

Presentation Made by Councillor Ian Willock

At Parish Council Meeting

October 3rd 2016

Outlining concerns regarding housing issues,
in the Bolton by Bowland and Gisburn Forest

Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2028

Submission Version

September 2016

Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2028

Submission version

September 2016

Some observations and concerns about

Policy BBGF1

Scale and Type of new housing development

Background to this Presentation

- The Neighbourhood Plan Submission version is an excellent document. It is the result of an extremely lengthy and detailed project. In general, it can be accepted as a good and accurate reflection of the outcomes of the various consultation exercises following the publication of the draft plan
- However, there is one area of important and significant change with which we should be concerned

- It is clear that the Neighbourhood Plan has raised quite differing and strongly held views and opinions within the community
- The issue of housing development has raised the most divisive responses
- The Steering Group champion the case for more houses, believing such growth will contribute to the retention of existing services within the villages (see appendix E Site Assessments 1.4)
- There are clearly strongly held alternative views that additional housing will spoil the village and will do little to sustain assets in the community.
- Various workshops have taken place to clarify the views and wishes of the community and the Housing Needs Survey is a further input into the argument

- At the workshops it has been made clear that the Neighbourhood Plan has to reflect the wishes of the community
- I believe it is our duty as councillors to ensure we do accurately reflect those wishes
- I therefore support acceptance of the Neighbourhood Plan provided we have a clear mandate
- Without such a mandate we would be perceived by the people we represent of acting undemocratically, pursuing an objective of a minority

In this presentation I attempt to identify the key issues on housing development in Bolton by Bowland and demonstrate a number of serious concerns about how these have been reflected in the latest Submission version of The Neighbourhood Plan

The two major inputs

- The Housing Needs Survey
September 2014
- Housing Consultation Workshop
November 10th 2014
- Over the next few slides I will outline the significant output from these events

The Housing Needs Survey

Aim

- To investigate the local affordable housing need for the parishes of Bolton by Bowland, Gisburn Forest and Sawley
- The survey shows that of those households that responded, 50% (for 81 against 82) are in favour of more housing being developed if it were affordable and for local people
- The median price for properties sold in the research period Bolton by Bowland, Gisburn Forest and Sawley Parish was £425,000.
- This is an indicator of a lack of affordable housing within the parish.
- The Submission Version of the Neighbourhood Plan emphasises this in section 5.1.11
- Stating ‘there is a lack of affordable housing within the three parishes’

Housing Consultation workshop

November 10th 2014

Full details of this workshop were published and are included in the Neighbourhood Plan archive documents of the Parish website.

- This workshop attracted 58 members from the parishes
- Also present at the workshop were the top table including Chris Bosonnet (representing the estate) and Claire Parker(Kirkwells)

The workshop with 63 people attending and voting, focused on three elements.

- Number in support for continuation of a growth based plan
- Number in favour of total (housing) increase to 2028
- Consultation on sites

Looking at the results of each of these

Number in support for continuation of a Growth Based Plan

Number in support for continuation of 'growth based' Plan

57 (90%)

Number opposed to continuation of 'growth based' Plan

6 (10%)

- This demonstrates that from those attending there was strong support for a growth based plan
- There was some debate on how such growth might be realised but the main focus was about new housing
- The principle issues discussed were how many houses, where should they be built and the kind of houses

Number in favour of total (housing) increase to 2028

<u>No increase</u>	8	(13%)
<u>1 - 5 houses</u>	19	(30%)
<u>6 – 10 houses</u>	13	(21%)
<u>11 – 15 houses</u>	15	(24%)
<u>16 – 20 houses</u>	8	(13%)

The NP concludes that 27 or 43% wanted 5 or less
and 36 or 57% wanted 6 or more

It is also correct that 40 or 63% wanted max 10
whilst 23 or 37% wanted 11 or more

Consultation on sites

Site 1 Between School and graveyard

48 of 63 or 76%

Site 2 Above Park View Barn Gisburn Road

37 of 63 or 59%

Site 3 Nook Laithe Croft has subsequently
been discarded

Discussion points from November 10th workshop

Q Mike Smith, Closes Hall Mews – how many houses would be on the other two sites(1&2) and what types of houses? **A** CP – 6 on each. The rest of the identified space would be parking and green space on the larger sites

JW - we would see the identified sites as being mixed sites offering affordable and sheltered housing, open market housing and green space

AC – it is down to us to decide what to have

Q David Howarth, Stump Cross – re the small developments - can we dictate how many are built and therefore safeguard the situation?

A JW – we propose to define the number and type of housing on each site. The Neighbourhood Plan can and must reflect our views.

CP – as well as the number and types of houses, we can also specify the phasing

The Draft Neighbourhood Plan

- Following the various inputs the plan proposed several policies
- Most relevant to housing in Bolton By Bowland
was Policy BBG F2

Draft Version

- Policy BBGF2 Phasing of New Housing Development
- New housing in Bolton by Bowland on allocated sites will be provided in a phased manner over the plan period (up to 2018) to avoid over provision at the beginning of the plan and to meet future demand.
- Phase 1
 - **Site 1 to be developed as a mixed local greenspace/housing site for a maximum of 6 houses to include both market housing and affordable housing.**
- Phase 2
- A review will be undertaken by the Parish Council 5 years after the completion of phase 1. The Parish Council will then organise a full consultation exercise with the community on whether a second phase is needed

Conclusion on Draft Plan

The Draft Plan did accurately consider the views of the consultation workshop.

Site 1 was chosen to reflect the views of the majority of those attending the workshop 76% as opposed to 59% for site 2

Phasing was proposed to give ample time to consider and consult further on whether more houses were needed and where they should be sited

The Draft Plan also accurately reflected both the strong views of the workshop and the Housing Needs Survey in recognising the critical requirement to provide affordable housing

Housing Development in Bolton by Bowland

- Since the publication of the Draft Neighbourhood plan in Jan 2015 there has been a formal consultation and responses from various parts of the community.
- In particular the phasing plan for housing development in policy BBGF2, although generating no negative response from the residents was deemed inadvisable by RVBC and subsequently also by the consultants who first proposed the phasing option.
- Particularly concerning were the comments by RVBC.....
 - ‘The phasing stated in this policy may be difficult to justify, for instance in terms of development viability considerations’
- I suggest we are proposing housing development to satisfy the wishes of people within the community. Certainly not the wishes of developers.

The Submission Version

- The submission version was made available to The Parish Council on September 5th 2016
- Policy BBGF1 replaces earlier policies concerning housing development.
- I propose to look at BBGF1 and demonstrate the differences apparently as a result of consultations

Submission version

- **Policy BBGF1 – Scale and Type of New Housing Development**
- Over the plan period, within the defined settlement boundaries of Bolton by Bowland, Tosside and Holden (Map 1, 2, and 3 respectively), proposals for new small scale housing development will only be permitted where it meets the following criteria:
 - a) It is located on the preferred site shown on the proposals map for Bolton by Bowland and conserves and where possible enhances the character of the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area; or
 - b) It is located on the preferred site shown on Map 2 for Tosside; or
 - c) It would not lead to the loss of open space, shops or other local facilities; and
 - d) It has appropriate access; and
 - e) Contributes to character and amenity of village; and
 - f) Does not have a detrimental effect on the landscape or character of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); and
 - g) Is in accordance with all other relevant policies within the context of the surrounding area.
- **Development in Bolton by Bowland on the preferred sites (1 and 2) will be up to a maximum of 8 dwellings in total. The community would prefer that this development up to the maximum of the 8 dwellings should be accommodated on site 1 which is located between the school and the graveyard. However, the plan continues to include site 2 as a potential site to safeguard the plan's overall development objective should there be a problem with site 1.**
- Development in Tosside on the preferred site will be supported for up to 12 dwellings of an appropriate density consistent with the context of the surrounding area

The Differences

- The new plan removes and makes no reference at all to the critical requirement to provide affordable housing
- The new plan whilst removing the phasing option and including Site 1 as the preferred option now includes the possible option of Site 2 becoming the chosen site.

Conclusions on Submission Version

- The policy fails to emphasise the fundamental requirement to provide affordable housing which was made very clear at the workshop
- It fails to reflect the input from The Housing Needs Survey.
- This was and is a central plank of the argument for housing in this and the earlier draft

Conclusions on Submission Version

- The proposal for the development of 8 houses can be justified from the workshop where 63% were happy with up to 10 houses
- There is a very weak case for the inclusion of site 2 without a further consultation argued in the draft plan
- 59% of 63 people from a village of 500 residents is a poor mandate for such a critical issue.

Conclusion on Submission Version

- **We must include the requirement of affordable housing in policy BBGF1**
- We have to be sure that we have a mandate from the people of Bolton by Bowland for any development of site 2
- It has been repeated on many occasions and emphasized at the Housing Consultation Workshop that the plan has to reflect what the people want
- As Councillors, I believe we would be seriously neglecting our responsibilities in proceeding with a plan which did not have complete support of a majority of the people in the village
- More importantly, not to have that support, could well risk the whole plan being rejected at a possible future referendum, when the whole housing proposal has to be made very clear.

It seems to me there are at least three options

- **Just remove the inclusion of Site 2 as an option**
- **Look at the data and decide if the data available provides us with sufficient mandate for the inclusion of site 2**
- **Conduct another simple consultation to decide the acceptability of site 2**

Some points on which to base a decision

- 48 people or 76% voted for site 1
- 37 people or 59% voted for site2
- Only 63 people attended out of a village of over 500 people
- The Draft Plan clearly reflected the majority decision by making site 1 the chosen initial site
- The removal of phasing does not eradicate the option of site 1 being favoured by the majority of people
- The Draft Plan consultations and the Strategic Environmental Assessment have provided no objections to Site 1
- What problems therefore do we envisage affecting Site 1?
- What reason or justification do we have for the possible development of site 2 being chosen by developers?
- A further consultation would cause perhaps a couple of months delay but the whole project is over a year behind schedule and clarity on this point is crucial