

Basic Conditions Statement for Dorney Parish Neighbourhood Plan



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DORNEY PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN Reg 15 SUBMISSION BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared by Dorney Neighbourhood Plan Committee(DNPC) on behalf of Dorney Parish Council (“the Parish Council”) to accompany its submission to the local planning authority, Buckinghamshire Council, of the Dorney Parish Neighbourhood Plan (DNP) under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as Amended) (“the Regulations”).

The DNP has been prepared on behalf of the Parish Council, a qualifying body, for the Neighbourhood Area covering the whole of the Parish of Dorney , as designated 24th September 2022.

The policies described in the DNP relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area.

This statement addresses each of the ‘Basic Conditions’ required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (see para 37 of the NPPF) .

The Regulations state that a Neighbourhood Plan will be considered to have met the conditions if:

(a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the order,

(b) having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, it is appropriate to make the order,

(c) having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any conservation area, it is appropriate to make the order,

(d) the making of the order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,

(e) the making of the order is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area),

(f) the making of the order does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations

2. BACKGROUND

The decision to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan was made by the Parish Council in April 2023. The key driver of that decision was a sense of wishing to plan positively for the future of the Parish on a range of issues and to involve the community in the planning process.

The DPNC was given delegated authority by the Parish Council to make day-to-day decisions on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, as the qualifying body, the Parish Council approved the publication of the Reg 14 Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan in October 2023.

The DPNC on behalf of The Parish Council has consulted the local community extensively over the duration of the project. It has also had an excellent dialogue with officers of the Bucks County Council . The outcome of that work is the Reg 15 Submission version of the DNP.

Further details on the governance and management of the project are contained in the separate Consultation Statement

The DNP identifies four settlements which form the core areas for potential development. They are defined by maps and description in the DNP.

3. CONFORMITY WITH NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with consideration and consistency to national policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and is mindful of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in respect of formulating neighbourhood plans.

In overall terms, there are many aspects of the NPPF that are particularly relevant to Dorney and they are reflected in the NP and indicated below:

Achieving sustained development

In section 6. We have outlined those principals which we believe support sustained development together with specific requirements that further support the policy.

We have tried to future proof any developments by ensuring that the social objectives outlined in the NPPF are supported by excellent and appropriate design and materials, eco positive energy efficient installations and good utility support. We have indicated that any new developments should consist of mixed dwellings to allow for a diversity of residents within the parish.

Due to the position and geography of the Parish environmental objectives are important to the residents of Dorney together with the many visitors we have from the nearby conurbations. This has been reflected in the DNP in many sections.

Firstly, in the proposed development part of the plan, we have adopted a settlement approach to planning ensuring that those areas outside of the settlements are removed from consideration and hence protecting our natural and historic environment.

In our policy section we have further emphasised this within “the Character of Dorney”, “High Quality Design”and “Housing”. The significant number of buildings falling into this category are referred to in the listed buildings section of the DNP.

Bio diversity within the Parish is already significant, particularly with regards to livestock and migrating birds. This is indicated within the appendix B of the DNP showing the number of birds identified within the Parish and within the policy “ Protecting our Landscape “ we have highlighted requirements to preserve and enhance the diversity we have by ensuring that areas outside the settlement areas are retained and enhanced to support the natural habitats.

Economic objectives are not as prominent as those for social and environmental. As can be seen in the employment and economy sections of the DNP local business within the Parish is relatively small with many of its residents commuting.

In the vision we have expressed our approach to welcome small businesses into the appropriately designated areas. In addition, we have particularly looked at support for people now working from home and in our sustainable development section in the DNP we ensured that new developments have the appropriate utilities and energy efficient systems.

Strategic Policies

Although these policies are for an overall higher strategy the DNP does provide support where appropriate.

In relation to housing we have put a great deal of emphasis on the placement and design quality of new development. This can be seen in the sustainable development, design codes and will be further enhanced when the Village Design Scheme proposals are produced in 2024.

In relation to infrastructure although this requirement falls at a higher level than the Parish, in the overriding principals under sustainable development there are two requirements. Firstly, that existing key utilities, including fibre-optic broadband, are efficient and available or are enhanced prior to construction and that, secondly, it will be of contemporary construction requiring energy efficiency and water management to be adhered to.

In relation to conservation and the enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment this is a key element of the Dorney Parish DNA. It is supported by the first 2 objectives and by the policy “The Character of Dorney”. In addition this is emphasised in the sustainable development proposals and is also one of the main drivers for the settlement approach to development

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Within the sustainable development of the DNP there is a target for the number of developments and this would be a significant increase on the development numbers required based on statistical evidence allowing us to fully support the governments objectives. This is outlined in “Sustainable Developments, Settlement Areas and Design Codes”

In the DNP it states that it must be mixed development and of small scale which would be likely to negate most affordable housing options.

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

Within the DNP we have indicated the significant natural, built and historic benefits that the Parish possesses. In section 15 “People and the Community” the number of visitors to Dorney Parish has been highlighted and the provision of a change of scenery for the population of nearby conurbations.

Although there is an understanding that any significant expansion of business within the Parish is unlikely, within our vision and section 13 “People and the Community” and 14 “Economy” support for any increase is highlighted.

Promoting healthy and safe communities together with open space and recreation

These two requirements are supported by the DNP in many of the objectives in the Vision and Objectives section. There are already many footpaths, tow paths and bridleways within Dorney and

it is an area that attracts cyclists. Maintenance and enhancement of these facilities is important to the Parish. Support is also provided in the sustainable development section of the DNP.

Achieving well-designed places

This is supported within the DNP due to the different requirements of the settlements, the conservation area and the number of historic and listed buildings. It is one of the over-arching principles in the sustainable development section. It has been qualified at a high level within the design code section and will be described in greater detail within the VDS being produced in 2024

Protecting Green Belt Land

Dorney Parish is within the green belt and the residents appreciate the benefits that brings. The settlement strategy within the DNP is designed to protect the green belt by only allowing development to take place within the settlement boundaries. In the overriding principles for housing development number 1 it says it should be constructed on brown field sites or infill plots as a priority.

4. General Conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Development Plan

As expected, many of the key strategic areas in the South Bucks Local Plan (SBLP) reflect those identified in the National Planning Policy Framework. In the NP within our Vision, Objectives and Policies section we have adopted many of the strategic housing policies as they support the requirements of our residents. To ensure that the policies are being supported by the DNP, even though there is some duplication, it is important to review them to ensure compliance.

The Green belt

There are four fundamental aims that are outlined in the plan and apply to Dorney Parish and these are: -

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up area
- to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

These four areas are fully supported within the DNP particularly with the settlement approach that is proposed. In addition, our objectives provide additional support particularly the first two: -

- To protect and enhance the rural quality of Dorney Parish
- The historic character of the parish must be conserved and where appropriate enhanced

Landscape

The SBLP states the landscape within South Bucks is very varied ranging from the higher quality landscapes such as the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), to the areas of damaged landscape, the latter being particularly concentrated within the Colne Valley Park. The natural beauty of much of the District's countryside is of great importance to the quality of the life enjoyed by residents and visitors and so must be protected. It is important also that the areas of the District which have been damaged in the past, are now improved as quickly as possible, in terms of their landscape quality, in order that residents and visitors within these areas enjoy a more acceptable quality of life.

These comments are fully supported by the DNP within its sustainable objectives where we confirm the need to protective, conserve and enhance the quality of the environment and preserve the vistas of the parish. In addition, we are intending to apply for an extension to the existing conservation area to protect sensitive landscape and improve biodiversity.

The SPLP also singles out the protection for the River Thames which borders Dorney Parish and the approach in the policy "Protecting the Landscape" specifically mentions the River Thames and Dorney Parish requirements.

Conservation

The SBLP states that the overall objective is the preservation and enhancement of the District's historic fabric and sites of nature conservation interest. South Bucks is fortunate in having a great deal of conservation interest within its District, with many buildings of historic interest, Conservation Areas, ancient monuments, ancient woodlands, historic parks and gardens, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and other sites of archaeological or nature conservation interest.

Dorney Parish contributes by way of a conservation area and a considerable number of listed buildings.

The SBLP objective is fully supported by the DNP firstly by stating the intention to apply for an extension to the existing conservation area which will protect additional historic areas and properties.

Secondly in Section 6 Sustainable Developments, Settlement Areas and Design Codes it states that any housing development in the Parish will - protect, conserve, and enhance the quality of its environment including designated heritage assets and their settings.

Environment Protection and Improvement

Although the SBLP states that in most parts of South Bucks the scope for substantial improvement of environmental quality is limited, particularly given that the District is rural in nature, is not densely populated and has little industry or other uses which might be considered to be major polluters, it does go on to provide guidance as to how South Bucks can support the National requirements.

One of the SBLP policies is that development will only be permitted where its scale, layout, siting, height, design, external materials and use are compatible with the character and amenities of the site itself, adjoining development and the locality in general. Poor designs which are out of scale or character with their surroundings will not be permitted.

This objective is fully supported by the DNP particularly in Section 6 Sustainable Developments, Settlement Areas and Design Codes: - Any new development must achieve high quality design and

environmental standards whilst also being sympathetic to housing stock in the area, reflect local preferences in terms of location and supports community infrastructure.

In addition, the DNP provides a focus on key environmental requirements within its overriding principles by saying that any development will be of contemporary construction requiring energy efficiency and water management to be adhered to.

Further requirements for specific environmental construction features are outlined in the design codes and will be enhanced when the Village Design scheme is produced in 2024.

Leisure, Recreation and Tourism

The SBLP states that leisure and recreation cover a wide variety of activities ranging from formal activities such as golf, tennis and football to informal activities such as walking and horse riding. Sport and recreation is of considerable importance for a number of reasons including the contribution that it makes towards good health, the promotion of sporting excellence, the enhancement of the quality of life, and the help that it provides to the local economy. It can also serve to assist in the protection of the countryside. It is also important that leisure and recreation pursuits are available for all sections and age groups in society.

Dorney Parish provides fully supports the statement and provides significant opportunities for leisure and recreation for its residents and its visitors. The DNP recognises this and in Section 6 Sustainable Developments, Settlement Areas and Design Codes it states “there is a need for development to contribute to the quality of life for residents, including healthy lifestyles, green open spaces, safe places for active play, and to be accessible by walking and cycling”

Housing

The SBLP states Demand for housing in South Bucks is very strong due to its attractive countryside, its accessibility to major employment centres, and to the very high quality of its residential areas. Some 13% of the District is excluded from but enclosed by the Green Belt. The areas excluded from the Green Belt comprise the larger settlements of the District, including Beaconsfield, Gerrards Cross, Burnham, Farnham Common and Iver/Iver Heath. A full list of those settlements excluded from the Green Belt is set out in the Green Belt chapter. The effect of Green Belt policy has been to concentrate the bulk of new housing development in the settlements excluded from the Green Belt. In addition, some limited infilling on a small scale has been allowed to take place within identified settlements in the Green Belt where this is in accordance with local plan policy.

Dorney Parish understands this and wishes to play a positive role towards development within the Parish.

In the sustainable development section of the DNP, it states that we should aim to achieve up to 20 new mixed dwellings during the period up to 2040 but it recognises the issues that need preserving and therefore it states that any approved development should be small scale and approximately proportional to the overall aim of achieving up to 20 new mixed dwellings during the period up to 2040.

The SBLP further states that the proposal would be compatible with the character of the surrounding area in terms of density, layout, design, height, scale, form and materials. Development adjacent to the areas defined in Policy H10 (Residential Areas of Exceptional Character) should be sympathetic to the character of these areas. In assessing whether proposals are compatible the Council will have particular regard to the size and shape of the site and its physical characteristics.

Dorney Parish endorses this statement and within the DNP it states in its overriding principles that any development will protect, conserve, and enhance the quality of its environment including designated heritage assets and their settings. It will also be of a high standard of design and reflecting the housing stock in the area of construction.

Shopping and Town Centres

This section does not apply to Dorney Parish

Economy and Employment

The SBLP states planning policy plays an important role in integrating many environmental and economic objectives. The maintenance of a healthy local economy is important not only for the employment opportunities that it may offer, but also because it has an important impact on the quality of life and on the quality of the environment. A healthy local economy, where there is a close balance between jobs and local workforce skills, offers residents the chance to work locally where they do not have to commute long distances. Other benefits can include buildings being put to an active use, where they may otherwise have remained vacant and derelict to the detriment of the character and amenities of an area.

Within the DNP in the People and Community section there is recognition of the businesses that exist within the Parish. In the main local businesses fall into two categories. They are either connected with agriculture and farming or hospitality. It is also recognised that a high percentage of the residents work outside of the Parish.

Accepting that opportunities for new business are limited within the economy section of the DNP it states for the future prosperity of the parish economic considerations have also been reviewed. For instance, within Boveney there are barns and a shed which are vacant pending Eton College's planning application. If Eton College accept that a smaller number of houses could be built at Boveney, then these unused units can be re-let to local businesses. This would strike a good balance between economic growth and protection of the environment and sustainable development within the settlement areas.

Transport

Within the SBLP transport section many of the aspects mentioned fall outside of any impact on Dorney Parish although recently the Parish was affected considerably by the smart motorway implementation on the M4.

It does state in the body of the section that there is no doubt that traffic represents a major impact on the local environment.

Within the DNP there are steps taken to encourage greater use of cycling. In the objectives it states “To protect and enhance footpaths, cycle ways and bridleways around the Parish”
In addition, within the design code there is a requirement for cycle parking within any new development.

The Parish provides access to Eton Wick and Eton and within the DNP under Roads it recognises the need to try and reduce the speed of vehicles passing through the Parish.

In the body of the SBLP it states whilst the Council wishes to minimise dependence on the car, it also accepts that travel patterns and modes of travel are unlikely to change fundamentally within the lifetime of this Plan. Therefore, it will be necessary for developments to make provision for the off-street parking of cars and other vehicles attracted by development proposals, and to do so on land owned or controlled by the applicant.

Dorney Parish supports this and within the DNP in the Design code section the need for off street parking and visitor and delivery parking is a key requirement. Although visitors are welcome within the Parish parking can be an issue and within the Roads section the Parish Council has committed to pursue all options to try and find a solution.

Community Facilities

This section does not apply to Dorney.

Although there was a requirement within the questionnaire section of the DNP to have a doctor’s surgery within the Parish it is felt that realistically the volume of residents is unlikely to attract this facility. In addition, a local shop was also a popular requirement but with two major supermarkets just outside the parish boundary this was thought unlikely to attract a potential business.

5. Conformity with the Chiltern & South Bucks Local Plan 2036 Settlement Capacity Study

This report was produced in 2019 and relied on information and projections based on the period from 2014 to 2018.

The commentary suggested that Dorney Parish has very few services and facilities and was not considered suitable for major new development. This was borne out by data for housing completions in the 4 years prior to the reports production which showed that approximately one dwelling every two years has been delivered in that period. This suggests that a nominal allocation for windfall development, of a similar rate to recent delivery, is justified (9 dwellings).

The suggested housing figure for this parish for the period 2016-2036 is 0 dwellings from allocations and 11 dwellings from other sources.

We have in the section Sustainable Development, Settlement Areas and Design Codes suggested an aim to achieve up to 20 new mixed dwellings during the period up to 2040 with any approved development being small scale and approximately proportional to the overall aim of achieving up to 20 new mixed dwellings during the period up to 2040.

This is an increase on the 11 suggested by the local plan as activity has been seen to increase since the time the report was produced.

6. Compatibility with EU Legislations

To be discussed with Bucks.