



## **MINUTES OF MEETING WITH BASILDON COUNCIL PLANNING POLICY TEAM 05 MARCH 2020, BASILDON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Attendees** - Ade Awolola, Liam Andrews, Terri Sargent, Rebecca Neil

### **1. Introductions**

LA introduced himself as a new graduate planner in the Policy team and explained that he would be main point of contact for Neighbourhood Plan matters.

### **2. Update on Local Plan**

RN asked for an update on the local plan. AA advised that, as far as the Council were concerned, the Plan was ready to proceed to examination. However, DEFRA are yet to respond with their comments on the additional air quality work Basildon had commissioned, despite the fact that they had initially expected to give a response by the end of January. AA advised that they are still hoping for an examination date in June.

### **3. Update on Noak Bridge Neighbourhood Plan**

RN and TS advised that the initial consultation process was complete, responses had been analysed and a report had been published on the Neighbourhood Plan website. The next step was to try and form a series of focus groups to look in more detail at the issues that had come out of the initial consultation. RN explained that now the work had become more involved, the Parish Council would be attempting to get more residents involved in the process.

### **4. Issues raised during initial consultation and potential policy responses**

RN and TS advised that the three biggest priorities for residents emerging out of the consultation was traffic/congestion, the impact of H10 on school places and GP appointments, and the desire to preserve the character of the village (as well as concern about degradation of the Conservation Area).

RN advised that the PC were looking at commissioning their own transport assessment and had met with the CCG and Essex CC to discuss their plans for expansion of schools and healthcare facilities. RN also advised that the NBNP team would be looking at what form protections for the existing village might take and preparing a brief/design code for any new development in the Neighbourhood Area (potentially with Central Government funding). TS asked whether AA or LA were aware of any plans for

Essex to update the Noak Bridge Conservation Area Appraisal at County Level. **They did not know but AA agreed to investigate this.**

RN also advised that residents appeared to value the green space in the village but did have some concerns about its maintenance, which could potentially be something that local CIL funding could address. TS explained that the green space on Fore Street was something that local residents would like to protect, and that the NBNP team were potentially looking at a local green space designation.

RN also advised that initial indications were that there were a significant number of residents who indicated in the questionnaire that a single adult needed to move out of the family home, and that these were older residents who wanted to downsize and young adults who wanted to live independently. With that in mind, RN asked about the possibility of introducing some form of nomination rights for the affordable units (for younger people from the village) or requiring the unit mix to feature some 1-bed units (as the local plan mix doesn't differentiate between market 1 and 2 beds, meaning a developer might be able to develop market units with no 1-beds at all). **AA thought this might be possible in principle but would have a think about what mechanisms there were to do this.** AA also advised that there was support available from AECOM for a local housing needs assessment.

## **5. Timing of Neighbourhood Plan and implication for housing allocations**

RN asked for clarification on housing allocations in the plan, expressing the concern that if the NBNP were adopted before the Basildon Local Plan, we would be required to allocate housing; if we left it until afterwards, then we would be in a 'race' with any potential developer of H10 to get the Plan examined so that the policies would hold sufficient weight. AA advised that Croudace had not yet agreed a PPA or submitted a formal pre-application enquiry, and for a scheme of this size, the application process would in itself take some time. Her view was that we should aim to get the plan as complete as possible before adoption of the Local Plan, working on the basis that H10 would go in, and if it did not, we could adapt and change the Neighbourhood Plan as necessary (and that we could still adopt policies relating to the existing village).

## **6. Local authority support from this point forward**

RN asked whether - if all goes well and the NBNP team manage to get more residents involved - AA and/or LA would be able to offer them some basic training on the neighbourhood planning process. TS explained that it would be really helpful if they were able to attend the village hall for this, and it was agreed that this was acceptable in principle.