



Consultation Update

Thank you to everyone who completed the Noak Bridge Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire! We received over 250 responses. Your views and experiences have helped us understand what local people want to see happen in Noak Bridge, and identify the challenges and opportunities facing the village over the next few years. The questionnaire results can be viewed in full in our Consultation Report, published on our Neighbourhood Plan website at www.noakbridgenp.org. A brief overview of your responses, and how we intend to act upon them, is included within this leaflet.

We are holding a **PUBLIC MEETING** on **17th March 2020** from **6.30pm until 7.30pm**, where we will be providing an update on Basildon Council's Local Plan, our Neighbourhood Plan and allowing residents to ask the Team any questions.

What next?

The initial consultation has enabled us to identify a number of priorities, and we must now look at whether these can be taken forward into our Neighbourhood Plan and, if so, how. We are looking to establish a number of working groups focussed around five key areas to further develop the policy for our Plan. These are:



Transport and roads



Education, health and other local services



Design and conservation



Environment and green space



Housing



We need local residents to get involved in the next stages of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is a plan **for the community, by the community** - so we need as wide a range of participants as possible! Perhaps you have a professional background in the built environment and are able to lend your expertise to the Plan, or maybe you are able to assist us with administrative tasks or help apply for grant funding. Or maybe you would simply like to help make Noak Bridge a better place to live! If you would like to get involved, please contact us at info@noakbridgenp.org or come along to the public meeting on the 17th March.

TRANSPORT AND ROADS

The consultation highlighted significant concerns about congestion in the village, with 64% of respondents feeling that the current traffic situation needed to be improved. Residents were also concerned about inconsiderate parking and speeding vehicles. When asked about future housing development in the village, 97% of respondents felt that minimising the impact of additional traffic was 'very important'.

We are looking at commissioning our own Transport Assessment to help us understand the impact of any substantial new development on local transport networks and pedestrian/cyclist safety, and how sustainable modes of transport could be promoted in any new housing development.

The Neighbourhood Plan can only cover transport issues that relate to the impacts of new development. We cannot use the Plan to remedy existing issues, such as speeding vehicles or current parking arrangements. However, we have recently met with the Highways Team at Essex County Council to discuss some of the issues local people have raised and seek alternative ways to address these problems.

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND OTHER LOCAL SERVICES

Generally, respondents were satisfied with existing services and facilities within the village. The exception was the local Health Centre, which 34% of respondents felt did not meet their needs. Residents were also concerned about the potential impact of any new development on primary school places and on the availability of GP appointments.

The emerging Basildon Borough Local Plan provides that any developer of site H10 would be expected to make a contribution towards enhanced health and education provision. However, it is not clear what form these contributions will take, and we are investigating how our Neighbourhood Plan support the delivery of these objectives.

We have met with the Basildon and Brentwood Clinical Commissioning Group, who are responsible for the strategic planning of local health services, to discuss the analysis they have carried out into local population growth. We are continuing to work with them to better understand the impact of any new homes and develop plans to mitigate against any increased demand for the health centre. We have also met with the Essex County Council Education Department to discuss their plans for additional school places.

DESIGN AND CONSERVATION

Residents were asked to prioritise what they liked about living in Noak Bridge, with the largest response (59%) selecting the 'look and style of the village'. However, some people expressed concerns about the degradation of the Conservation Area. 82% of respondents felt it was 'very important' to ensure that any new houses look similar to the current style of the Parish.

As part of our work with focus groups in the coming months, we will be seeking residents' views on how best to protect the existing village and Conservation Area. This could be by writing planning policies resisting certain types of development in the village or requiring extensions or alterations to be constructed using specific materials.

The emerging Basildon Borough Local Plan requires any new development on H10 to complement the existing character of the Noak Bridge village. However, we will look at the possibility of adopting more specific design guidelines for any new development sites in the Neighbourhood Area to ensure that the development respects the original style of the village and is of a high quality design. We are looking at the possibility of applying for grant funding and technical support from Central Government to assist us in this task.

ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN SPACE

It was clear from the responses that local green spaces were highly valued by local residents. 90% of respondents felt that the existing parks and open spaces in the village met their needs, and 88% were satisfied with the nature reserve.

However, when asked what could be improved about Noak Bridge, parks and open spaces received the second highest rating, with 27% of respondents expressing the view that they could be improved, with some people raising concerns about the quality of the gym and play equipment, lighting and availability of dog mess bins. We will explore this further through a focus group. If any development goes ahead, we can potentially look at spending any funds the Parish receive through the Community Infrastructure Levy (a levy on new development) on improving local parks and other green infrastructure in the village.

HOUSING

33% of respondents had at least one household member who wanted or needed to move out of their existing property or would do in the next five years. These appeared to be young adults wanting to live independently, and older residents who felt that their existing property was too large, too costly/difficult to maintain, or unsuitable for their health or mobility requirements.

The emerging Basildon Borough Local Plan contains important policies on housing, both in terms of supply and ensuring that a range of dwelling types are provided in new housing developments. However, any future homes on site H10 are unlikely to be required by the Council to provide any specialist housing for older people. Having identified a general need for smaller properties, we will now investigate whether new development in the village can accommodate this need.

The Parish Council are aware that there is significant opposition to the principle of *any* additional homes in Noak Bridge. Progress towards the Neighbourhood Plan does not in any way prejudice the ability of residents or of the Parish Council to object to the inclusion of any housing development sites at the public examination of Basildon's Local Plan.

The Noak Bridge Neighbourhood Plan is managed and supported by the Noak Bridge Parish Council.

To find out more, visit our new website at:
www.noakbridgenp.org

