground</p> <p><b>Panorama of lowlands from the Blackdowns to the Mendips; Martock church tower.</b></p> <p>Renumber the views as a result of the deletion of View 1.</p>
PM8	Pages 26 and 27	<p>Paragraph 8.6</p> <p>Both Martock and Coat have designated Conservation Areas, <b>identified by the local planning authority under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Conservation Areas were designated because of their special architectural or historic significance, and because it is desirable to preserve or enhance their character and/or appearance.</b> The Martock Conservation Area ...designated in 1981. A <b>fresh</b> Conservation Area appraisal exercise is taking place <del>(during 2018)</del> for Martock <del>...and development matters in Martock.</del> <b>would be supported by the Parish Council to re-appraise the boundaries of the Conservation Areas and update the description of key features of architectural and historic importance. The extent of the Conservation Areas for Martock and Coat is shown on the South Somerset Local Plan Policies</b></p>

		<p><b>Map, and in the Martock Village Design Statement.</b></p> <p>8.11 There are many buildings ...are provided with an appropriate level of protection <b>which reflects their status.</b></p> <p>8.13 The Local Plan offers ....The Parish Council intends to establish and maintain a schedule of local heritage value (<b>not designated heritage assets</b>). <del>that should be subject to Policy Mart9.</del> It is hoped .....</p> <p>Policy No. Mart9 Heritage Assets</p> <p><b>Proposals for development within the Conservation Areas of Martock and Coat should preserve or enhance these areas' special architectural or historic interest and safeguard their settings.</b></p> <p>Development proposals will be supported that maintain or enhance the character and setting of a heritage structure- <b>listed buildings and structures.</b></p> <p>Development proposals that affect a <b>listed</b> heritage asset must demonstrate <b>how they have taken account of the significance of the asset in protecting or enhancing</b> the said building or structure <b>for the appreciation of existing and future generations.</b></p> <p>Any renovations or alterations ... architectural interest and setting.</p> <p>Development.... design approach taken.</p> <p><b>Development proposals should avoid any harmful effect on non-designated heritage buildings and features, where possible.</b></p>
PM9	Pages 27-31	<p>Policy No. Mart10 Local Green Space</p> <p>The areas listed below ....</p> <p>A. Bracey Road Recreation Area</p>

		<p><del>B. Church Close Amenity Area</del></p> <p><del>C..... D. ....</del></p> <p><del>E. Martock Churchyard</del></p> <p><del>F. Old Methodist Churchyard</del></p> <p><del>G. ..</del></p> <p><del>H. Pair Trees</del></p> <p><del>I, J, K, L ....</del></p> <p><del>M. The Village Green</del></p> <p><del>N. Middle Street Field</del></p> <p>Development proposals ....</p> <p>Paragraph 8.19 Each designated site ...sufficiently the criteria of the NPPF....</p> <p>Remove paragraphs 8.21, 8.24, 8.25, 8.27, 8.32 and 8.33.</p> <p>Add a new paragraph after 8.31 Steppes Crescent Green, as follows:</p> <p><b><i>The Martock Conservation Area includes a number of green spaces which meet the criteria in the NPPF for local green spaces but have not been defined as such because of their existing status. The following areas should be preserved or enhanced, and their green character conserved:</i></b></p> <p>Add back paragraphs 8.21, 8.24, 8.25, 8.27, 8.32 and 8.33.</p> <p>Maps 5a and 5b</p> <p>The sites named B, E, F, H, M and N should not be shown as Local Green Spaces. They should be shown in a different colour (eg. blue rather than green) and the key to the maps should describe them as: Sites within Martock Conservation Area which should remain as green spaces, to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.</p>
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		Site N on Map 5a should exclude the driveway and parking area for 123 Middle Street.
PM10	Page 32	<p>Policy No. Mart11 Local Character and Design</p> <p>Development proposals should, where appropriate, provide an assessment of the character of the site and its context (including landscape character <b>and relationship to heritage assets</b>) and show how .....</p> <p>Wherever appropriate, development proposals should <del>demonstrate how they have followed</del> <b>be designed in accordance with</b> the guidance of the Martock Design Statement. ....</p> <p><b>8.37 Development proposals should ensure that they will preserve or enhance the architectural and historic character of the designated conservation areas.</b> The Parish's conservation areas <del>are overdue an appraisal</del> <b>would benefit from a fresh appraisal.</b> Once completed we would expect <b>the revised</b> appraisal documents .....</p>
PM11	Page 33	<p>Paragraph 8.40</p> <p>Add a new second sentence as follows:</p> <p><b><i>The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) took effect in South Somerset in 2017. It is used alongside funds from s106 obligations to provide infrastructure and mitigate any harm arising from developments. SSDC will use receipts collected via CIL to fund infrastructure. This need not be directly linked to the development from which CIL money has been collected. Once the Neighbourhood Plan has been made, however, Martock Parish will receive 25% of the receipts collected within its area</i></b></p>

		<b>for expenditure on infrastructure which the Parish Council considers necessary.</b> Policy Mart12 requires developers .....
PM12	Pages 34, 35 & 36	<p>Policy No. Mart13 Accommodating Growth</p> <p>The Settlement Area Boundary .....</p> <p>A. ...</p> <p>B. ....</p> <p><b>C. Development on land adjoining the Settlement Area Boundary north of Coat Road and south of Hills Lane, as shown on Map 6, which meets local housing needs, achieves good design standards, does not compromise the landscape character and setting of Martock/Bower Hinton and has no adverse impact on the setting of the Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, will be supported; and</b></p> <p><del>C.</del> <b>D.</b> Small-scale development on land ....</p> <p>Map 6 – Martock/Bower Hinton Settlement Area Boundary</p> <p>This map should also illustrate two sites west of the settlement area, which have been put forward in the Local Plan Review Preferred Options document as:</p> <p>Land north of Coat Road (Policy MB1) and Land south of Hills Lane (Policy MB3).</p> <p>A key should be added to the map to show that the red line is the Settlement Area Boundary, and the other (new) coloured line illustrates the Potential Development Sites from the South Somerset Local Plan Review Preferred Options document.</p> <p>Paragraph 8.46</p> <p>Add a new sentence at the end:</p> <p><b><i>The Local Plan Review - Preferred Options document proposes two sites for new housing development outside</i></b></p>

		<p><b><i>the Settlement Area Boundary west of Martock/Bower Hinton. These are illustrated on Map 6 as potential sites for new housing development though they should not be regarded as allocations until the new Local Plan has confirmed their status and been adopted.</i></b></p> <p>8.49 modify the second sentence to read:</p> <p>To be consistent with our strategy of gradual and incremental growth, any such development proposals should <b><i>either seek to align with Policies MB1 and MB3 of the emerging Local Plan Review and be located on the sites North of Coat Road or South of Hills Lane or</i></b> be small in scale and constitute a logical extension of the current built-up area. <del>It</del><b><i>All proposed development contiguous with the settlement boundary</i></b> should have a positive effect ....</p>
PM13	Page 37	<p>Martock NP Map 7 – Stapleton and Coat Local Gap</p> <p>Modify the map so that the land north of Coat Road, which is the subject of Policy MB1 of the Local Plan Review Preferred Options document, is excluded from the Local Gap.</p>
PM14	Page 38	<p>Paragraph 8.54</p> <p>The NPPF (paragraph 151) ..... addressed satisfactorily. The Parish adopted <b><i>produced</i></b> a Sustainable Development Plan ....conservation areas. <b><i>Footnote 49 to paragraph 154 of the NPPF cautions against commercial scale renewable and low carbon development outside areas specifically identified as suitable for wind energy development in the development plan. Martock has not</i></b></p>

		<p><b>been identified as suitable for commercial scale development.</b></p> <p>8.55 Policy Mart15 reflects ....provides <b>provision</b> for ....</p> <p>8.56 The Martock Sustainable Development Plan was adopted<del>–</del><b>produced</b> by ....</p>
PM15	Page 41	<p>Paragraph 9.8 should be deleted, and replaced with:</p> <p><b>As explained in paragraph 8.46, some 210 new homes will be required in Martock/Bower Hinton to contribute to South Somerset District’s housing target for 2036. Three possible sites for new development are identified in the emerging Local Plan Review Preferred Options document. All are located on the western edge of the existing Martock/Bower Hinton settlement. The site subject to emerging Policy MB2 - Land south of Coat Road lies within the Settlement Area Boundary, as shown on Map 6. Policies MB1- Land north of Coat Road, and MB3 – Land south of Hills Road are also shown on Map 6, but they lie outside the defined Settlement Area Boundary.</b></p> <p>9.9 It is felt .... amenity of the local area. <b>The Martock Village Design Statement</b> should help determine what is an adequate external amenity space, and whether satisfactory space has been provided for refuse and recycling storage.</p>
PM16	Page 42	<p>Policy No. Mart18</p> <p>New residential development should favour small dwellings, <b>meaning dwellings with 1, 2 or 3 bedrooms.</b></p> <p>Development proposals ...</p> <p>9.14 Policy Mart18..... On larger developments of 10 or more dwellings,</p>

		there should be a mix of dwelling types and sizes which includes a majority of smaller dwellings <b>ie. with one, two or three bedrooms.</b> Developers should provide evidence that <b>are encouraged to demonstrate that</b> the proposed housing mix .....
PM17	Page 43	Paragraph 9.17 should read:  The Local Plan endeavours ...The Government's new policy, <b>referenced in paragraph 63 of the NPPF</b> , is that no affordable .... should be placed on <b>non-major</b> development schemes of <del>10</del> <b>9</b> dwellings or less <b>or sites of less than 0.5 hectares.</b> <del>The Local Plan policies .... on all sites remains.</del> <b>Policies HG3 and HG4 of the current Local Plan have not been applied by the District Council to non-major developments since the change in Government policy. The Local Plan Review Preferred Options document requires major development schemes to include provision for 29% affordable housing.</b>
PM18	Page 44	Policy No. Mart20 Community Housing  Community Housing schemes may be supported outside <b>(but adjacent or well-related to)</b> the settlement area boundary .....
PM19	Page 45	Policy No. Mart21 Self-Build Housing  The provision of plots on <b>major</b> larger housing developments ....  9.26 Regardless of the current low ....plots on larger <b>major housing developments (ie. developments of 10 or more dwellings or sites of 0.5 hectares or more)</b> being offered to local self-builders.....
PM20	Pages 47 and 48	Paragraph 10.6

		<p>The current Local Plan <b>(2006-28)</b> sets a minimum...The recent Local Plan Review 'Issues and Options' report employment land by the Review. <b>Preferred Options Document sets a requirement for 3.0 ha of new employment land in the Parish. This does not allocate the site at Ringwell Hill, where outline planning permission was granted for industrial use in 2006, but never developed.</b></p> <p>10.16 The Local Plan <b>(2006-28)</b> allocates a site of 2.8ha .....development. <b>The Local Plan Review</b> will consider....with this allocation <b>Preferred Options document does not allocate this site.</b> The allocation of large .....</p>
PM21	Page 54	<p>Policy No. Mart29</p> <p>Where appropriate ....</p> <p>ii. demonstrated to have the backing of the community <b>have been subject to consultation with the local community.</b></p> <p>11.16 Last sentence to read:</p> <p>We expect .... the community, <b>and the proposed scheme to have the backing of the Parish Council.</b></p>
PM22	Page 57	<p>Policy No. 31 Existing Community Facilities</p> <p>Development proposals .....supported.</p> <p>Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of community facilities, <b>which require planning permission,</b> will only .....</p> <p>12.9 The NPPF (paragraph 92) ....day-to-day needs". <b>The Government introduced changes to the Use Classes Order in England on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, notably with the introduction of a new Use Class E, incorporating shops, financial and</b></p>

		<b><i>professional services, cafe/restaurants, offices, research and development businesses, clinics, health centres, day nurseries, day centres and gymnasiums. As a result, not all changes of use of community facilities now require planning permission.</i></b>
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