

Biddulph Town Council



Session 3- 09.30 Wednesday 5 February 2020

Matter 3 Local Green Space (LGS)

Biddulph Town Council is grateful for the opportunity to address the Inspector in relation to Main Modifications on the above issues.

The information below is a guide to the points that will be raised at this Session in order to highlight the key issues.

Background

Biddulph Town Council has led the development of a Neighbourhood Plan and Neighbourhood Development Order, which are due to be submitted to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council at the beginning of February 2020 for Regulation 16 consultation.

These documents are '**pioneering**' in that very few Groups across the country have completed both projects simultaneously.

The process that has been undertaken in order to create these two documents has been lengthy, but **thorough**. A dedicated Working Group (made up of **local experts**) has worked for over four years to build and gather a comprehensive evidence base, which represents the views and needs of the community. With the support of a planning consultant from Urban Vision, the Group members have used their professional skills and knowledge of the local community to collect data and commission specialist organisations, which helped to develop policies that are both pro-development and will support and enhance features of the town that are most cherished by those that live there.

The Group has engaged with the Local Plan process and fully understands the challenges that have arisen around Green Belt constraints.

Issues

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- It is unclear why some Local Green Spaces were chosen for inclusion, and others discounted at this stage. It has not been demonstrated that the requirements of national policy and guidance have been met.
- It should be noted that, whilst the protection for LGS is similar to that for green belts, the purpose is different.



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- With regard to Dorset Drive East and West, the community identified these areas as being 'demonstrably special'. The sites are:

Well used by walkers, provides visual break and transitional area between settlement and open countryside beyond disused railway. Forms part of buffer on settlement edge. Wildlife corridor function along stream.

As a result, these are included within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan as Local Green Spaces.

- The Town Council is currently working with the Environment Agency to complete tree and shrub laying activities in the area, to manage any future flood risk. These sites continue to have potential for future projects and development.
- The Town Council has recently submitted a 'pocket park' application for this area, to support the community to enhance the area further. This process has identified:
The creation of a pocket park will have a number of benefits for the community:
 - *The improvement of the walkway between two residential areas will enable better connectivity for residents to walk into town along a route that is not beside a road. In addition, a reduction in car use would have the potential to improve critical road junctions at Dorset Drive and Station Road.*
 - *Improved public space and ongoing management will help to reduce risk and anti-social behaviour for residents. In addition, there will be better linkages between two communities.*
 - *There will be improvements in the network of public spaces, linking the Biddulph Valley Way with the town centre and creating a long-term value.*

The Town Council has identified these areas as being of significant importance for the community. Ultimately, The Town Council, in partnership with Biddulph in Bloom wishes to work towards the development of a town walk, linking green spaces in the urban area to provide an accessible route for residents and visitors.

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