

**BEARLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2019-2031**

CONSULTATION STATEMENT

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1. Introduction

This consultation statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 in respect of the Bearley Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). It has been prepared with the aim of fulfilling the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, which are set out below.

Legislative basis

The legislative basis of the Statement is provided by Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations which require that a consultation statement should be a document containing the following:

- Details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed NDP
- Explanation of how they were consulted
- Summary of the main issues and concerns raised by those consulted
- Description of how these issues and concerns were considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan.

An extensive level of consultation, both with the community and statutory bodies, has been undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Committee (NPC), its successor Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) and the Parish Council, the details of which are set out below.

The submission plan includes:

- Details and results of questionnaires sent to householders, local businesses, landowners, village organisations and statutory consultees;
- Details of pre-plan and Regulation 14 public consultations, Open Days and responses;
- Details of local engagement and communication throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Development Plan;
- Details of responses to the consultation on the Neighbourhood Development Plan and how these have been addressed in the final submission version of the plan.

The Bearley Neighbourhood Development Plan takes into account representations received to both the formal consultations and comments received from the public, local businesses, landowners, village organisations and statutory consultees.

2. Background

2.1 Bearley Village Community Plan

The community started work on the Village Plan in December 2011 and through the hard work of a group of residents and Councillors completed and submitted the Bearley Village Community Plan to Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) in March 2012 at a time when SDC had commenced work on the Core Strategy. This delayed comments from SDC which were finally received in December 2012. SDC comments requested inclusion of items arising from the emerging Core Strategy and a number of clarifications on the statistical formulae used in the Plan. An Addendum to the Plan was prepared and submitted in March 2013. The plan was adopted by SDC Cabinet on 20 May 2013 as “material consideration in processing planning applications and an important source of local information”.

The Bearley Village Community Plan was prepared through the analysis of responses to a two-part survey questionnaire in January 2012. The first surveying the demographic and business profile and the second the community views on the development, facilities, infrastructure requirements and improvements to the village. The response rate to the comprehensive two-part survey questionnaire circulated by the Parish Council was 64.6% which represented an exceptional response in such cases.

The Bearley Village Community Plan naturally formed part of the evidence base of this Neighbourhood Development Plan through reaffirmation and verification of factual information a second time in 2014 through the NDP survey. The uncompleted actions from the Action Plan of the Bearley Community Village Plan 2012 have also been carried over to this Neighbourhood Development Plan in formulating the appropriate policies together with any further actions arising from the consultation process.

2.2 Bearley Neighbourhood Development Plan

This NDP therefore builds on the guidelines and recommendations of the previous village plans of 2001 and 2012, adding updates and new elements based on the latest community consultation. It is based on extensive research and influenced by robust engagement with the local community and evidence.

The NDP contains the vision for Bearley that was developed through consultation with the local community and key stakeholders, and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision. This NDP is in conformity with the strategic direction of the SDC Core Strategy as documented in the Basic Conditions Statement. It allows the village to develop through steady but moderate growth, to meet the established housing needs of the community, at the same time preserves the importance of the Green Belt, the rural character of the village located in the Arden special landscape area and its numerous heritage assets. It also considers the infrastructure needed to support such growth and makes provisions for safeguarding the environment, green assets, habitat and biodiversity.

2.3 Commencement of the Bearley Neighbourhood Development Plan

In July 2013 the Parish Council met SDC planners to discuss the emerging SDC Core Strategy (2013-2028) and the need for a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The meeting had concluded that Bearley as category 4 Local Service Village (LSV) is required to deliver a target of 10-25 houses. This could be met by identifying limited infill sites permitted under NPPF.

In February 2014 Bearley Parish Council proceeded to identify potential infill sites by sending a questionnaire to owners of suitable land. This requested their indication of

availability of land, willingness to develop and the nature of development envisaged. Twenty owners were approached and individually briefed on NPPF and Core Strategy. Nine owners have indicated that they were not considering any development. The remaining eleven owners agreed to become part of Site Assessments and Site Allocations process.

In January 2014 a developer held a public consultation meeting at the Village Hall and displayed a proposal for 90 houses in three phases at the high/medium landscape sensitivity location west of School Lane, east of Oak Tree Close, south of existing Grange Road houses and north of Snitterfield Road.

Upon completion of the infill potential survey a further meeting was held with SDC on 17th April 2014. In this meeting SDC advised that “the best way forward in ensuring developments in keeping with the preferences of Bearley would be through the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan”. SDC also indicated that dedicated support would be available from SDC planning staff. On 7 May 2014 the Parish Council applied for the adoption of the Parish Boundary to be designated as the ‘Bearley Neighbourhood Area’ for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Councillors who attended the WALC Annual Briefing in March 2014 which included training on Neighbourhood Planning started drafting the outline of the Neighbourhood Development Plan on 20th April 2014. An outline of the Plan contents was prepared together with a series of questions seeking clarification from the SDC. This enabled the inclusion of a verified outline of the plan in the briefing note which was issued to potential volunteers of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee (NPC) in July 2014 together with draft Terms of Reference (TOR).

2.4 Pre-plan Activities and Open Day Public Consultation

On 28 August 2014 the Neighbourhood Plan Committee (NPC) was formed and the TOR approved. A survey questionnaire was prepared and a Pre-plan Public Consultation meeting was held on 24 November 2014.

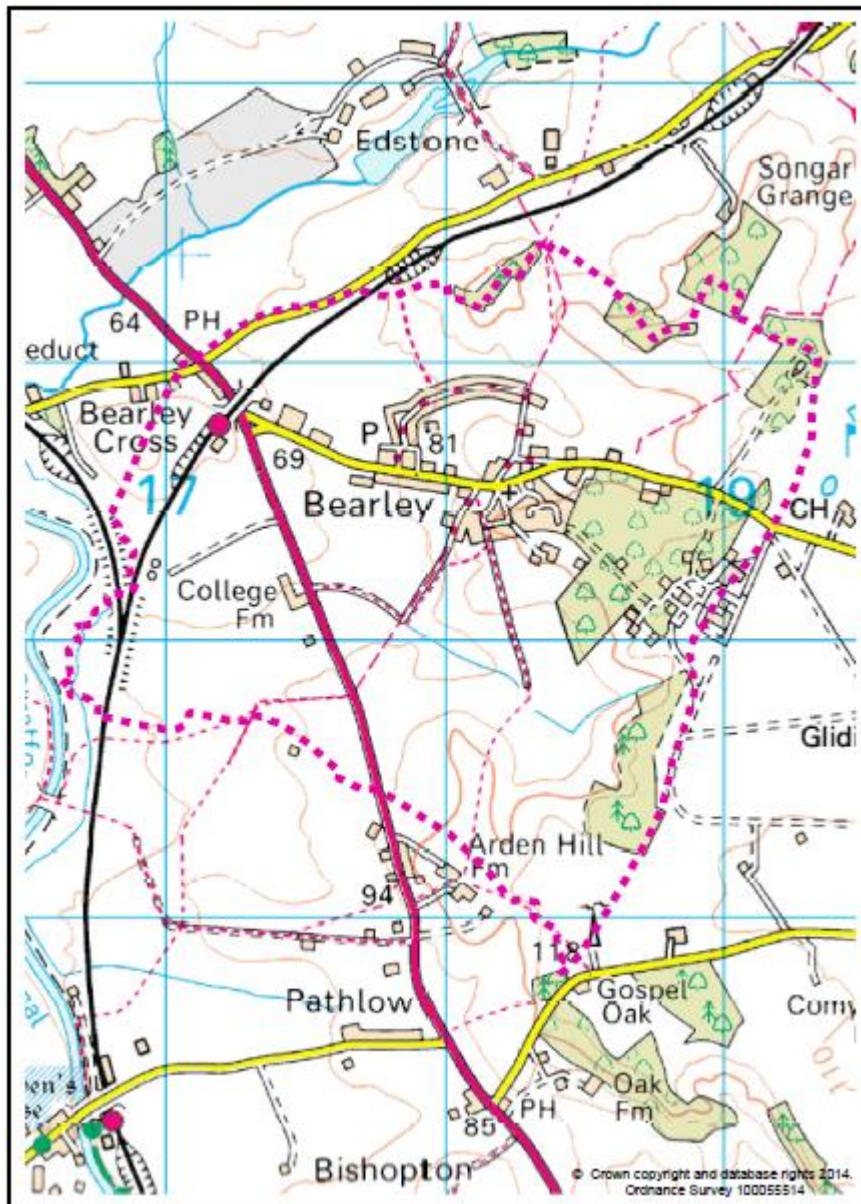
The Bearley residents have been kept abreast of developments on the progress of the transition from Bearley Village Community Plan to NDP through publication of Parish Council minutes as well as “Councillor’s Letters” detailing developments and progress at the bi-monthly parish magazine Bearley Beacon which is distributed to every household. The bearley.org website was also developed and all relevant documents were placed on the website alongside Parish Notices.

The NPC comprised Parish Councillors and resident volunteers. Although there were some changes in participants, there were typically ten to thirteen members at any one time. The first draft of the Plan was completed in October 2014. This assumed Bearley, washed over by the Green Belt, was a Category 4 Local Service Village (LSV) which had to provide 10-25 houses in the Plan period based upon clause 89 of NPPF 2012. At the same time the SDC Core Strategy was sent to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination. This created considerable uncertainty towards preparation of the Bearley NDP and the Project Timetable, as the basis on which the Plan would be developed became dependent on the progress of the SDC Core Strategy Examination.

Following an application made in June 2014 a grant of £7,000.00 was received from Locality, Groundworks towards preparation of the Plan. This provided the necessary finance for the Pre-plan open day displays, handouts and preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan Survey, including printing and independent expert analysis costs.

On 9 September 2014, Stratford-on-Avon District Council approved the

Neighbourhood Area which our Plan will cover as being the same as that of the Parish Area of Bearley. A map of the Bearley Neighbourhood Area is outlined below:



The Pre-plan Open Day Public Consultation was held on 24 November 2014 at Bearley Village Hall. Some 140 persons from the community and landowners attended the presentations and the question and answers session which followed. In addition to the five panel displays a four-page handout providing salient points of the presentations was provided to all attendees. All queries raised were satisfactorily addressed by follow up e-mail correspondence. Details are provided in Appendix 1.

Immediately after the Public Consultation meeting copies of the NDP Survey “A Clear Vision for Bearley” were posted to all households, village organisations and businesses and were e-mailed to statutory consultees by SDC Consultation and Insight Team who were retained as independent contractors to ensure professional integrity of the survey. The survey to households, village organisations and businesses was delivered together with postage paid envelopes which were addressed to take the responses directly to the Consultation and Insight Team. Details of the households, village organisations, businesses and statutory consultees receiving the questionnaire are provided in Appendix 1.

By the 8th January 2015 deadline a total of 152 responses to the questionnaire were received from 109 households and 43 individual residents. Analysis commenced and top-line results were reported by the Consultation Team on 27 January 2015 and placed on the website. The final report was issued on 15th April 2015. A copy of the questionnaire and summary of the responses can be found in Appendix 1.

NPC met monthly to review progress in meetings open to the public until May 2015 when several members had relocated from the village. A number of new volunteers came forward in May 2015. The TOR were reviewed and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) was established in June 2015. Initially the NPSG could only monitor the Inspector's Interim Conclusions and establish liaison meetings with SDC following successive announcements on the SDC's Core Strategy. Additionally, the NPSG carried out work on establishing the Built-Up Area Boundary and supporting the Parish Council in its continued liaison with SDC. All the meetings of the NPSG were open to the public.

The Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy 2011 to 2031 was adopted by SDC on 11 July 2019. Consultations on Site Allocations and Built Up Area Boundaries commenced and progressed through to 2017. The Parish Council with the help of NPSG met SDC on several occasions in response to proposals, for consultations and to seek clarifications which would enable the Plan process to restart on a robust basis.

Following discussions at NPSG the Parish Council decided to restart the Neighbourhood Plan activities at its 12 September 2017 meeting. In October 2017 an independent planning consultant, Neil Pearce of Avon Planning Services, was appointed to advise and guide the NPSG and the Parish Council towards the delivery of the Plan.

The project timetable was reviewed and revised in November 2017.

A further Locality Groundworks grant of £2,025.00 was obtained in May 2018 towards meeting the consultancy costs.

2.5 Pre-submission Bearley Neighbourhood Development Plan Consultation

The NPSG and the Parish Council met on 23 April 2018 together with the consultant to review work carried out to date and map out activities to deliver the Plan by the end of 2019. All the activities reported in this section are evidenced by supporting documents in Appendix 2.

A review of the bearley.org website was undertaken and special tab was created for all Neighbourhood Development Plan related material.

Whilst the NDP policies and text were going through their iterations with the help of Avon Planning Services, the NPSG prepared a brochure entitled "Neighbourhood Plan – what are we doing in Bearley". This was delivered to all households in Bearley, placed on the website and copies displayed at the Village Hall towards the end of September 2018. The brochure was in the Q/A format explaining the Neighbourhood Planning process, the project timetable and how the Plan will reflect the residents' and community opinions.

November 2018 and January 2019 issues of the Bearley Beacon reported on the Brochure and the forthcoming arrival of the Pre-submission version of the NDP for consultation. The draft Pre-submission version of the NDP was submitted for SDC comment to establish whether it was sufficiently robust to proceed to the Regulation 14 Consultation. The SDC gave approval to go ahead with the consultation on 8 January 2019 and the Consultation period from 31 January to 14th March 2019 was agreed.

SDC indicated immediate start of Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Process.

Copies of the Pre-submission Version of Bearley NDP were delivered to residents, businesses, landowners and village organisations in sealed packages containing a covering letter, a response form and a post-paid stamped envelope in which to return the completed response form to the Parish Clerk. The package envelopes were printed with a special label to prevent treatment of the package as a circular. Details are provided in Appendix 2.

The Pre-submission Version of Bearley NDP were delivered to formal statutory consultees by e-mail requesting read receipt. Hard and electronic copies of the NDP were also provided to SDC Planning Department officers.

The Pre-submission Version of Bearley NDP and associated support documentation were placed on the bearley.org website and a special version of the response form specific to comments on Pre-submission Version of Bearley NDP was created which was only valid for use during the consultation period. This ensured that all responses made through the website could be securely handled by the Parish Clerk.

Publicity material advertising the Consultation arrangements were posted on Parish Notice Boards, the website and banners were placed at strategic points around the village visible to residents, visitors and passers-by. An advertisement aimed was also posted on the 24 January 2019 issue of Stratford Herald informing the general public.

Two open Public Consultation days were arranged at the Village Hall on Saturday 9th and 16th February from 10 am to 4 pm when Parish Councillors and NPSG members were available to respond to questions. A special presentation was prepared and delivered at 11 am and 1:30 pm on each one of the open Public Consultation days. A four-page handout summarising the NDP vision, strategic objectives and policies was handed to all the attendees. Attendance recorded on Saturday 9th February was 45 households and on 16th February 40 households. Extra handouts were made available for distribution to friends and neighbours who could not attend. All questions raised were satisfactorily addressed and requests for further information were recorded and responded to by follow on e-mails and telephone calls. Virtually every person attending received a personal briefing tailored around the question and was provided with the references to required supporting evidence.

3. Conclusion

This Bearley Neighbourhood Development Plan Consultation Statement and its appendices are considered to comply with Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.

- Appendix 1 – Details of Pre-plan activities, consultations, including questionnaires, analysis of responses, open days presentations and literal responses received;
- Appendix 2 – Provides a summary of the consultation on the Pre-Submission Bearley Neighbourhood Development Plan; and
- Appendix 3 – is a copy of Pre-Submission Bearley Neighbourhood Development Plan.

All appendix material is available at <http://www.bearley.org/neighbourhood-plan/neighbourhood-plan/>.

Appendix 1 summarises the Pre-plan activities of the Parish Council and events leading to the decision to prepare Bearley Neighbourhood Development Plan. It includes the

information provided to the residents on the planning process, details of the questionnaires and results of subsequent independent analysis of responses, Open Day presentation and handout material as well as other background material. This appendix also includes progress reporting to the community via Bearley Beacon, Parish Council meetings backed up by placement of items on the website.

Appendix 2 summarises supporting information from the formal six-week Pre-Submission Bearley Neighbourhood Development Plan Consultation period, which took place between 31st January and 14 March 2019. The purpose of the consultation process was to ensure maximum involvement of the community and responses received have been fully addressed and used to introduce amendments to the Plan towards the preparation of Submission version.

Responses were also obtained from the LPA, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, and other statutory consultees. These responses were considered at length by the NPSG and the actions taken are documented within Appendix 2.

All feedback has been given full consideration by the Parish Council and the NPSG and, wherever possible, relevant and appropriate changes have been made to the Plan prior to submission to the LPA.