



**Basingstoke
and Deane**

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Marian Dain
Ecchinswell, Bishops Green and Sydmonton
Parish Council
Sent via email

1 June 2022

Dear Marian,

Request for information on indicative housing number for Ecchinswell, Bishops Green and Sydmonton Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your email dated 16 March in relation to an indicative housing number for the neighbourhood plan. Please accept my apologies for the delay in providing a formal response to your original email.

The planning policy team is pleased to hear that you are progressing the Ecchinswell, Bishops Green and Sydmonton Neighbourhood Plan (EBGSNP) and we will continue to support you through that process.

You have requested an indicative housing number in order to inform the neighbourhood plan process, an approach which is in line with paragraph 67 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As you will be aware, the council is at an early stage of updating its Local Plan, rolling the Plan forward to cover a period up to at least 2039. An evidence base is being compiled to inform Plan making and this has included a detailed Settlement Study which considers the relative sustainability of settlements in the borough and includes indicative future housing requirements for suitable settlements. This study specifies a figure of 15 homes for Bishops Green over the Plan period. Ecchinswell was also considered through this process and no housing requirement was identified. The study also proposes a new Settlement Policy Boundary (SPB) for Bishops Green and Ecchinswell.

Further details regarding the Settlement Study are available via the following link:
[Agenda for Economic, Planning and Housing Committee on Thursday, 6th January, 2022, 6.30 pm - Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council](#)

The council is currently due to consult upon the draft Local Plan Update later this year, in line with Regulation 18 of the relevant legislation. This would be the first statutory stage in the Local Plan process. It is currently proposed that the outcomes of the Settlement Study outlined above would be included within the draft Plan. However, the council is currently reviewing its approach to the consultation and these elements may change as the Plan develops.

Plan making is very much at its early stages and therefore holds no weight in planning terms at this time. The strategy outlined in the draft Plan will be subject to public consultation as part of the Local Plan Update process and the Examination in Public, and so may be amended in due course. However, the above information provides a direction of travel and represents the current thinking of the LPA in this regard. It is worthy of note that if the housing requirement for the settlements of Bishops Green and/or Ecchinswell were to change after the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was 'made' then that could be addressed via modifications to the NP as relevant.

In order for the parish to benefit from the protection afforded by paragraph 14 of the NPPF, all of the four criteria within that paragraph must be met. These relate to the age of the plan and include the need for the plan to allocate specific sites and policies to meet the identified need in Bishops Green (criterion a and b). In relation to the next two criterion (c and d), this information is published annually online, and more detailed information is available to view through the council's Authority Monitoring Report¹. It should be noted that this position may change and therefore the council's position may be different when the Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted.

At present:

- In relation to criterion c), I can confirm that the council is able to demonstrate a 4.5-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

In relation to d) regarding housing delivery, the Housing Delivery Test results were published in February 2022 by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This confirmed that against the council's requirement to deliver 2195 new homes, 4001 new homes were delivered, which results in a 2021 measurement of 182%. The test was therefore passed and no consequences resulted.

I hope that the information set out above is of use to you and obviously please let me know if it would be helpful to discuss any of the above in more detail.

Yours Sincerely,

Joanne Brombley
Planning Policy Manager



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Marian Dain
Ecchinswell, Bishops Green and Sydmonton
Parish Council
Sent via email

16 December 2022

Dear Marian,

Indicative housing number for Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Neighbourhood Plan

I write in relation to previous correspondence dated 1 June 2022 that provided an indication of the parish's identified housing requirement (in line with National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 67). The purpose of this letter is to update the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) position in light of changing circumstances.

In this previous correspondence the LPA indicated that, based upon the findings of the draft Settlement Study (as discussed at Economic, Planning and Housing Committee in January 2022), the parish's identified housing requirement would be 15 homes in Bishops Green, and none in Ecchinswell. As you are aware, the Settlement Study is an evidence base document produced to inform the Local Plan Update's spatial strategy, however neither the document itself nor any resultant spatial strategy has been formally agreed or endorsed by the council.

Notwithstanding this, the study provides figures that take 'into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy for the local planning authority', as required by NPPF para 67. It therefore takes into account the considerations highlighted in national policy and so reflects the LPA's current thinking on the parish's local housing requirement.

On this basis, the submission EBGs Neighbourhood Plan proposed to allocate a site for approximately 15 homes in Bishops Green, and a site for 5 homes in Ecchinswell. Recognising the uncertainty of the evidence base, the plan also included a commitment to undertake an early review the plan if the housing number increased before the LPU was adopted.

However, since that earlier correspondence, a planning application for up to 42 new dwellings at Woodside View in Bishops Green has received a resolution to approve

(22/00174/OUT). When this application is approved, subject to it being implemented, it will meet the village's housing requirement identified through the Settlement Study.

As you are aware, in order for the parish to receive the additional protection from speculative development offered by NPPF para 14, it must (inter alia) 'contain policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement'.

In this regard, the Local Planning Authority is of the view that the housing requirement figures identified through the Settlement Study are minimums. This approach reflects the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development and would be consistent with the neighbourhood planning policy in the current Local Plan which sets parish targets of 'at least' a certain number of homes. It is therefore the LPA's view that the allocation of 15 homes in Bishops Green would still provide 'policies and allocations' to meet the parish's identified housing requirement.

In relation to Echchinswell, the draft settlement study initially identified a requirement for six dwellings in the village based upon its proportional share of the borough's need. All the other housing requirements identified by the study have been rounded to the nearest five, however the requirements for Echchinswell and the other very small settlements were rounded down to zero. This was a policy decision (not related to the actual level of need) as it was not considered proportionate to require communities to produce neighbourhood plans for such a small number of homes.

The actual level of need identified by the study for Echchinswell, rounded to the nearest five (consistent with the other settlements), should therefore be five dwellings, and the neighbourhood plan would contain 'policies and allocations' to meet this. Although the site is not directly adjacent to the proposed SPB (as required by Policy SS5 in the adopted Local Plan), the council's draft LPU (as set out in the papers for Economic, Planning and Housing Committee for June 2022) proposes to include greater flexibility where there are no suitable alternative sites within or adjacent to the SPB.

It is therefore the LPA's view that subject to the LPA continuing to satisfy the other requirements of NPPF para 14 (as detailed in previous correspondence), the ESG Neighbourhood Plan (as submitted) would include 'policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement', which would provide greater protection from speculative development for the whole parish.

I hope that this is of assistance. Please let me know if you would like to discuss any of the above in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

Joanne Brombley
Planning Policy Manager