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Senior Leadership Team

Chief Executive  
North Dorset District Council  
Nordon, Salisbury Road  
Blandford Forum  
Dorset DT11 7LL

1 January 2018

**Local Plan for Shaftesbury and District**

Dear Sir or Madam

Together with others I have been invited to comment on proposals for a Local Plan for Shaftesbury and District. However, I have been unable to access the NDDC websites as they have been blocked by Norton antivirus software with the following warning: "Dangerous Web Page Blocked - This is a known dangerous web page. It is highly recommended that you do NOT visit this page". The websites of Dorset County Council are similarly blocked.

I am therefore writing to you with the following comments and recommendations:

- It is essential that a Local Plan is prepared and agreed soon, to comply with Central Government regulations and as a basis for the future planning, development and enhancement of Shaftesbury and its surrounding environment
- The Local Plan should contain provision for safeguarding the Conservation Area and the heritage status of Shaftesbury's ancient 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century heart (not just the Abbey precinct). The local plan should also contain provision for the appropriate number of houses as prescribed by Central Government with provision for land to be used where planning consents have been given. It is not acceptable for land to be banked by developers and for no development to take place where this has been agreed
- The environment and the faltering economy of Shaftesbury and surrounding areas are being harmed by a lack of adequate road transport infrastructure. This problem has been raised many times in recent years. I attach a web link to the debate in the House of Commons on 15 July 2003 initiated by our then local MP, Bob Walter:  
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200203/cmhansrd/vo030715/halltext/30715h02.htm>. It is unacceptable that, over 14 years later, this matter has not been resolved by the NDDC and by Dorset County Council. The volume of traffic on the A350 which is little more than a country road has grown to a level which the small villages cannot support. Redirecting heavy lorries along the C13 through Melbury Abbas is not a long term solution. Funds have been announced by the present Conservative Government for improvements in road transport infrastructure. May I suggest that the two authorities (NDDC and DCC) seek to resolve the present problem as a priority.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Chief Executive of the Dorset County Council.  
I wish you well in your endeavours and all good wishes for 2018.

Yours sincerely

Sir John Stuttard, JP, MA, FCA, Hon President, Shaftesbury Civic Society