

Highclere Neighbourhood Plan – a Call for Sites

On behalf of Highclere Parish Council, the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Steering Group has been drafting an NP for the whole Parish over the last two years. The Plan is a long-term mechanism to assist our various communities to influence planning across this Parish where they live and work. It can include:

- A shared vision and objectives for the neighbourhood.
- Policies defining where homes, shops, business or other development should and should not be built.
- Guidelines for the design and character of new houses or buildings.
- Identification and protection for important local green spaces.

Our recent survey to all Highclere Parish residents sought support for the objectives developed thus far, which seek to maintain and develop its unique character. Almost 200 responses from our 652 households were overwhelmingly positive and full details of the survey results will be available in due course.

Of continuing concern to residents is the difficult topic of planning and housing development. It has become clear from the scale of public opposition that large scale applications are unwelcome – like those by JPP for 55 then 26 houses by The Red House and by Bewley Homes for 350 in Wash Water. However, the survey showed significant support for small developments consisting of smaller, and/or more affordable housing. This would also be in line with what we believe will be the demands from the Borough when the Local Plan Update is complete.

Therefore, to inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, the steering group is calling upon landowners within the parish and developers, for expressions of interest in applying in the future for development permission – a call for sites. Our desire to understand the level of potential development within Highclere Parish implies neither commitment nor pre-approval. Any proposed development in the future would have to go through the planning process in place at the time.

This is an informal opportunity for landowners within the parish to propose sites which may be appropriate for development. The exercise is designed to enable the Neighbourhood Plan steering group to understand better how the needs and wishes of the community can be met by available land. Suggestions received by us will be used to guide and inform the preparation of the *Allocations of Land and Site Development* section of the Neighbourhood Plan.

If you would like a site to be considered for inclusion in the Plan, we would be pleased to hear from you – a rough plan or scale drawing of the site would assist. Any site need not be owned by you, if you have a direct responsibility for its management. Proposals can be for a wide range of development uses.

Please contact Colin Wall at colin.n.wall@gmail.com before February 12th 2022.

We look forward to receiving your proposals.

Prepared on behalf of the Highclere Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group