

Neighbourhood Plans?

Presentation to Brocton Parish Council

By

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What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

- A Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for a community to help guide the use and development of land and focus on the needs and aspirations of a local area.
- And how the Neighbourhood Plan can feed into wider regional and national plans;
- A community might identify itself as having a recognised 'electoral' boundary, such as Brocton Parish Council area;
- Or it could also be defined by physical geographical features such as roads and rivers which overlap Parish Council boundaries.



About Brocton

- Brocton Parish area is spread out over a relatively large area, with about 556 residential properties between Milford Common and the A34 Stafford to Cannock Road;
- There about 1,000 on the electoral roll;
- There is a village hall, shop, play area and a pub (Chetwynd Arms);
- There are two garages on the A34 Cannock Road;
- Also, a small business park;
- The Parish boundary borders the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Greenbelt;
- Berkswich is a neighbouring Parish.



Who lives in Brocton Parish?

- Would it help to know more about the demographics of each household and the properties they live in?
- For example; the number of people living in each property and their ages;
- How long have they lived in the Parish?
- What attracted them to live in Brocton?
- Are they employed or self-employed?
- Are they retired?
- If they travel to work, where do they travel to?
- How do they get there? (Car/Cycle/Walk/Public Transport);
- How many bedrooms in the property?
- How many cars?



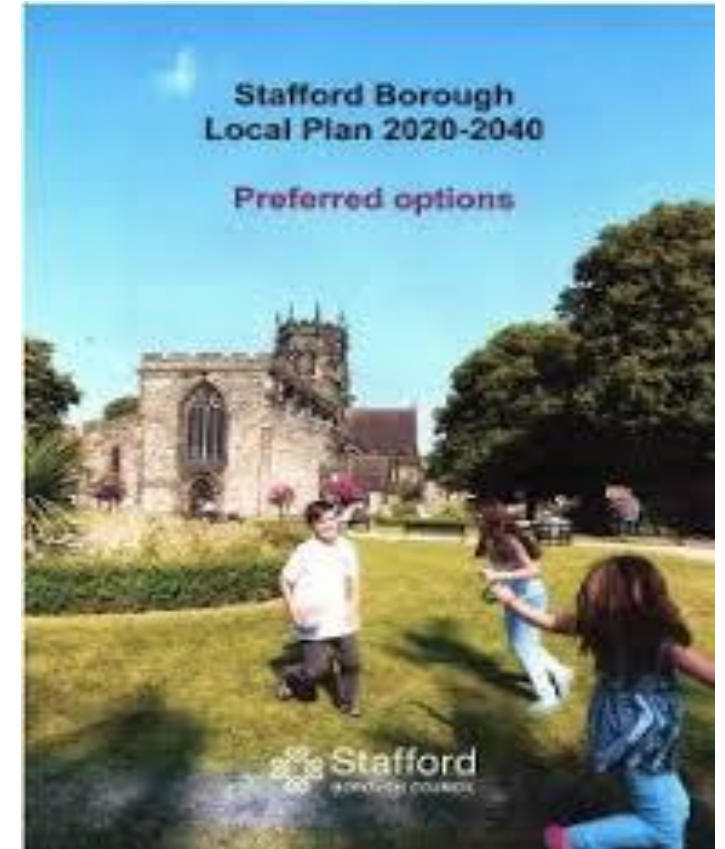
What do they think about local amenities?

- Which local amenities and facilities do they use in the Parish?
- Which age groups are not catered for?
- Which recreational/sport/leisure activities do they go to outside of the Parish?
- Where do they go to? Stafford/Cannock or further afield?
- What improvements or additional amenities/facilities/recreational activities would they wish to see within the Parish?
- How important (if at all) is public transport?
- And don't forget, young people have a say too!



So why consider a Brocton Neighbourhood Plan?

- Stafford Borough Council is currently reviewing its Local Plan;
- It has been much delayed;
- Central Government has raised the targets for new housing numbers across the whole Country;
- In Stafford, the target number of new builds has been raised from about 10,500 to 16,500 over a twenty year period;
- That's about 20% more houses than there are in Stafford Borough at this time!



So why consider a Brocton Neighbourhood Plan?

- Stafford Borough Council planning officers are obliged to invite landowners to submit areas of land for potential housing development or employment land.
- Not surprisingly, landowners are very keen to submit their sites for evaluation and potentially see their land values skyrocket;
- The Borough Council must also have a five year supply of housing site allocations;
- At the present time the Borough Council has less than four years supply;
- Developers are submitting applications for housing developments across the Borough.



Five sites in Brocton submitted to date...

Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SH&ELAA).

- BR003 Land to rear of Brocton Business Park A34. 2.6ha for Employment Land;
- BR004 Land at Sawpit Lane 0.8ha for 17 houses, currently agricultural land;
- BR005 Cottage Farm, Cannock Road. 1.15ha for 24 houses, currently agricultural land;
- BR006 Land at Sawpit Lane 1.2ha for 25 houses, currently for equestrian purposes;
- BR007 Land Walton Lane 3.1ha for 65 houses, currently agricultural land;
- Total area for housing 6.25ha (about six full size football pitches) for up to 131 new homes. Density per ha all about 21 dwellings.
- <https://shared.xmap.cloud/?map=a4757117-496b-4a68-998f-7379c8dcdd9c>

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So, would a Neighbourhood Plan be useful for Brocton Parish?

- A Brocton Neighbourhood Plan could be a useful tool to oppose all new developments;
- Sustainability will be a key factor
- Access to amenities, services and connectivity;
- Or it could provide a guide towards acceptable and not-acceptable development sites;
- A Neighbourhood Plan could provide a 'wish list' of improvements or additional local amenities;
- It could provide a profile of the local demographic and what type of new housing might be welcome in the future;
- Affordable housing?
- Downsizing opportunities to enable movement within the locality;
- More bungalows or level access buildings?

Hixon Neighbourhood Plan

- In Hixon, we designed a questionnaire, which was hand delivered door to door to 770 households;
- 483 (63%) returned completed questionnaires;
- We were able to define the age demographic, how many are employed, unemployed, retired or in education;
- Over 700 of residents reported that they leave Hixon to a place of employment;
- By contrast, about 1,000 from outside Hixon are employed in Hixon;
- Analysis of the responses enabled a set of eight local development policies to be created based on sound public consultation:
- We identified that 24.8% of properties were bungalows and wrote a development policy that would insist new developments maintain that ratio;
- We wrote policies on Design, Landscaping, Open Spaces, Natural Environment, Heritage & Culture, Community Facilities, Employment Sites and Green Spaces;
- All research, analysis, design and printing was carried out in-house by Hixon Parish Council. It cost less than £3,000.
- It was a massive effort and took over two years from start to finish;
- The Neighbourhood Plan Inspector described the finish documents as “refreshingly informative and concise.”

Local Neighbourhood Plans and emerging Stafford Borough Council Local Plan

- Stafford Borough Council is currently reviewing its Local Plan;
- It is not known when it will be published or put out for consultation;
- Local Neighbourhood Plans will need to 'mirror' the Stafford Borough Plan;
- Development sites in the Stafford Plan will have to be included in Neighbourhood Plans;
- Further information may be some time away, but it is not too early to consider whether a Brocton Neighbourhood Plan would be useful
- Or otherwise!

