

Hazelbury Bryan Neighbourhood Plan.

Initial public consultation on Saturday 8th October at the Village Hall.

Analysis and summary.

Object:

To establish the real level of interest in and support for a neighbourhood plan.

Attendance:

Based on the names recorded on the list provided and the entries to the prize draw, some 73 households were represented, plus certain committee members (5) and the HBPC Chairman – a total 79 or approximately 16% of the village. A very good turnout and mostly very supportive (four volunteering to assist). Tea, coffee and cake went down very well. It is hoped that most left with a better idea of what the Plan is looking to achieve.

What do you most like about Hazelbury Bryan?

Unsurprisingly, the friendliness and community spirit of the Village received most mentions (26), followed closely by the attractiveness of the area (21), the peace and quiet (18), interestingly the lack of light pollution (16) and the “good” shop (15). Others in descending order: The Antelope, the school, good walks, local diversity, wildlife, allotments, village hall, Alec’s field & play area, with individual mentions of being off the beaten track, the churches and a sense of security.

What do you like least about Hazelbury Bryan?

Again of no surprise, most comment surrounded transport, with top of the list speeding vehicles (of all sizes) (23), lack of public transport (17), the need for safe paths & links within the village (13), too many large vehicles (10) and the poor state of surrounding roads (6). Other dislikes to receive mention were lack of mobile signal (3), the solar farms and panels on character houses, hedges not being cut back, bins as an eyesore, too quiet at night and the pub – these last two being very much outvoted by the likes!

What different views do you have from the ones recorded in the Parish Plan 2010?

By the comments – very little.

Other matters raised under this area of the survey were:

The Village needs:- a heart/hub perhaps with services being concentrated into one area; a doctor’s surgery; more affordable housing (2); to maintain the green “gaps”; no more housing estates; and HB to be considered a village not as individual hamlets. Amongst other requests: very bright commercial lights to be turned off at least for part of the night; some sites to be tidied up; and that the roads be kept narrow to stop further development !

Should our Parish Council actively encourage and support a Neighbourhood Plan?

The Committee will be pleased to note that all the responses (39) said yes and there were none against.

Should we protect our open spaces? If so which ones and why?

Again largely in favour, but the prospective areas singled out were fairly diverse. Top came the spaces between hamlets/no infilling (12), followed by green areas generally (to prevent over development) and agricultural land. It was suggested that nothing should be allowed beyond existing boundaries, brownfield sites should be considered first (4), only small developments should be allowed (but size not specified) and that all new builds should be in a form sympathetic to the Village. Some responses suggested that it would not be practical to protect the open spaces given the current infrastructure (3). Requests that it be kept a “village”(2) and one to relocate the Village Hall to Alec’s Field.

Where should further houses be built? How many? What kind of houses?

The primary question from the Plan’s point of view brought about a wide variety of comment, generally covering all three aspects at once – how many, where and what.

There were only a few direct answers to how many, ranging from 200 “affordable, green, in Kingston” (presumably over the next 15 years), 10 a year (2), 5 a year and “as few as possible” (4).

As to where, a range of views: Brownfield sites (8), infill (8), a new hamlet to be created, the Village boundary to be extended by 400yds all round, and “in Sturminster”!

Certain factors received broad support and perhaps the most widely held view was that future developments should be small in size (17), not estates (8) and built in sympathy to surroundings (8). Affordability was a major concern with regard to houses for both the younger (15) and the elderly (8). In similar vein there were further votes for houses suitable for young families (4) and the elderly (2), tied in with the need for a range of sizes and costs (8). In addition there was strong support for ecologically designed and built properties (8) and self- build plots (4). Whilst there were calls for further social housing (3) there were those against(2). Other suggestions included retirement apartments and co-housing for single people.

Widely commented (11) was that improvements to the infrastructure should be achieved before any substantial increase in property numbers, with additional mentions of requirements such as new or larger school (3) and a doctor’s surgery(3). Concern was noted that a retirement village might be created to the cost of the school and “where will newcomers find employment”?

Where should further businesses be built? How many? What kind of businesses?

The potential impact on transport was a great concern with regard to any new business. Some doubted the attraction of HB but others saw the need for local jobs.

How many and where met with predominantly negative responses: “none without improvements to the infrastructure” (4), “little demand for” (1) and should be “built elsewhere” (1). There were requests that existing larger business should be relocated (2) and suggestion that any redundant farm buildings should be utilised first and that all existing business sites should be protected from change of use.

What businesses did people want to see? Primarily small, local, artisan, workshop type operations (10), shops (2), service companies (3), a care home (2), a health centre (3), a farm shop (2) although it was pointed out that the previous one failed (1), and any to provide focus & infrastructure (1).

Unanswered questions posted:

What does “not achievable” mean on the SHLAA map and “longer term potential”? (3)

What happened to Lark’s Hey development? (3)

At what stage in development would HB become a town?

Could the village really prosper if an additional 350 houses were added?

When will SHLAA update their “included sites” “information”? (2)

Other postings not linked:

Comments on The Antelope (3); more positive links between the Village and Church; dangers of access at the top of Coney Lane; and talk of a mobile communications mast.

Conclusions.

Many of the responses are matters for the Parish Council and well outside the remit of any Neighbourhood Plan. They - footpaths, speeding vehicles, etc. - should be flagged to the Council for consideration and attention.

There are sufficient concerned and interested inhabitants of Hazelbury Bryan for a Neighbourhood Plan to be an ongoing objective, but the wide diversity of views will make the formation of a generally acceptable plan no easy task. The final Plan must achieve a majority acceptance in a Village referendum, as well as falling in line with the broader requirements of the District Planning Policy.

The Committee should consider taking the next step in the process by collecting and collating more specific and detailed views in respect to housing (demand, needs, etc.) and development in general, with a view to formulating an initial draft plan for further consultation.