

BALCOMBE PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

REGULATION 14 REPORT: SEPTEMBER 2015

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to summarise the outcome of the consultation period on the Pre Submission Balcombe Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BPNP) held from the 11th June until the 24th July 2015. The report makes some recommendations on how the BPNP should proceed in the light of representations made.
2. The report will be published by Balcombe Parish Council (BPC) and it will be appended to the Consultation Statement that will accompany the submitted BPNP in due course, in line with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
3. During the consultation period representations have been made by local people, by the statutory consultees developers/landowners and by other local and interested organisations. The responses from the local community have been reviewed and analysed by the BPNP Steering Group and its summary of those responses is reported separately.
4. This report therefore summarises those representations made by the statutory consultees, developers/landowners and other interested organisations in relation to the extent to which the proposed land use policies meet the basic conditions as required by the Regulations. Details of the full representations made will be included in the Consultation Statement in due course.

Consultation Analysis

5. The local planning authority Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) has provided officer comments. BPC has been in regular dialogue with MSDC during the preparation of the BPNP. The authority has raised issues on some of the proposed policies and has made a number of suggestions on how the final document may be improved.
6. Along with suggestions for minor rewording, the only issues raised by **MSDC** relate to Policy 2 Housing Site Allocations, suggesting adding a stronger reference to the importance of a woodland setting and to Policy 3 Housing Design, suggesting adding a stronger justification to the supporting text to support the desire for smaller dwelling units e.g. referencing the Northern West Sussex SHMA 2012 and the Mid Sussex SHMA 2009. More generally, it recommends some minor amendments to better reflect the position of the emerging District Plan and the AONB Management Plan.
7. **High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** and **Natural England** have not responded to the consultation. The **Environment Agency** and **Highways England** have both responded with no comments specifically related to the

BPNP. **Sport England** has raised no objections to the BPNP nor has it suggested any amendments.

8. **West Sussex County Council** gave general recommendations on guidance on road design (visibility splays, turning circles and car parking layouts) and parking standards (updated in September 2010), but no specific comment relating to the policies.

9. **Historic England** has raised no objections to the BPNP but has suggested improvements to Policy 3 Housing Design, by adding the following wording to the last para of the policy:

the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the significance and character or appearance of the Balcombe Conservation Area.

and

Proposals that involve the change of use of historic buildings within the settlement boundary for housing as 1, 2 or 3 bedroom units, including buildings judged to make a positive contribution to the special historic or architectural interest or character and appearance of the conservation area, that sustain the significance of these buildings and their settings and their contribution to the conservation area, that provide a viable future use of the structures, will be supported.

It has also suggested that Policy 5 should have the following wording added to the last para of the policy:

the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the character or appearance of the Balcombe Conservation Area and Listed Buildings in the Village Centre.

Finally, it has suggested a new policy protecting views as stated in the Village Design Guide.

10. **Southern Water** has raised no objections to the BPNP and has suggested additional policy wording to ensure that the infrastructure required is supported.

11. **Balcombe C E School** welcomes and supports the BPNP but has suggested amendments to Policy 6 Primary School, to include wording to support further traffic calming efforts in the vicinity of the school, especially on the main road in front of the school. On Policy 8 Skateboard Park, it has requested the reconsideration of the location of the Skateboard Park, to instead be located by the Recreation Ground for example.

12. **St Mary's Church** has made three comments on the BPNP. On Policy 2 Housing Site Allocations, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) does not support the relocating of the Rectory as it believes the church has a more accessible and central point of contact through this building and its location. The PCC supports the expansion of the graveyard but suggests revisiting the

access provision for the proposed site. Finally, the PCC suggests that a part of the Rectory Garden could be used as outdoors space by the Half Moon Pub, supporting the pub's viability.

13. The Aerodrome Safeguarding department at **Gatwick Airport** have made no specific comment regarding the BPNP, although they state that they would consider matters concerning renewable energy with particular regard to wind turbines and large areas of solar panels.

14. A representation has been made by Mr Harry Oliver on behalf of **Balcombe Estate**. The Estate urges the BPNP to designate the Vintens site as they believe there is not enough housing allocated in the plan. They also believe that the Vintens site is a better alternative to Rectory/Balcombe House site in terms of damages to amenities and landscape. The Estate also objects to the built up area boundary as three sites should be included within the boundary and allocated in the plan, namely Vintens Nursery, the Walled Garden and Vintens field. They are further concerned with the Village centre policy and does not believe that two years vacant period is necessary. They have further declared that the skate board park is on a lease to the Scouts. Finally they propose a new Policies Map including the sites mentioned above.

Modifying the Submission Plan

15. The comments made by the statutory consultees confirm that the BPNP meets the 'basic conditions' of making neighbourhood plans, though some further clarity and minor amendments to the submission version of the Plan will be helpful.

16. The comments made by Mid Sussex District Council and Historic England should be welcomed and minor changes made to the plan as suggested. However, there is no need for an additional policy on the views mentioned in the Village Design Guide, as this can be addressed through a minor amendment to the Design Policy. Although not the subject of a comment, the title of Policy 3 should be changed to 'Design' for the policy to relate to all development, not only housing development. The suggested policy wording by Southern Water on utilities infrastructure does not need to be included in the BPNP as this is a district wide matter already provided for by national and district policy.

17. In the case of the comments made by Balcombe C E School, it is understood that the Steering Group was already considering the deletion of the Skateboard Park policy and to pursue its provision in a different way. Regarding the Policy 6 Primary School, it is recommended that wording is to be added to support further traffic calming efforts as a non-statutory proposal in the list of Infrastructure Projects as this is not within the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan.

18. In respect of comments made by The St Mary's Church relating to the Rectory, it is recommended that Policy 2 be reworded to make it clear that the policy does not require its relocation but merely makes provision for such a situation, should it arise. In addition, there should be minor rewording of

Policy 10 Burial Ground Extension in regard to the provision of access to the proposed site.

19. It is noted that the planning authority has not objected to the scale of housing development proposed in the Plan or to the sites proposed for allocation. There is therefore no requirement for the Plan to consider additional sites or to amend the Settlement Boundary to meet the basic conditions as suggested in some responses from the public and from Balcombe Estate.

Recommendations

20. It is recommended that:

- The policies and supporting text are changed with only minor modifications as described above
- There are no other sites allocated
- The BPNP is finalised for submission for examination, subject to the completion of its Basic Conditions Statement and Consultation Statement

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