
Ellisfield Parish Council

Parish Newsletter September 2008

URGENT

SEERA - South East Plan Consultation

DEADLINE FRIDAY 24 October 2008

This is the final consultation before the Government finalises the Plan later this year or early next.

Your Parish Council continue to believe that our North Hampshire villages and countryside are at risk.

You may be aware that public consultation is underway on the Government's proposed changes to the draft South East Plan.

To put this in context; here is an extract from a recent newsletter from Hampshire County Council. You can read this newsletter in full at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/phfuturesummer08.pdf>

During winter 2006/7, a panel of planning inspectors conducted a public inquiry – called an Examination-in-Public (EiP) – into the draft Plan. The EiP Panel endorsed much of the Plan but recommended that various draft policies be amended.

On 17 July 2008, the Government published the changes it proposes to make to the draft Plan, taking account of the EiP Panel's recommendations.

A letter from the Under Secretary of State sets out the key areas where the Government takes a different view to the Panel, while a 30 page schedule lists all proposed changes, including those recommended by the Panel and endorsed by Ministers.

The Government proposes more housebuilding than the EiP Panel's recommendations, which themselves were an increase from the figures in the draft Plan.

Ministers propose a bigger increase in housebuilding at Basingstoke than recommended by the Panel, to reflect the town's designation as a Growth Point. 945 new homes a year are now suggested for the Borough – a 15 percent rise from the draft Plan's 825.

Most of the EiP Panel's recommendations relating to Hampshire have been accepted by Government, but higher housebuilding is proposed in five Districts.

Extra housebuilding in Basingstoke, East Hampshire, Hart, Test Valley and Winchester Districts would increase the Hampshire total to 6,685 a year. This is more than the 6,100 a year in the draft Plan and the EiP inspectors' recommendation of 6,415. With the changes proposed by Government, 133,700 new homes could be built in the county over the 2006 – 2026 period.

The further increases, on top of those recommended by the EiP Panel, are disappointing. They are made worse by the intention to remove the clause in the draft Plan that development should be conditional on infrastructure provision.

Another major proposal is the deletion of the draft policy on Strategic Gaps. Apart from these, the Proposed Changes broadly mirror the Panel's recommendations.

Individuals and organisations have until 5.00pm on Friday 24 October 2008 to comment on the Proposed Changes.

Cllr Paul Carter, newly elected Chairman of SEERA (South East England Regional Assembly) has said in a recent press release:

'Government seems determined to show it has the power to over-ride the region's own realistic housing targets that balance growth with the need for decent infrastructure and protecting the environment. These new Government targets threaten to destroy that balance.' 'It is unacceptable to increase housing numbers to a level that threatens to be undeliverable - particularly in the current economic climate. The Assembly's original target of 578,000 homes was agreed after three years of extensive research and consultation. First it was increased by inspectors who pushed it up to 640,000 and now we're faced with yet another increase [662,500].'

The Parish Council will make a response but individuals are encouraged to respond to add weight to the argument. The Proposed Changes can be seen in detail at: <http://gose.limehouse.co.uk/portal> Comments on them should be sent by 24 October 2008 to the Government Office for the South East using the online 'consultation portal' accessed via the above web site. A paper response form is also available; the parish clerk has 20+ copies if you would like to respond in this way.

Allotments

If you have walked past the Upper Allotments, behind The Fox this summer, you will have seen signs of the hard work that has taken place to regenerate this area. Steven Gould has installed a deer fence surrounding the cultivation area and is in the process of installing rabbit fencing to make the allotment gardens viable. The issue of providing a water supply has been proving difficult as the cost of installing piped water is prohibitive. If you were at The Annual Parish meeting you will be aware that our County Councillor, Anna McNair Scott offered financial assistance and has given us a £1,000 grant to purchase a water bowser to solve this problem. The allotment area is quite large and to make full use of the fenced area there are plans to plant a community orchard. If you are interested in an allotment, or planting a tree in the orchard, please contact the Parish Clerk.

Hill Farm Pond

Great News!!! We have secured a £10,000 Lottery Grant towards the costs of renovating Hill Farm Pond, largely due to the hard work of Councillor Peter Hopwood, who has arranged for wildlife surveys to be completed and quotations for works as described in the January newsletter. Past newsletters can be found by on the village website. <http://www.ellisfield.gov.uk/council/default.asp>

Peter is planning to organise a working party of those who have said they would like to get involved with this project on the weekend of 11 /12 October; he estimates that two small teams could clear all the surrounding scrub in a weekend, preparing the area for professionals to undertake the heavy work.

If you would like to join the working party – please contact Peter direct.

Christmas Fair

This year's Christmas Fair has been scheduled for the afternoon of Saturday 22 November in the Memorial Hall. Once again Caroline Cazenove has agreed to coordinate proceedings, please do contact her if you would like to help with this traditional event in the village calendar.

Traffic Calming

At last some action Hampshire County Council, regarding traffic calming measures on the Axford Road. Following a recent on-sight meeting with parish councillors and a traffic engineer from the Highways Department; specific proposals have been drawn up to install 'Village Gateways' and are currently being revised and will hopefully be ready to view at the next Ellisfield Parish Council Meeting scheduled for Monday 20 October 2008.

Application for a 30mph speed restriction on the Axford Road has been submitted in the second tranche of Hampshire 'Village 30' scheme and has, once again been turned down. It is hoped that the gateways will have some effect and if not, we will be in a stronger position to request speed restriction.

Affordable Housing

After a disappointing 6 months in which Hastoe, the Housing Association the Working Party initially preferred, decided the site on Green Lane next to Farrier's Field was too expensive to develop, we are back on track.

Hyde Housing Association, our other choice, are happy with that site and also our proposal to adopt the approach pioneered by Preston Candover for giving a greater chance for housing to always be available for individuals with a connection to Ellisfield or Farleigh.

Our timetable now is to seek to agree with Basingstoke & Deane, Hyde and their Architects a site layout and then have some initial architectural sketches and costings prepared. If this happens without hiccup and a design and other arrangements your parish council are happy with emerges we are planning an open day for consultation with all parties in the area who have an interest in March of 2009.

Planning Applications

It is possible to access details of any planning applications made in Ellisfield via our website. You will find a link from the www.ellisfield.gov.uk homepage. No planning applications have been received since the last newsletter.

Request to people to monitor power cuts and surges

At the Parish Council Meeting on Monday 01 September, Peter Mitchell of Fox Hill House, Green Lane, commented that the number of power cuts and surges experienced by himself and close neighbours was unacceptable. Mr Mitchell reported that he had contacted Southern Electric and been referred on to a number of organisations, only to be referred back to Southern Electric. He has now written to the Managing Director of Southern Electric regarding this issue. It was discussed and agreed by the parish council that village residents would be asked to keep a log of any interruptions to supply/surges that they experience so this information can be presented as part of a case for renewing power lines to alleviate the problem.

If you would like to participate, please complete enclosed form.

Neighbourhood Watch

An active scheme exists in the village with the following co-ordinators:

Scheme 090 - Colin Balkwill – 381791 & email: colinirene@tiscali.co.uk

Area covered: Axford Road & lower parts of College & Green Lanes.

Scheme 263 - Jane Evans – 381470 covering Northgate Lane, The Green and top third of Green Lane.

Scheme 300 - Roger Graham – 381383 & email: rogergraham@btopenworld.com covering the upper part of College Lane, Bell Lane and Church Lane.

Scheme 299 & Area Co-ordinator - Hannah Houstin-Lacey – 381 863 & email: laconsult@btinternet.com covering the middle of Green Lane.

Latest Neighbourhood Watch newsletter enclosed.

Vacancy

We have a vacancy for a parish councillor following the recent resignation of Cllr Steven Gould. Steven has been a parish councillor for 5 years and has done a sterling job for which we thank him.

Steven has been a Trojan in relation to many matters including acting as deputy chairman, keeping an eye on council property especially lower common and the swing and acting as treasurer, reviewing finances, and going to BDAPTC meetings. Steven has driven the allotments project has said he will be happy to stay involved in the project, securing a water supply etc.

According to section 87(2) of the Local Government Act 1972: If, within 14 working days after the date of this vacancy was published (15 Sep. 08 – 03 Oct. 08), a request for an election to fill the said vacancy is made in writing to the Returning Officer of the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Civic Offices, London Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire. RG21 4AH by ten electors for the Parish, an election will be held to fill the said vacancy; otherwise the vacancy will be filled by the Parish Council by co-option.

Contact Details for Councillors & Clerk

Cllr Caroline Cazenove;

Brocas, The Green. 381279

Cllr Tim Guinness; (Chairman)

Widmoor Farm, College Lane. 381348

Cllr Peter Hopwood;

The Acorns, Axford Road. 381321

Cllr Alison Swanston;

Oak Hill, Green Lane. 381171

Cllr Rose Taplin;

3 Hill Farm Cottages, Green Lane. 381417

Parish Clerk - Jacqui Matthews (Mayfield, Green Lane, Ellisfield RG25 2QL) she can be contacted on 381149 or at clerk@ellisfield.gov.uk. See also www.ellisfield.gov.uk/council