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Q: Why are you doing this online and not sending a questionnaire to all households?

A: We are following Government guidance – due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions it is safer to have non-contact with other persons and reduce material that may become contaminated with the virus. An online consultation is the approved way to do things.

Q: I don't have internet access, how can I see the documents and give my comments?

A: Contact the Parish Council Clerk, and we can arrange for you to borrow, on a short-term loan of up to 4 days, a paper version of the main Neighbourhood Plan document, plus a Response Form. On return of the plan document, we will then quarantine the material before it can be reissued.

Q: I've printed my Response Form, where do I send it?

A: You can drop it off at the Parish Council mail box at 108 Green End Road, or there will be a collection box held at the Post Office in the High Street.

Q: When does the consultation close?

A: The public consultation must run for at least 6 weeks. We have chosen to do a 7 week period from 14 December 2020 through to 1 February 2021. Any comments received after that will have to be disregarded.

Q: Why must we have 500 new houses?

A: The Borough Council Local Plan 2030 has allocated 500 dwellings to Great Barford as part of the Bedford Borough growth strategy. Our Neighbourhood Plan must support the Local Plan and cannot reduce the allocated housing number.

Q: Why do you not mention self-build projects in the housing mix?

A: We have not specified the amount of individual housing types, only that the Neighbourhood Plan must accommodate the 500 dwellings allocated in the Local Plan. The developer may wish to include self-build in their housing mix.

Q: Why have you allocated such a big area for development?

A: This relates to the Bedford Borough Council's option proposed at the Local Plan Consultation in 2017, and that option was identified in the AECOM Site Assessment report. The allocated land is an area in which a site, or sites, can accommodate an overall maximum of 500 units. The whole area will not need to be built on, allowing for a lot of green open spaces.

Q: I don't live in the Parish, can I submit a Response Form?

A: A Neighbourhood Plan is produced by the local community, for the local community. As such, the consultation stages are an engagement process for people who live in the parish, local business and land owners, to gain their opinion. If you respond, we would ask that you explain your interest in the plan.

Q: Why have you not done anything about congestion on the High Street and Silver Street?

A: Neighbourhood Plans are primarily about new land use, not the current road network. We acknowledge the heart of the village suffers congestion, that's a main reason why we

allocated the new development to the west, as this will have the least impact to increase traffic on the High Street and Silver Street areas – see section 8.3.

Q: If there is a waiting list for the allotments, why have you not planned for more?

A: The Green Infrastructure Plan identifies aspirations for extended and/or new allotments. The Parish Council does not own any suitable land, so would look to the new development to provide additional allotments within its green open spaces – see section 10.6. Provision of allotments is covered by the Local Plan Policy AD28 and is proportional to the population.

Q: Why have you not allocated new business units?

A: We have not identified land for new employment sites, but will support and encourage proposals for development of new small scale businesses – see section 14.

Q: When will we be able to vote on the Neighbourhood Plan?

A: After this public consultation, and making any amendments, we will submit the Draft Neighbourhood Plan to the Local Authority. They will check what we have done and then arrange for a further consultation to gather comments, which will be passed to an independent examiner to confirm we have met all essential conditions. If the plan passes these tests, the Local Authority will organise a referendum. Unfortunately, the regulations linked to the Coronavirus Act 2020 mean that no elections or referendums can take place until 6 May 2021.

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