



# Neighbourhood Development Plan

## A Milestone for the Plan

February 2018

The Neighbourhood Development Plan is now entering an important and exciting new phase.

We now have a draft Plan, after 2½ years of collecting and analysing evidence, formulating and drafting policies, and organising the evidence into a written supporting document. The draft Plan was submitted to the three parish councils for review and comment before the end of 2017. At the same time the policies section of the Plan was submitted to the Borough Council's Planning Policy Team for initial comment.

### Next steps

Before the Plan can be adopted and come into effect it must now go through a series of legally required processes. Progress from now on will largely be in the hands of the Borough Council and will depend on the outcome of each step.

The first step is **Environmental Screening**. We hope that by the time you read this article the full draft Plan will have been submitted to the Borough's Planning Policy Team. They will send it to three governmental agencies: Historic England, Natural England, and the Environment Agency for review and comment. This is expected to take about 2 months. Depending on the results we may be able to proceed straight to Local Consultation, or a technical review called **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** may be required. SEA would assess the Plan's likely impact on the local environment. If SEA is required, it is likely that it would take 3–4 months.

### Local Consultation

The government's stated purpose for Neighbourhood Plans is to enable "local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community". For this reason the **Local Consultation** is one of the most important stages in making the Plan. This is the stage when the local community is invited to review and comment on the draft Plan. We hope that all eligible residents will participate in the Local Consultation.

This stage will take 6 weeks. Every household will be notified and all residents aged 16 years or over will be invited to indicate whether or not they agree with the Plan and its policies, and to submit any comments that they may have. The draft Plan will be available on the parish council and Neighbourhood Plan websites, and printed copies will be placed in accessible locations such as the village halls and local churches. A number of informal drop-in consultation sessions will be held at Whitmore village hall, the most central meeting point in the Neighbourhood Area.

### Independent Examination and Referendum

All the responses received in the Local Consultation will be reviewed and some changes to the draft Plan and its policies may be necessary. The completed Plan will then be submitted to the Borough Council. The Council must conduct a second 6-week consultation on the Plan, following which the Plan, with the comments received in the second consultation, will proceed to **Independent Examination**. If the Independent Examiner find that the Plan and its policies are "sound" he or she will recommend that it proceeds to Local Referendum. The Examiner may also recommend that prior to the referendum some modifications should be made to the Plan.

The **Local Referendum** will be the final stage in making the Plan. All adult residents of the Neighbourhood Area will be eligible to vote. If 50% or more of those voting in the Referendum vote "Yes", the Neighbourhood Plan will be passed and its policies will come into effect and must guide decisions on planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area.

## **General update**

Since the last major update in April 2017 we have kept residents informed through regular articles printed in One Way magazine and posted on village noticeboards throughout the Neighbourhood Area and on the website.

We have accomplished a lot. As well as working with our consultant, Hannah, on the policies, we have continued to gather supporting evidence and prepare reports. To see any of the evidence and reports, visit the Neighbourhood Plan website, click on “The Plan” tab and select “Evidence base” on the drop-down menu.

### ***Local Green Space***

A major project was the Local Green Space Audit and preparation of the Local Green Space Designations report. The landowner and community consultation took place in August–September 2017. Thank you to all those who responded. Local Green Space designation enables communities to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. As well as identifying established community green areas such as Chapel Chorlton Green, Whitmore village hall playing field and the green areas at The Croft at Blackbrook, we have included the public rights of way on Maer Hills and the verge and stream at Aston, and the roadside verges on the A51 that link up the network of lanes and footpaths in Chorlton and Maer & Aston parishes. There are many other spaces besides. Throughout the Neighbourhood Area a total of 85 green areas were identified for protection. The Local Green Space Designations report can be viewed on the website.

### ***Townscape Character Appraisal***

The term “townscape” refers to any group of buildings, large or small, including in rural settings. This report was prepared by AECOM consultants, working closely with the Steering Group. It assesses the character of the Neighbourhood Area’s many settlements and their relationship to the landscape, and includes a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of the different settlements. It also includes a Village Design Statement for Baldwins Gate. Visit the website to read the report.

### ***Traffic issues***

Traffic is an issue of major concern to a great many residents. We were unable to obtain traffic survey data from County Highways. Instead, we are fortunate that Mr Richard Latham of Baldwins Gate agreed to analyse traffic data collected by HS2 in 2015 and 2016 and examine the traffic flows in two areas of greatest concern: Baldwins Gate and Blackbrook. The settlement of Baldwins Gate generates some 1,216 journeys daily (journeys beginning or ending between Common Lane and Woodside). Each day 12,329 vehicles enter/leave the village at Common Lane. At Blackbrook 13,636 vehicles daily pass the Swan with Two Necks, with 10,270 travelling to/from Baldwins Gate and 9,259 travelling to/from Loggerheads. On the A51 4,377 vehicles travel to/from the Woore direction and 3,366 travel to/from the direction of Stableford.

**It’s your neighbourhood – please support the Plan!**  
**Please participate in the Local Consultation**  
**Visit the website: [www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org.uk](http://www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org.uk)**  
**Email us: [cmaw-neighbourhoodplan@hotmail.com](mailto:cmaw-neighbourhoodplan@hotmail.com)**  
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