

Buckland Monachorum Neighbourhood Plan

Consultation Statement V3

(April 2019)

Introduction

This document sets out the manner in which the Buckland Monachorum Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) was drawn up with specific reference to the way that local residents and authorities have been invited to contribute to its development.

Before the Plan can be accepted, a process known as Section 14 Consultation had to be undertaken. This involved sending the Plan to a range of statutory bodies (including both Local Authorities and other organisations such as Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency) for their input but also, making the draft Plan available for local residents to read and comment upon. This activity took place between January and April 2017 and the responses received are at appendix A. Following receipt of the comments, the plan was amended where necessary and a commentary of the changes made (or why changes were not considered necessary) is also at appendix A

The Consultation Diary

March 2014 - May 2014

The Plan started life with a decision by the Parish Council to create a Neighbourhood Plan taken in March 2014. Following this, the Parish Council's Annual Parish Meeting in May 2014, attended by over 80 parish residents, outlined the process of producing the Plan and called for volunteers to sit on the Steering Group. Notices were also put on the five village noticeboards calling for volunteers. From this early engagement, a Steering Group of 18 was formed with membership drawn from Parish Councillors and residents representing each of the villages in the Parish. In May the Steering Group held a 'kick-off' meeting and agreed the broad scope of the Plan and the terms of reference of the Group.

July 2014

In June 2014 the Parish Council applied to both WDBC and DNPA to formally agree the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan. The decision was made to define the Neighbourhood Plan's boundary the same as the Parish boundary. The advantage of this approach was coherency, given the Parish Council's responsibilities for the whole parish. The disadvantage was that we would need to deal with two Authorities and two sets of local plans.

August 2014

As Economic Development was a part of the Plan, the Steering Group decided to visit every business in the parish and left cards, asking them to get in touch if they would be prepared to contribute to the Plan, although disappointingly, very few did.

The Plan's production was advertised in the Parish newsletter (Miscellany) which is delivered to every house in the Parish.

One village in the Parish (Crapstone) is unique in having no community facility. As this was known to be a feature the Plan would consider, work started on the preparation of a 'Crapstone Day' to explore this issue. The event was held on 30th August and every resident within the village was notified of the event (by a leaflet through the letterbox). The event was co-ordinated by the BMNPG and the TVAONB and around 45 residents attended. The morning was a series of discussions on how the village might improve the facilities on offer and the afternoon a walk around the village looking at potential opportunities. Information gained during the day was then used for the Plan's development.

September 2014

Meetings were held with DNPA and WDBC to discuss the Plan and meet the Officers designated to assist with the Plan's production. A meeting was also held with Maristow Estate, the principal landowner within the Parish.

October 2014

Both DNPA and WDBC approved the Plan's boundary. Members of the Steering Group attended NP events at Tavistock (WDBC) and Plymouth (WDBC & South Hams).

November 2014

The Plan's questionnaire was prepared and 'road tested' using Plymouth University and the Community Council of Devon. The questionnaire was printed and distributed by the Parish Council to every household in the Parish (1500). Returns were sent to the Community Council for Devon for analysis and a report produced and placed on the Parish website. The questionnaire invited people to 'sign up' for updates etc and 180 email addresses were compiled into a focus group who would be sent information on the Plan as appropriate.

February 2015

Briefings on the Plan were given to the Dartmoor Commoners AGM and the TVAONB Annual General meetings.

March 2015

In order to better understand the natural and environmental features of the Parish, a 'ramble' was organised with experts on hand to brief on various aspects. The ramble was attended by 50 parish residents and visited the Harrowbeer Airfield, Drake's Leat, the Chapel at Buckland Monachorum, Buckland Abbey and a 'windscreen' tour of the Parish.

Also in March the BMNPG held a 'housing day'. This event was widely publicised (local newspaper, notice boards around the parish) and was attended by over 120 parish residents. The aim of the day was to explain how the Plan needed to include policies on residential development and to seek additional feedback on the sort of housing people believed was required and where this housing should be located. Information on the results of the questionnaire was on display and people were given the opportunity to meet the NP team and talk through residential housing issues in the parish.

April 2015

As two issues which frequently came up during the above meeting were potential development at the Yelverton Business Park at Crapstone and the lack of parking at Yelverton shops, meetings were held, one with the owner of the land on which the Business Park might expand and the other with Maristow Estates who owned the car parking land to better understand the constraints and opportunities of both.

May / July 2015

Detailed planning advice on the implications for expansion of the Business Park was obtained through a study conducted by the Community Council for Devon and published on the NP website and the BMNPG advertised for any additional sites that may be suitable for residential development so that these could be added to the sites already identified in the two SHLAAs conducted by the LAs.

The BMNPG Website was commissioned and widely advertised throughout the parish using articles in local newspapers.

Aug / Oct 2015

The BMNPG constructed a set of draft NP Policies and these were shared with WDBC and DNPA in preparation for the Plan's publication. WDBC's NP Officer responded in detail and a number of elements of the Plan were amended to reflect the advice obtained.

Around this time it became clear that WDBC's 'Our Plan' (the draft Local Plan's rewrite) may not proceed as originally intended and the BMNPG decided to 'pause' until there LA's decision on how best to proceed was clearer.

Nov 2015

The BMNPG considered that although the business community had been targeted at the beginning of the Plan and asked if they would like to contribute, very few had responded positively and that a further attempt to engage them should be made. Each business within the parish was again contacted asking if they would appreciate participating in a discreet event for them, arranged by the BMNPG. Around 50 letters were hand delivered but only 5 replied and so the initiative was dropped.

April 2016

WDBC's Our Plan was withdrawn and replaced by an intention to develop a Joint Local Plan (JLP) with South Hams and Plymouth. Advice from both WDBC and DNPA was sought on whether to suspend the NP until the JLP was complete or continue with the NP and the advice was to continue, referring the Plan to the LA's extant Development Plans.

April 2016

Between the period of Oct 2015 and Mar 2016, Maristow Estates undertook an exercise to look at a potential plan to develop around Yelverton; principally to aid the lack of parking provision but also to 're-shape' the village to better integrate services. The decision was taken to consult residents and the BMNPG decided to combine one of these consultative exercises with a Neighbourhood Plan 'Open Day'. This was aimed at publicising the new potential sites for residential development sought in 2015 and asking residents' opinions on them and also to publicise the NP's Policies and seek residents' views on these. The day was advertised in the local press and on noticeboards, over 200 residents attended and attendees were asked to complete a simple questionnaire. The results of the questionnaires were analysed and published on the NP website, showing the vast majority of those attending supported the policies advocated.

May / July 2016

Through HMG's Locality programme, funding was sought and received to subject the draft Plan to professional scrutiny. Two consultants were selected, one a member of the NP Examining body; the other an ex LA Planning Officer. Both looked and advised on the Draft Plan and their comments reflected in the revised Draft Plan ahead of the Regulation 14 consultation.

In May 2016 a meeting between the NP, Maristow Estates and DNPA was held, the outcome of which was Maristow's decision to 'park' their initiative to propose development around Yelverton and so work to encompass this within the Plan was abandoned.

August 2016 / Dec 2016

Although the LA advice was to continue with the production of the Plan, WDBC were putting the final touches to their Joint Local Plan and it was clear that policies within the JLP may affect those within the NP and that both plans would probably emerge around the same time. It was therefore decided to 'suspend' the NP until a draft version of the JLP was available (Jan 2107).

Jan 2017 - Apr 2017

The NP was published for Regulation 14 consultation, allowing well in excess of the statutory 6 weeks for comment. Around 15 responses were received although neither LA met the deadline but having been prompted to input, duly did so. A consistent comment from consultees was the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment, a Habitat Regulation Assessment and a more comprehensive Site Assessment document. These were commissioned although not received until November 2017.

In addition to widely advertising the Plan prior to, and during the consultation period a number of statutory consultees were provided with a copy of the Plan. These were:

West Devon Borough Council
Dartmoor National Park Authority
Natural England
Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
The Environment Agency

English heritage
Highways England
Maristow Estates
Devon & Cornwall Police
Devon County Council
Historic England
South West Water
WW Utilities
South Hams District Council
NHS England
The Coal Board
Dartmoor Forest PC
Horrabridge PC
All Buckland Monachorum Parish Councillors

November 2017

The NP was updated as a consequence of comments received, the SEA, HRA and Site Assessment in preparation for submission to the lead LA (WDBC). The revised Plan was loaded onto the website and local publications and notice boards alerted residents to the revised document.

April 2018

Before the Plan could be assessed by the Local Authority (WDBC), two planning applications were submitted; the first for 22 houses in Crapstone and the second, to extend the Business Park in Crapstone. Both these were opposed by the Parish Council and WDBC and both went to Appeal. The Inspector granted both and so the NP required significant revision to accommodate these changes. As these changes were being made, late changes to the LA's Joint Local Plan were made which, again, introduced significant changes to the NP by removing the requirement for sites within the AONB to be identified for future housing. Additionally, the JLP having been adopted, the NP needed to be checked against the policies within the JLP.

April 2019

Having redrafted the NP to accommodate both the above changes, it was considered that the NP should be 're-consulted'.

Conclusion

The above diary demonstrates that the Plan has involved the community at several points along its journey from conception to the current time. The website has been available for over 18 months and attracted positive comments and the public meeting held over the period have been well attended. The Plan reflects comments received and it is hoped that it will receive an equally positive reception when put to Referendum.

