**Nether Alderley Neighbourhood Plan**

**Consultation Analysis**

**Contents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Page** |
| **1.** | **Introduction** | **3** |
| **2.** | **Analysis of Responses** | **4** |
| **3.** | **Implications and Recommendations for the Neighbourhood Plan** | **10** |
| **4.** | **Next Steps** | **13** |

1. **Introduction**

The proposed Nether Alderley Neighbourhood Plan will contain a range of policies that are designed to influence land use and help to determine planning applications across the parish.

On Saturday 12th February 2022, an initial consultation event was held at Nether Alderley Village Hall, concerned with the proposed draft policies. The draft policies were developed in response to what local residents and businesses had previously informed the Parish Council are their local priorities.

Although not part of statutory consultation, the event was held in order to ensure that the Parish Council had interpreted those priorities in an appropriate and accurate manner.

If required, the Parish Council will make amendments to the draft policies in accordance with feedback received from the consultation event, and these amendments will be reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan as it progresses.

This short report is concerned with the responses received from the consultation event. The responses have been analysed, and the implications for the Neighbourhood Plan detailed. There are a number of recommendations for the Neighbourhood Plan moving forward for the Parish Council to consider. The analysis is set out in Section 2, while the implications and recommendations are detailed in Section 3. Section 4 of the report sets out the next steps.

1. **Analysis of Responses**

The first consultation event in support of the proposed Nether Alderley Neighbourhood Plan was held on Saturday 12th February 2022. The event had been delayed due to the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the weather on the day was poor, meaning that the turnout was not what was hoped.

However, those that were in attendance engaged in a lively manner and provided positive feedback. In addition, the Parish Council has also received a number of representations following the event which are also addressed in this report.

The draft policies consulted on are as follows:

* HD1: Local Design and Character;
* HD2: Local Heritage Assets;
* LE1: Countryside and the Natural Environment;
* LE2: Green and Blue Infrastructure;
* SFP1: Sustainable Construction and Energy Production;
* SFP2: Communications Infrastructure;
* SI1: Local Services;
* SI2: Community Assets and Infrastructure;
* CC1: Alderley Park;
* CC2: Nether Alderley Village Hall;
* CS1: Local Footpaths and Walkways;
* H1: Housing to Address Local Needs;
* LE1: Homeworking and Home-based Business; and
* LE2: Rural Business and Diversification.

The response to each of these is considered below.

HD1: Local Design and Character

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 83%

No: 17%

Part: -

The vast majority of respondents were supportive of Policy HD1, with specific comments made in respect of the character of new properties, landscape treatments, and environmental standards.

Those that did not support the policy – including NARPA – opposed it on the basis that the whole of the Parish is located in the Green Belt, and therefore development should not be considered unless very special circumstances exist, meaning that this policy would not be necessary. This is not entirely accurate and is considered in more detail in Section 3 of the report.

HD2: Local Heritage Assets

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 83%

No: -

Part: 17%

As with Policy HD1, the vast majority of respondents were supportive of Policy HD2, with a number of comments made that the policy is ‘essential’. In addition a number of respondents asked if the cross by the junction with Artists Lane will be restored. One respondent, while supportive of the policy, asked if it would carry any weight.

Those that responded that they part supported the policy did not really explain why they only part supported the policy, and also stated that a Heritage Statement should be submitted for any proposals involving or affecting a heritage asset, which the policy – as currently drafted – requires.

LE1: Countryside and the Natural Environment

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 83%

No: -

Part: 17%

The vast majority of respondents were supportive of Policy LE1. Comments were received in respect of lighting; while control of this to existing properties is difficult, Policy HD1 can be adapted to ensure such issues are addressed in new proposals. In addition, further comments were received in respect of the potential to create a wildflower meadow within the Parish.

Those that responded that they part supported the policy did not respond to the content of the draft policy but merely reiterated that inappropriate development should not occur within the Parish. In addition, they also referred to the Parish’s location within the Green Belt; Green Belt policy is not an environmental policy. These issues are addressed in Section 3.

LE2: Green and Blue Infrastructure

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 67%

No: -

Part: 25%

The majority of respondents support Policy LE2. One respondent raised concerns regarding the parkway concept for Melrose Way and appear to assume that this would mean development which isn’t the case; this can be addressed by amending the policy to make this clear (this is addressed in Section 3), while another did not express a position in terms of support but commented that the development of Alderley Park is a threat, which is not really relevant to the policy in question. A number of comments were made regarding flooding.

Those that responded that they part supported the policy raised flooding issues, and also stated that any public art along Melrose Way would be inappropriate suggesting that this would distract drivers. They also stated that the speed limit along Melrose Way should be reduced to 50mph; however, this is not an issue that the Neighbourhood Plan can address, though it will be noted and can be added to the non-planning section.

SFP1: Sustainable Construction and Energy Production

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 75%

No: -

Part: 17%

Although most were supportive of Policy SFP1, the only comment received asked if the policy could go further than the government mandate. This is addressed in Section 3.

Those that part supported the policy suggested that the policy should be more specific, and that designs should still be reflective of the local context.

SFP2: Communications Infrastructure

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 83%

No: -

Part: 17%

The vast majority of respondents were in support of Policy SFP2.

Those that part supported referred to development within the Green Belt not being permitted unless very special circumstances were demonstrated and suggested that the policy had been overtaken by events.

SI1: Local Services

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 75%

No: 17%

Part: 8%

The majority of respondents were supportive of Policy SI1. Specific comments were received in respect of public transport, and health provision, particularly the capacity of the local GP surgery.

Those that didn’t support the policy referred to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and suggested that improving local services would lead to pressure for new development. This is addressed in Section 3.

SI2: Community Assets and Infrastructure

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 75%

No: 17%

Part: 8%

The majority of respondents support Policy SI2. Specific comments were received regarding the provision of play areas for small children, and the proposed new football pitch within the Conservation Area.

Those that don’t support the policy refer to inappropriate development in the Green Belt, while misquoting from the draft policy, and identified that some roads within the Parish are in a poor condition and need addressing – these are noted but cannot be addressed within the Neighbourhood Plan, but issues relating to specific roads can be referred to in the non-planning section.

CC1: Alderley Park

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 58%

No: 17%

Part: 25%

Policy CC1 appears to be the most contentious policy. The majority of respondents acknowledge that community cohesion associated with Alderley Park and how it is developing is an issue, but most appear to associate this with further development which is not supported.

Amendments to the policy will be required to reflect this. This is addressed in Section 3.

CC2: Nether Alderley Village Hall

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 92%

No: -

Part: 8%

Policy CC2 is overwhelmingly supported. No detailed comments were provided.

CS1: Local Footpaths and Walkways

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 92%

No: -

Part: 8%

The vast majority of respondents are supportive of Policy CS1. Concerns were expressed regarding the condition of some footpaths and pavements, while it was suggested that a map could be produced detailing local paths and walkways.

Those that only part supported the policy asked why new developments should overlook local footpaths and walkways, and lower speed limits were suggested for some lanes across the Parish; again, this is a non-planning matter.

H1: Housing to Address Local Needs

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 92%

No: -

Part: 8%

Policy H1 is overwhelmingly supported, with respondents recognising the lack of housing opportunities for the young, and those on lower incomes.

Those part supporting the policy referred to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and suggested that such developments should be delivered through infill and brownfield land only. This is addressed in Section 3.

LE1: Homeworking and Home-based Business

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 100%

No: -

Part: -

Policy LE1 was supported by all respondents, with one comment received suggesting that the policy should be linked to Policy SFP2.

LE2: Rural Business and Diversification

Is the policy supported:

Yes: 92%

No: -

Part: 8%

Policy LE2 is overwhelmingly supported, with respondents noting that rural employment opportunities are important to those on lower incomes. Those part supporting the policy referred to ensuring that any proposals are compatible with the Green Belt. This is addressed in Section 3.

1. **Implications and Recommendations for the Neighbourhood Plan**

The response to the proposed Neighbourhood Plan and the draft policies has been largely positive, and some constructive comments have been received. This is reflective of the work that the Parish Council has put in.

All of the draft policies were supported by the majority of respondents to some extent, while specific comments are helpful, the majority of which can be addressed through amendments to policies, or through adding to the non-planning section.

Suggested amendments to the draft policies are as follows:

HD1: Local Design and Character

The impact of lighting was raised as an issue by respondents; therefore it is proposed to amend the policy to require a lighting assessment with planning applications.

Green Belt was raised as a key issue regarding this and other policies. The Green Belt issue is addressed separately below.

HD2: Local Heritage Assets

A number of respondents asked if the cross at Artists Lane will be restored. It could be added to the non-planning section that the Parish Council will work with relevant organisations to secure the restoration of the cross.

No specific amendments to the policy will be required.

LE1: Countryside and the Natural Environment

Lighting was raised in respect of this policy. This will be addressed through an amendment to Policy HD1. No amendments to this policy will be required.

LE2: Green and Blue Infrastructure

The proposed parkway concept for Melrose Way will require further detail, including making clear that it does not mean ‘development’, and being clearer regarding public art provision, and therefore it is proposed to make amendments to the policy.

Flooding and speed limit issues were raised. These can be added to the non-planning section if the Parish Council are comfortable with this.

SFP1: Sustainable Construction and Energy Production

One respondent asked if the Neighbourhood Plan could go further than government mandate. This is possible but could be open to challenge on the grounds of viability. No amendments to this policy are suggested.

SFP2: Communications Infrastructure

No amendments to the policy are required.

SI1: Local Services

No amendments to the policy are required. Comments regarding public transport and local health provision are non-planning matters and can be added to the non-planning section.

SI2: Community Assets and Infrastructure

No amendments to the policy are required. Comments regarding the condition of roads are non-planning matters and as such, can be added to the non-planning section.

CC1: Alderley Park

Alderley Park was the most contentious issue raised during the consultation event, and while it should be noted that 83% of respondents either support or part support Policy CC1, it is recommended that the policy be reviewed and amended in view of the comments that have been made.

CC2: Nether Alderley Village Hall

No amendments to the policy are required.

CS1: Local Footpaths and Walkways

No amendments to the policy are required. Comments regarding the condition of footpaths and walkways are non-planning matters and as such, can be added to the non-planning section.

H1: Housing to Address Local Needs

The policy was overwhelmingly supported, though comments were made regarding appropriate sites for such developments such as infill sites and brownfield sites; the policy can be amended to reflect these suggestions.

LE1: Homeworking and Home-based Business

No amendments to the policy are required.

LE2: Rural Business and Diversification

No amendments to the policy are required.

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As referred to above, Nether Alderley’s location within the Green Belt was raised by respondents in response to a number of the draft policies. It is considered that this should be acknowledged.

Green Belt policy is a strategic policy, and a Neighbourhood Plan cannot amend strategic policies; this is done through the Local Plan process. Therefore there is no need for there to be a Green Belt policy within the Nether Alderley Neighbourhood Plan.

However, given that the Green Belt is clearly important to the residents of the Parish, it is considered that the Neighbourhood Plan should respond to this.

Therefore it is proposed that a new section be added to the Neighbourhood Plan which addresses the Green Belt in Nether Alderley, but which explains what it can and can’t do, and where the application of Green Belt policy lies.

1. **Next Steps**

The next steps in progressing the Neighbourhood Plan are as follows:

* Nether Alderley Parish Council to consider this report, and approve the proposed amendments to the proposed Neighbourhood Plan;
* Make the amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan and prepare the submission version; and
* Prepare a consultation event on the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan.