



Neighbourhood Development Plan

Our Natural Environment

We are happy to report that the Borough Council commenced the 6-week publicity and consultation period for the Plan on 23 April. It has publicised the Plan online on its website and by making a printed copy available at Castle House. The consultation is on whether the policies of the proposed Plan conform with national and local strategic policy and with human rights. This takes us one step closer to completing the process of making the Plan.

One of the overarching aims of the Plan is to protect the rural character and natural environment of the Neighbourhood Area.

Many of the Plan's policies make a contribution to environmental protection. Like all of the Plan's policies, policy to protect the natural environment reflects input provided by the community, as well as study of the local area.

Importantly, the main policy on the natural environment states that any new development should "complement the landscape setting and character of the area, preserve or enhance and not cause significant harm or degradation to the special rural character and ecological and environmental features of the area".

Features that are specifically mentioned for protection include wildlife areas and wildlife corridors. An example of wildlife corridors is the hedgerows that provide connections between wildlife areas and provide travelling routes, safe places, nesting sites and food sources for small animals, birds and a range of insect life. Also mentioned in the policy are watercourses (another kind of wildlife corridor) and ponds, woodland and orchards, mature and veteran trees and the sunken lanes that are characteristic of our area. The bog on Chorlton Moss that residents recently worked so hard to protect from development has a specific mention, along with other bog and peatland sites in the Neighbourhood Area.

The policy on the natural environment is supported by maps showing the locations of the features and habitats mentioned.

Light pollution is always an issue in rural locations. It has a direct effect on rural character and the natural environment, and it is a particular concern for the residents of the Neighbourhood Area's many small settlements that have no street lighting. The Plan's policy on the impact of lighting states that any exterior lighting on new development "must be designed to maintain dark skies and to avoid impact on the rural environment and local wildlife".

It's your neighbourhood – please support the Neighbourhood Plan!

Please turn out to vote in the Local Referendum – apply for a postal vote if you will be away on holiday or business!!!

Visit the website: www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org.uk

Email us: cmaw-neighbourhoodplan@hotmail.com