

OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Final draft

Following extensive engagement and detailed surveys, the neighbourhood plan for the communities of Ashton Hayes and Horton-cum-Peel is in **final draft** form.

Once adopted, the plan will be in place for 20 years, although it will be periodically reviewed to ensure its continued validity and relevance. It offers guidance to developers and planners on the nature of development that our community wishes to see. As such it will be a key element of Cheshire West and Chester's (CWaC's) planning policy.

Consultation

The **final draft** will now be issued for formal consultation with the community before it is published and voted on in a referendum during 2016 (see *Next Steps* on back page). All residents and a number of statutory consultees (which include the Environment Agency, English Heritage, Natural England and landowners), can submit comments on the proposed policies in the **final draft** during the consultation period, which will run for six weeks, from **Monday January 18 till Sunday March 6**.

Following the consultation period, any feedback received from residents or other consultees will be carefully considered. The Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will update the plan where needed. It will be assumed that residents and consultees who do not respond during this consultation are in broad agreement with the **final draft** plan.

Based on feedback from the Policy Proposals Survey issued to all households in October 2014, changes were made to the plan to reflect comments received from residents and CWaC. However, the policies in the **final draft** will all look very familiar to those who have read previous versions.

Format

The final plan comprises three parts.

- **Part 1** - proposed policies and justification to support them.
- **Part 2** - detailed evidence base underlying Part 1.
- **Part 3** - attachments providing more detail and sources.

Parts 2 and 3 will be published on the Parish Council website - www.ashtonhayespc.co.uk. where a number of specialist studies and research papers are available.

This 6 week consultation period is limited to Part 1.
See back page for details of how to obtain a copy.



CONTENT OF THE PLAN

The policies in the plan cover five key areas.

- **Built & natural environment** policies **E1 – E4**
- **Housing** policies **H1 – H3**
- **Community facilities** policy **C1**
- **Business & employment** policies **BE1-BE2**
- **Transport & infrastructure** policy **T1**

- **Community Action Programme**
Residents have already raised a number of issues which are outside the statutory scope of a neighbourhood plan. Those items have been collated into a Community Action Programme (CAP) and passed to the Parish Council for action.

The whole plan area is governed by Green Belt legislation, so new development is restricted. Proposed developments in Green Belt that include affordable housing can be allowed through the Rural Exception Sites policy of CWaC's Local Plan. Such schemes must be supported by an up to date survey of residents' housing needs. The policies in the **final draft** plan take these constraints and controls into account and include reference to rural exception sites. The following paragraphs provide an at a glance summary of the policies which address key issues raised by residents. *Significant changes from the Oct 2014 survey are shown in italics.*

<p>Policy E1 – Local character Policy objective To protect and maintain the local character of the area. Policy content New development in and adjoining the countryside will be acceptable where it is designed and positioned so as to be sensitive to the built environment of the village and its rural setting.</p>	<p>Policy E3 – Carbon reduction Policy objective To contribute to the community goal of achieving carbon neutrality. Policy content The installation of renewable energy generation capacity of up to 20% of the plan area's average electricity consumption will be promoted if criteria listed in the final draft plan are met. <i>The policy now specifies community involvement in energy projects outside of those permitted under household schemes.</i></p>
<p>Policy E2 – Green environment Policy objective To protect and maintain the local green environment and its accessibility. Policy content Areas are listed which should be protected from the adverse impacts of new development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. In addition developments or changes of land use must, where possible, enhance the local green space amenity. <i>The recreation field has been removed from the policy at the request of AHSRA. The locations of some other green spaces have been clarified.</i></p>	<p>Policy E4 – Pollution & sustainability Policy objective To ensure that existing pollution levels do not increase and to help mitigate existing and future levels of pollution. Policy content Where possible development proposals should take effective measures to avoid pollution in specific ways that are listed in the final draft plan.</p>
<p>Policy T1 – Public transport improvements Policy objective: To reduce reliance on private cars by improving public transport and the access to it. Policy T1 – Public transport improvements In order to improve pedestrian access to public transport, developer contributions on new developments will be sought for this purpose. Specifically, contributions will be sought which further aims listed in the final draft plan. <i>Additional detail has been added</i></p>	

Policy H1 – Local housing need

Policy objective

To ensure that the provision of rural exception site housing as far as possible meets the needs of the plan area and is led by the community.

Policy content

Residential development that is proposed in accordance with the Rural Exception Sites policy of Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) is supported in circumstances specified in the **final draft plan**. *The provision of market housing for elderly people has been changed on CWaC advice to refer to a "significant proportion" to avoid being too restrictive and thus subject to challenge.*

Policy H2 – Location of rural exception sites

Policy objective

To ensure that new development is located in places which do not adversely affect the character of the plan area.

Policy content

A rural exception site will be supported where it complies with Policy H1. The policy lists criteria to evaluate the suitability of proposed housing development locations.

Policy H3 – Design of new housing development

Policy objective

To ensure new development is in keeping with, or contributes to, both the character of the plan area and the carbon neutrality aspirations of the community.

Policy content

New development must contribute to the existing character of the village and its carbon neutral aspirations. Specifically designs should follow guidance in the **final draft plan**. *The previous reference to 'contemporary design' has been removed on CWaC advice as it tended to imply that modern houses (even if meeting all the other criteria) would not generally be allowed.*

Policies BE 1 and BE 2

Policy objective:

To support existing, and encourage new businesses seeking local premises and to ensure that any growth within the plan area considers options for facilities suitable for future employment. *The previous policy has now been split into 2 for clarity*

Policy content BE 1 – Premises provision

The creation of suitable premises for local businesses will be encouraged, with specific examples given. *A criterion added that such premises should take note of policies H2 & H3 as far as these are relevant*

Policy content BE 2 – New employment opportunities

The development and introduction of new direct employment will be supported. Specifically, support will be given for development which meets criteria listed in the **final draft plan**.

Policy C1 – The protection, provision and enhancement of community facilities / amenities / services

Policy objective:

To protect existing sites and/or buildings which have importance for the community and, where appropriate, to establish new facilities.

Policy content

Existing community facilities, amenities and services will be protected in ways listed in the final draft plan and proposals for the creation of new and/or improved community facilities will be supported provided criteria listed in the **final draft plan** are met. *A criterion added that such premises should take note of policies E1 & H3 as far as these are relevant.*

TO VIEW THE FINAL DRAFT PLAN

One of the key aims in the plan is to avoid waste of resources and to build a sustainable future for Ashton Hayes and Horton-cum-Peel. This reflects the changes made by residents to reduce the area's carbon footprint. The Parish Council wishes to share the **final draft plan** in as environmentally friendly a way as possible.

From January 18, the **final draft plan** will be available to download from the Parish Council website: www.ashtonhayespc.co.uk/overview

Alternatively, you can:

- ask to be emailed a copy of the **final draft** in pdf format - please email your request to jane@ashtonhayespc.co.uk
- request your own printed copy of the **final draft**, together with a printed feedback form. Please email jane@ashtonhayespc.co.uk, or post your request to Ashton Hayes and Horton-cum-Peel Parish Council, c/o 4 Carter's Cottages, Kelsall Road, Ashton Hayes CH3 8BH before January 25
- inspect a printed copy of the **final draft** at selected locations (see below).

Inspecting the final draft

Printed copies of the **final draft** will be available, but should not be removed, between January 18 and March 6 at the following times and locations:

- Timebank office (above Community Shop) – Monday to Friday mornings, subject to activities at the time.

- Pavilion Café – during opening hours.
- Parish Room – Saturdays 10am - 4pm.
- Church – usually open 10am - 3pm
- School – during opening hours

Making your views known

- Email feedback should be addressed to jane@ashtonhayespc.co.uk.
- A feedback form can be downloaded from the Parish Council website at www.ashtonhayespc.co.uk/overview
- You can request a printed feedback form in the same way as the **final draft plan**.
- Feedback forms will be provided at the locations listed above.
- A collecting box for written feedback (in any form) will be available in the community shop.
- Feedback can be posted to the Parish Council using the address given to the left.

Please try to read the final draft plan and submit any comments, so we can be sure that the plan reflects the views of as many residents as possible.

This information will be repeated on the Parish Council website, at the selected locations and in the **final draft plan** itself. **All comments must be received by midnight on Sunday March 6.**

Next Steps

Submitting the plan

Once any necessary amendments are made to the draft following this six week consultation period, the plan is formally submitted to the local authority, CWaC. For a further six weeks, the plan is made public and all interested parties, including residents, can send feedback directly to CWaC, for consideration by the Examiner at the next stage.

Independent examination

CWaC will appoint an independent Examiner to review the plan, with necessary attachments and documents, including all comments made through the consultation process.

Local referendum

CWaC will organise a referendum of all residents in the plan area. The question that will be asked is: "Do you want Cheshire West and Chester to use the neighbourhood plan for Ashton Hayes and Horton-cum-Peel to help it decide planning applications in the plan area?". A simple majority of those voting is needed. Once our neighbourhood plan is brought into legal force, it will form part of the statutory development plan for the area. So, decisions on whether or not to grant planning permission in the area will need to be made in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.