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Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside

Strategic Planning
Dacorum Borough Council
Civic Centre, Marlowes
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Our Ref:

Your Ref:

26th January 2022 (by email)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Kings Langley Neighbourhood Plan (NP) – Regulation 16 Submission January 2022

CPRE Hertfordshire supports the production of local Neighbourhood Plans and appreciates the quality of analysis and content within the Kings Langley NP submission Regulation 16 documents. We hope that the Neighbourhood Plan will supplement existing Development Management policies to raise the quality of local development in Kings Langley; in particular the addition of local Design Coding work is noted as a reference for designers.

No allocations for greenfield sites are made in the NP which is welcomed and 99% of those polled wish to see Green Belt land protected (para 1.16). CPRE Hertfordshire is working hard locally and nationally to see that a government drive for housing numbers is not 'at all costs' and does not weaken Green Belt protections.

Policy and other comments

CPRE Hertfordshire cannot comment in detail on all the draft NP policies but the following are selected for mention:

- Policy KL1 – it would be preferable for this to underline the protection and value placed on open countryside as a key purpose and attribute of the Green Belt. Climate change should also be addressed in this policy.
- Policy KL2 could more strongly emphasise the priority for genuinely affordable housing when sites are considered.
- Policy KL6 should be extended to aspirations for the existing village e.g. the high street.
- Policy KL16 should include aspirations for better village public transport.

CPRE is working nationally and locally for a beautiful and living countryside

CPRE Hertfordshire is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

President: Sir Simon Bowes Lyon, KCVO
Chairman: Allan McNab

Registered Charity 1162419



The comments below are intended to be supportive and relate to ongoing issues of climate change, place-making and affordable housing.

Climate Change: The need to mitigate and adapt to climate change makes this a leading and central policy issue at all levels of planning. Its profile has increased in recent years and it gets regular mention in the plan. It is recommended that all the NP proposals be subject to a climate audit with a view to reducing green-house gas emissions. Topics to explore for further action may include:

- local targets for overall tree cover and urban greening,
- targets for active travel,
- identifying gaps in local services that reduce the need to travel,
- local food growing, rewilding or forest farming initiatives.

Affordable housing: The need is very evident (Section 2.16 of Area Profile) and not being met. One of the best vehicles currently available to expand provision and raise quality standards simultaneously may be community-led housing schemes including Community Land Trusts (CLT); a specific policy reference backing CLTs with explanation in the NP is recommended. Ideally this brings forward a model and process for affordably priced land for housing which is the key to securing genuinely affordable housing to meet local needs, be it for sale or rent. There are many good examples from the South West of such work in the last decade, see information of Middlemarch <https://middlemarchclh.co.uk/about/> and an example of a completed CLT in Dorset <http://www.tollerporcorum.org/community-land-trust.html>

Place Making: A big issue for the village is the health and attractiveness of the main High Street and severance by traffic on the A4251. Implementation of the Arup Public Realm strategy may benefit from a specific policy link in KL6 of the Neighbourhood Plan to stress the urgent need for a more people friendly village centre, perhaps even traffic-free on occasional days for public festivals and gatherings. The policy can also help to drive the case for local authority funding for public realm works. Further material for the Design Code may be found in *Manual for Streets 2007* (see link below). *Traffic in Villages* (see link below), produced for Dorset, is another useful reference for rural highways design and village centres.

Movement: The enhanced provision of a walking- cycling network for Kings Langley is clearly a 'work in progress'. A useful reference document is Department of Transport guidance 2017 on *Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans* (see link below).

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan at Fig 12.1 is useful for Section 106 negotiations but a map would help to show how these improvements relate to a wider network.

Initial analysis suggests one strategic link in a network might be a path and bridge crossing of the Grand Union Canal to link the areas of Coniston Road and Harthall Lane at the northern



end of the village. Other beneficial measures could monitoring active travel levels, promoting e-bikes and home working, co- working hubs to reduce the need to travel. Green Travel Plans for schools need to be regularly reviewed and can be a useful focus for local initiatives.

Analysis shows that a third of households in the area have limited or no access to a car, so the NP could support public transport by recommending desirable changes. Issues could include new routes, higher frequency service and the aspiration for electric low emission buses.

Summary

The NP is a significant land use planning document related to new development, and its content and the Design Coding provide it with an aspirational place making role. The above comments are intended to be supportive of the Kings Langley community and we welcome this important initiative in promoting the process of place-making.

Yours faithfully

Chris Berry
Planning Manager

Reference links:

Manual for Streets 2007

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/341513/pdfmanforstreets.pdf

Traffic in Villages

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/north-dorset/neighbourhood-planning/submitted-plans/pdfs/hazelbury-bryan/associated-docs/background-info-and-docs/dorset-aonb-traffic-in-villages-toolkit.pdf>

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans guidance - LCWIPs

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908535/cycling-walking-infrastructure-technical-guidance-document.pdf