

## **Local Plan Review “Options” Consultation – Alderholt Report by Chairman - Cllr G Logan for APC Council 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

Following the final decision on Local Government Reorganisation announced by the Secretary of State on the 26<sup>th</sup> February Christchurch and East Dorset Councils have decided to de-couple the current Local Plan Review, and East Dorset District Council is now progressing a separate new Local Plan for East Dorset.

### **Background**

Councils are required to have Local Plans in place to help ensure that planned and appropriate development takes place to ensure communities are protected, the local economy is buoyant and that the environment is protected.

East Dorset’s Local Plan dates back to 2014 and it is a requirement that a plan is reviewed every 5 years which is why the Council started work in 2016 to assemble evidence to inform a review which is due to come to a conclusion in 2019 with a revised Local Plan document.

If a Council does not have an up to date Local Plan there is a greatly increased risk that development will be inappropriate i.e. the wrong number and type of houses built in the wrong places. There are developers who specialise in doing this based purely on the motivating of making a profit and it is often extremely difficult for Councils to resist planning applications without an up to date Local Plan in place.

### **Guidance and evidence**

The Government provides guidance in the form of Legislation, the National Planning Policy Framework ( NPPF ), and other technical guidance to inform plan making.

In recent years the Government’s ambition has been to build more houses, more quickly and has introduced (and is introducing) a number of changes to the NPPF to make this happen. It has also introduced a national methodology for determining objectively assessed housing needs (OAN) which must now be applied in the preparation of Local Plans. In applying this national methodology the OAN figure for East Dorset for the plan period (2013 to 2033) is 8,840 dwellings. The Council needs to build more houses than is shown in the existing Local Plan.

The Cabinet report cited the existing supply in relation to the new OAN housing figure as follows:-

East Dorset Housing Completions (2013/14 – 2017/18)	758
Urban potential SHLAA#:	3,173
Existing new neighbourhoods	2,396

Remaining housing need for the plan period 2013 to 2033 is 2,513

Therefore if East Dorset is to meet its own objectively assessed needs new sites will need to be identified to bring forward 2,513 dwellings through the Local Plan Review process.

# SHLAA – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments

## Local Plan Review

Informed by this information the Council has been gathering information over the last 2 years to inform the review. It is a requirement that the plan is evidence based and once drafted it is examined independently by a Planning Inspector who can declare it “sound” or “unsound”. Plans which are found unsound are normally because a Council does not identify sufficient numbers of houses to be built in their area. An unsound plan increases the risk of inappropriate development.

As part of the process the Council issues a call for sites (Regulation 18), and this took place in 2017. The Council then assesses the sites to see how sustainable they are and whether they match the needs of the area, taking into account the need to protect sensitive nature habitats and minimise the loss of green belt. The principles being followed identifying sites for Housing are as follows :



The identification of ‘areas of search’ for new housing has given consideration to the existing settlement hierarchy and the sustainable location of new development. It has also given consideration to options in more rural areas where this would contribute to the future sustainability of these settlements and the provision of new / enhanced services and infrastructure.

Following consultation on the Local Plan review at Regulation 18 stage a number of sites covering a large area were submitted by landowners/developers for consideration by EDDC at Alderholt which could collectively deliver in excess of 1,000 dwellings.

Pressure for housing is well known and East Dorset only has 15% of land with no constraints. Alderholt fits the bill in that it is located outside the Green Belt and there are options for future development that are relatively unconstrained by landscape and biodiversity. There are opportunities with the Housing numbers suggested to make improvements to the amenities in the village i.e. GP Surgery, community facilities, more shops, recreational space, all of which are considered to be lacking at the moment.

## Consultation

The Council is about to begin the first phase of public consultation on potential sites to be included in the Local Plan, which is due to run for 7 weeks from 16<sup>th</sup> July to 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018. Details will be available on the Dorset for You website. For those not on the internet paper copies will be available at the EDDC office, public libraries and our Alderholt Parish Office.

This is only the first stage; a further round of consultation will take place most likely in first half of 2019.

The aim of this first round of consultation is to :

- Ask people if they think the proposed Housing is in the right place
- To ask what might need to be done to ensure that proposed development helps make communities more sustainable ( i.e. Doctors Surgeries, Schools etc )
- To see if there are any alternative proposals for Housing

### **AT THIS STAGE THE COUNCIL HAS NOT MADE ANY DECISIONS ON WHICH SITES SHOULD BE ALLOCATED FOR HOUSING**

I attended the Cabinet meeting (19<sup>th</sup> June 2018) and made a statement regarding the draft policies for Alderholt (5.28) which was well received by Officers and Members in citing the key issues and concerns.

In summing up that statement regarding the draft policies for Alderholt, I believe it is:-

Best to have a large scale well planned cohesive development as this provides greater leverage to get the improvements the village wants, rather than piecemeal small site by small site development.

We need to voice the outcomes we want – not just those listed below but others Cllrs and villagers deem appropriate:

- Pavilion
- Bus service
- Shops
- Education - expansion of St James' and provision of an upper school in the area, Dr's surgery
- Road improvements
- Pavements along Hillbury Road, Ringwood Road, and Daggons Road linking the Church to the pub
- Affordable housing – social, low cost market etc at 30% to 50% secured for those with a local connection to Alderholt.

- Requirement for business units as without these Alderholt will indeed be a dormitory village with everyone commuting
- A comprehensive village growth plan with policies to include/cover all the issues as per Wimborne, Ferndown, West Parley etc in the 2014 Core Strategy and this East Dorset Local Plan Options document, because without this it will be very difficult to control planning as there will be nothing to weigh the applications against. This needs to be done before the Local Plan document is submitted to the Secretary of State.

### **The next steps for APC:-**

- Receive EDDC Options Consultation, which is expected to run for 7 weeks from 16<sup>th</sup> July to 3<sup>rd</sup> September and will be on line so provide link to Cllrs and also put link on the APC website, and publicise in Parish Magazine
- APC Cllrs attend EDDC Parish & Town Council Meeting on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> August in Meeting Room 1 at Allenvue House, Wimborne, 2.00pm till 5.00pm.
- APC Cllrs to attend the EDDC Public Roadshow/Exhibition event in the Village Hall on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> August from 3.00pm through to 7.00pm. APC to evaluate resident's opinions from the EDDC Roadshow/Exhibition event
- APC to convene an Extraordinary PC meeting to determine APC's response to Options Consultation prior to 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 deadline.

### **What happens next ?**

EDDC will continue to collect evidence to inform the Local Plan as well as examining the results of the consultation. This information will be used to help the Council refine its proposals before a further round of public consultation in 2019.