

Neighbourhood Development Plan Consultation



Purpose

- 1.1 The Parish of Tanworth-in Arden lies entirely within the West Midlands Green Belt. Two features - Earlswood Lakes and Tanworth Conservation Area - are particularly valued by local residents and visitors alike. The adjacent conurbations of Redditch, Birmingham and Solihull mean that the parish is under constant planning pressure. The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is a community-led framework for guiding the future development and growth of the Parish up to 2031. It contains a vision, aims, planning policies and proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development.
- 1.2 This document seeks views on possible planning policies, including possible sites for development, for inclusion in our NDP as well as possible actions by the Parish Council and others to support those policies. The eventual NDP will play a key role in controlling future development in the Parish. This consultation paper has been prepared by a small group of residents under the auspices of the Parish Council.

Summary of consultation

- 1.3 The NDP is important. Its key aim is to protect the special attributes and facilities of the Parish that residents value and ensure any future development is undertaken in a way which enhances the character of the Parish and respects the Green Belt.
- 1.4 The NDP forms part of the statutory planning framework for the Parish, and the policies and proposals contained within it will be used in the determination of planning applications. An NDP has to support the strategic development needs of the wider area outlined in Stratford District Council's (SDC's) Core Strategy (CS). However, it can shape and influence where any development will go and what it will look like and will last until 2031.
- 1.5 In the last 25 years some 90, mostly larger, new homes have been built in the Parish. In addition, many smaller houses have been extended or replaced with the loss of over 150 smaller homes out of a total stock of 1300 homes. Consequently, the Parish's housing is highly skewed towards the 4 plus bedroom homes with limited and diminishing opportunities for younger families and for those on lower incomes to live in the Parish. It also reduces the opportunities for older householders in the Parish to downsize and remain in the Parish.
- 1.6 The CS makes no specific housing allocation for the Parish or any part of it. The CS confirms that national Green Belt policies apply which means that unless there are very special circumstances, development should be confined to limited infill in villages, brownfield sites or community led housing schemes.
- 1.7 A survey of residents identified the environmental and social features of life in the Parish which they want protected and where possible enhanced.
- 1.8 **The key planning proposals for consultation are:**
 1. **To strengthen the protection of the built and natural environment by:**
 - **Requiring new development to comply with local landscape and historic character statements to help ensure that new development respects the distinctive character of the Parish;**
 - **Identifying local views, wildlife sites and buildings of importance that should be protected;**

- **Maintaining tight control of development in the Green Belt and Protection of Earlswood Lakes and Tanworth Conservation Area from development that would damage their special qualities.**
- 2. As far as possible, that any future housing developments should be confined to providing more affordable homes to help offset the significant and continuing loss of smaller and more affordable homes, including a 'Local Housing Needs Scheme' restricted to families with a local connection;**
 - 3. There is no requirement for the NDP to put forward sites for development but three possible development sites, specifically for smaller and more affordable homes for families and those looking to downsize, have been identified which would respect the openness of the Green Belt and not lead to any merging of the main villages and settlements. Full details of these sites are included in the consultation paper on the NDP website:**
 - **Allotments in Earlswood OR land adjoining 141 The Common, Earlswood (development of the allotment site would require the allotments to be relocated, possibly to the land adjacent to 141 The Common in Earlswood)**
 - **Land behind the Warwickshire Lad on Broad Lane**
 - **Butts Lane, Tanworth**

Views are invited on whether any sites for smaller and more affordable homes should be included in the NDP and if so whether any of the three possible sites would be suitable;

- 4. No new sites for business development should be included in the NDP: however, it should allow appropriate extension of existing businesses**
 - 5. Support for appropriate small-scale expansion with regards to local tourism;**
 - 6. Respect the rural nature of the parish's road network and as necessary adopt an approach to speed and traffic flow management that reinforces this enduring character.**
- 1.9 In support of the above and to help tackle issues that are not strictly planning issues for the NDP but have arisen during its preparation, action will be required by the Parish Council. Views are invited on the following possible actions by the Parish Council:
- 1. Consider promoting a Local Housing Needs Scheme on one of the sites identified above;**
 - 2. To work with the District and County Councils and service providers to address the quality of broadband and mobile phone services as a matter of priority;**
 - 3. Work with the District and County Council to minimise the traffic impact of planned developments outside the Parish on roads in the Parish;**
 - 4. Initiate a study of traffic and parking in Tanworth village to assess the causes and extent of existing problems and provide suggested solutions;**
 - 5. Investigate the possibility of some or all the railway stations in the Parish being adopted by the local community with a view to securing Sunday services and removing the "request stop" status of some of the stations.**
- 1.10 Following this period of consultation, the views received will be carefully considered and the Parish Council will publish a draft formal NDP for residents to comment on. The final NDP will be subject to consideration by the District Council and an external examiner before being put to a referendum.