

Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan Update

Meeting Notes

11th January 2023

In attendance: Councillors David Whiter (DW), Charlie Butfoy (CB), Kate Tuck (KT), Alan Renwick (AR), Murray Campbell (MC), Roger Doust (RD), Peter Bloyce (PB), Francesca Maritan (FM) and Jessica Wells (JW) (Planning Policy Officer, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council), Kate Hope (KH) (Deputy Clerk).

DW chaired the meeting and explained to those present that the intention of the meeting was to discuss the process of updating the current Neighbourhood Plan, remembering that any/all updates must be validated and evidenced.

KT reminded everyone that, as there is no five-year housing supply at this time, if the Parish Council can update its Neighbourhood Plan, then it would also be required to update the allocated housing figure incorporated within the Plan.

JW confirmed that in the Neighbourhood Plan emerging evidence base, the currently allocated housing figure is 190 homes, but that a Borough Councillor motion which has not yet been fully endorsed will potentially make it 0. The SHELAA is just a list of promoted sites, provided by the Landowners for the Borough Council's consideration.

A formal call for sites as part of the Neighbourhood Plan update would be worthwhile, so that landowners can be engaged and form part of the update discussions.

PB noted that the current Neighbourhood Plan doesn't have sites listed at all.

JW explained the three levels of Neighbourhood plan modifications.

1. Minor modifications – spellings, layout, or design, for example.
2. Material modifications which do not change the nature of the plan. No referendum is required for this level of notification.
3. Material modifications which change the nature of the plan, such as updating site allocations. A referendum is required for this level of modification.

The Neighbourhood Plan examiner is responsible for deciding on whether material modifications are significant (level 3) or not (level 2).

AR asked all Councillors whether they were happy to proceed with an amendment of the Neighbourhood Plan, which all present were in agreement with.

JW explained that the NPPF currently gives adopted Neighbourhood Plans a two-year protection which, if Old Basing & Lychpit were to have a housing allocation which had already been met, would lead Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council to stop development accordingly.

DW asked JW if SHELAA site OLD001 is remaining as an ongoing plan for development and JW confirmed that it is still included.

KT asked JW why, if OLD001 is still included, Old Basing & Lychpit Parish is not in abundance of housing allocation?

JW confirmed that OLD001 is a separate allocation to that incorporated within the Neighbourhood Plan's allocation figure. This could be argued at the housing allocation calculation point.

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JW was asked where the 190 houses would fit within the Parish and she explained that, if a call to sites were done and 190 houses didn't fit, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council would look at alternative options (e.g., including houses close to the Settlement Policy Boundary).

PB pointed out that the standard housing allocation figure calculation is being reviewed and asked JW whether the process will need to change once again once decisions are made in this regard? Will the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan be invalidated if the calculation is amended?

JW suggested that the NPPF consultation (which incorporates the revision of two-year protection to five year protection) will expire on 3rd March 2023.

JW went on to explain that the Local Plan Update should reach 'Regulation 18' stage in Autumn 2023. The updated policies will be discussed at the EPH Committee over the coming months, as and when they are ready. KT asked how the Parish Council could feed back on those policy amendments and JW explained that they would need to submit any comments to their Borough Councillors for them to bring to the EPH Committee on their behalf.

DW and KT asked JW how best to extend the Loddon Valley protection zone within the Neighbourhood Plan update. JW suggested that it would need to be underpinned by the appropriate evidence, i.e. for biodiversity for example, you'd need a study which evidenced the natural environmental aspects which require protection.

DW asked about HBIC maps, to indicate SINCS, reserves, etc. and JW suggested that Councillors review the [Ecchinswell](#) or [Burghclere](#) Neighbourhood Plans who have both used HBIC maps to create their wildlife corridors. She also confirmed that landowner proposed sites which have been allocated cannot be overwritten with biodiversity corridors and the like.

CB ascertained that the Parish Council's focus should be to look at the SHELAA and to prioritise its own Neighbourhood Plan to combat the proposals of the SHELAA to give the Parish the best possible protection.

DW has spoken to Plan-ET (authors of the current Neighbourhood Plan), who have confirmed that they would be available to work on an update with the Parish Council. KT suggested that Councillors should review plenty of other adopted Neighbourhood Plans to find other Consultants who focus on the same priorities as Old Basing & Lychpit and approach them too. JW confirmed that O'Neill Homer carried out the Neighbourhood Plans for Ecchinswell and Burghclere and those reports were both of a high quality. All agreed that three quotes should be obtained for consideration by the Parish Council, in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

DW proposed that the group reviews all the existing policies. Some will not have changed, but some (of the eight in total) will need updating. There may also be new policies to add. The group agreed that they would want to push for a Local Green Space in the Pyotts Hill area, which has already been submitted to the Borough Council but not yet adopted.

KT suggested that more Local Green Spaces would be ideal and asked JW what the mechanism for adding more would be. JW confirmed that if a Local Green Space is requested as part of the local plan

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(as was done eighteen months ago), the Borough Council would review it, but if one were proposed for a Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council would be required to carry out the work to determine its appropriateness. There is no restriction on what size a Local Green Space can be according to the NPPF, so the Pyotts Hill proposal could be reviewed by the Borough Council (who had previously suggested that it is too large an area).

DW asked the group to consider the views which are included in the current Neighbourhood Plan. JW confirmed that a view cannot extend into an allocated site, but only up to the boundary. When challenged by KT with regards to sites such as OLD002 not having been allocated but merely proposed on the SHELAA, JW confirmed that OLD002 was included in the Spatial Strategy Report.

DW has already taken some photographs and printed the corresponding maps and will circulate all nine to Councillors. He recommended that no more than four are included in the update.

JW did emphasize that although views don't stop developments, the big strategic sites do try to acknowledge important views and design sympathetically.

KT felt that as OLD002 has not actually been allocated, Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council must push hard to insist that the valley is inappropriate for development, next to the incinerator, flood risk, etc etc.

DW asked all Councillors to study the current Neighbourhood Plan, reviewing the policies, and bring any suggestions to the next meeting. FM asked where the policies originated from. DW explained that after an initial public meeting, objectives were created to form a survey (which 15% of residents responded to) and the policies were then created based on the local feedback. For this update, a quick way to gather information might be a full-page advertisement in the Basinga or Parish Newsletter, asking the public to contribute their ideas.

FM asked how much weight the Neighbourhood Plan's policies bear at the Local Planning Authority. JW suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan is as important as the Local Plan when considering a planning decision. It was pointed out that therefore the Neighbourhood Plan can't contradict the Local Plan, or vice versa.

FM asked if policies which are very specific and directly appropriate to the local environment of Old Basing & Lychpit will stand true in the wider planning system and was told by JW that Neighbourhood Plans are very localised and relevant, which is why the Council must make sure that it responds well to this Parish and its distinctive features.

KT asked if it's possible to add a Policy regarding the 2025 Greener Homes Act. JW wasn't sure what position to take as the Local Plan hasn't yet referenced this or adopted any other Neighbourhood Plans with a similar policy. However, Ecchinswell and Burghclere's plans both have clauses regarding low carbon houses, so it'll be worth following up to see if those sections are adopted in their final versions.

It was agreed to discuss how to adjust the policies in more detail at the next meeting.

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DW asked the group to consider the 'other elements' of the Plan, such as its introduction, history, context, etc. Only minor alterations were considered necessary for these parts of the document. The CIL Plans will need more extensive updating.

With regards to the cost and funding of updating the Neighbourhood Plan, the government organisation which provides funding for this, 'Groundworks', is due to expire in April 2023. JW was able to inform the group that it is uncertain as to whether funding will continue after this date, or not. Currently, there is a £10,000 grant offered to all Parish Councils and a further £8,000 available for those Councils which prepare a Design Code for their Neighbourhood Plan (these are produced by Aecom and split the whole area concerned into different sections, pointing out the distinctive designs of each – JW suggested that this would be a very worthwhile exercise for Old Basing & Lychpit Parish Council).

DW suggested that a proposal to allocate £5,000 to get the process going should be brought to the next Parish Council meeting.

OFFICERS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The following individuals agreed to fulfil the following roles to enable the Neighbourhood Plan update:

Chairman – DW (who suggested a maximum of one meeting per month should be sufficient)

Finance & Grants – MC

Editor – FM

Elements Writers – CB (and hopefully GM, who was not present at the meeting)

Publicity – AR

Deputy Clerk – to communicate necessary documents etc.

Finally, JW was asked if she had any additional advice to offer. As well as providing more information regarding a Design Code (incorporated in notes above), she also suggested adding a Heritage Policy (which MC suggested could be reworked from the Rebuttal Document) and a greater emphasis on the River Loddon Valley as a "Valued Landscape" (no presently adopted Neighbourhood Plan has one incorporated in its document yet though).

JW confirmed that she has previously worked on the Neighbourhood Plans for Ashford Hill (final stages only), Eastwood Hey (final stages only), Echinswell and Burghclere.

DW asked whether any other Parishes are working on new Neighbourhood Plans and JW confirmed that there is still an appetite to work on them for now.

Next meeting to be held on Wednesday 15th February at 11am, at which attendees will review the existing policies, discuss any potential new policies for inclusion and seek to answer some funding questions having researched in advance.