Application for Designation as a Neighbourhood Area by Walton Parish Council

Decision Acting Under Delegated Powers

Date of decision: 21st October 2016

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The designation of a neighbourhood plan area is the first step in preparing a neighbourhood plan. Following an application by Walton Parish Council, this report recommends that the Parish area is designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area.

1.2. As the designated area is likely to impact on a significant number of people in two or more wards, approval is sought from the Group Manager Planning and Growth in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth under delegated powers.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. The application to designate a Neighbourhood Area was made on 26th August 2016. Officers confirm that the application complies with the relevant regulations.

2.2. The application was publicised for a period of 6 weeks from Wednesday 31st August to Friday 14th October 2016. This was advertised on the Council website and written notification was sent to statutory consultees and those with a registered interest in the Local Plan matters located in the Parish and surrounding area.

2.3. As this application was submitted before 1st October 2016, the Council has powers to confirm, refuse or amend the designated area.

2.4. The proposed area for designation is the administrative Parish of Walton. In determining the application, the Council must consider the desirability of designating the whole area, whether it is an ‘appropriate area to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area’, and whether it should be designated as a Business Area.
3. JUSTIFICATION FOR DESIGNATION

3.1. Seven responses were submitted during the consultation period. The representations received are summarised out in Appendix 1. No objections were received to the designation or the need for changes to the boundaries of the Plan area.

3.2. A number of representations contained generic advice for the production of Neighbourhood Plans. One response (Persimmon Homes) highlighted issues that will need to be addressed in the Plan’s preparation, especially the timing and coordination with the Local Plan Part II and the importance of proper cooperation between Walton and Street.

3.3. In considering whether the plan area is ‘appropriate’ officers have noted that Walton Parish includes a strategic allocation for housing and other uses adjacent to Street. In addition, the Parish boundary also includes a ‘Protected Route’ for the A39 bypass to the north of the village. It is not considered necessary to amend the plan area, but it is important that the Neighbourhood Plan is developed with regard to its context and with appropriate engagement of neighbouring Parishes. The steering group may wish to consider a joint Memorandum of Understanding with neighbouring parish areas.

3.4. In order for the Plan to meet the basic conditions the Neighbourhood Plan will need to have regard to the policies contained in the adopted Local Plan in relation to the strategic site. There will also need to be liaison should any plan proposals affect the safeguarded bypass route.

3.5. Under new regulations for applications received after the 1st October 2016, the planning authority must designate applications for parished areas with no discretion to amend. Thus if this application was withdrawn and/or refused, then any resubmission would have to be designated as submitted.

3.6. The specified area is not wholly or predominantly business in nature and so it is inappropriate to designate it as a Business Area.

3.7. Taking into account the lack of objections, it is considered that the specified area is an appropriate upon which to base a Neighbourhood Plan.

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1. The specified area without modification should be designated as a Neighbourhood Area for the reasons above.

4.2. The specified area should not be designated as a Business Area.
4.3. That a copy of this report will be sent to the constituent qualifying body, Walton Parish Council.

DECISION

4.4. That the designation of the Walton Neighbourhood Area be made in accordance with Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning.

4.5. That the Walton Neighbourhood Area not be designated as a Business Area pursuant to Section 61H of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Ian Bowen
Group Manager Planning and Growth

Cllr Nigel Woollcombe Adams
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth.

A copy of this report and a map of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area will be placed on the Council’s website www.mendip.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning and will be available to view on request at the Council’s Offices.

If have any queries then please contact a member of the Planning Policy Team by email: planningpolicy@mendip.gov.uk or telephone: 0300 303 8588.
### Appendix 1 - Summary of Consultation Responses

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<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Summary of Representation</th>
<th>Officer Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coal Authority</td>
<td>No specific comments to make.</td>
<td>N/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment Agency</td>
<td>No comments to make regarding the designation of this neighborhood area.</td>
<td>N/a</td>
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| Highways Agency             | Highlights that Highways England is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network (SRN) which in this instance comprises the A303 to the south of the proposed plan area, and the M5 to the west.  

Whilst it is unlikely that future development proposals will have the potential to impact on the SRN we would nonetheless welcome the opportunity to comment further on the plan as it develops to ensure it includes a satisfactory assessment of traffic impacts and mitigation requirements, if appropriate.  

The neighbourhood area contains a ‘Protected Route’ for the village by pass [diversion of A39 that currently runs through the centre of the village] to the North of the village and the Parish Council will need to liaise closely with Highways Agency should any plan proposals affect this. The Parish Council have already responded to this representation and expressed their intention to work with the Highways Agency. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Natural England             | No comment on the suitability of the proposed plan area or the proposed neighbourhood planning body. General advice for protecting and enhancing the environment in the production of neighbourhood plans along with links to advice and resources.  

Response to be forwarded to Walton Parish Council for use in their plan preparation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Persimmon Homes             | No specific comments on the Area Designation but highlight a number of issues that will need to be addressed in the Plan’s preparation. This includes the timing and coordination with the Local Plan Part II and the importance of proper cooperation between Walton and Street.  

Response to be forwarded to Walton Parish Council for use in their plan preparation.  

The District Council has and will continue to engage with Walton Parish Council as to the scope and timing of the Neighbourhood Plan and recommends that a Memorandum of Understanding or similar agreement is reached between the neighbouring parishes to ensure appropriate |
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gladman</td>
<td>No specific comments to make on the application but highlight a number of key requirements to which the development of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan should have regard. Gladman would also like to assist the Parish Council in preparing the emerging Neighbourhood Plan in order to meet the aspirations for its development needs and invite the Parish Council to contact us in this regard.</td>
<td>Response to be forwarded to Walton Parish Council for use in their plan preparation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic England</td>
<td>No objections to this proposal. Outlines the range of support on offer from Historic England in relation to Neighbourhood Plans.</td>
<td>Response to be forwarded to Walton Parish Council for use in their plan preparation.</td>
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