

Leicester Forest East Neighbourhood Plan

Consultation Statement

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The following appendices are available separately:

Appendix A Leicester Forest East Application for Neighbourhood Area Designation

Appendix B Theme Group Role

Appendix C Leicester Forest East Community Consultation 2016 Summary

Appendix Di Leicester Forest East Flier Front

Appendix Dii Leicester Forest East Flier Back

Appendix E Leicester Forest East Community Consultation 2017 Analysis

Appendix F Leicester Forest East Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Consultation Responses

Introduction

This Consultation Statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the Regulations sets out what a Consultation Statement should contain. According to the Regulations, a Consultation Statement:

- Contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan;
- Explains how they were consulted;
- Summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted;
- Describes how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

This document provides a record of the engagement that took place at the various stages of the plan's evolution. The main methods used to publicise the consultation and engagement process are documented, along with the main findings from the engagement.

Regulations and government guidance:

Stage 1: Deciding to make a Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Council of Leicester Forest East formally took the decision to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan at a Parish Council meeting on 20 January 2016.

Stage 2: Defining the neighbourhood

The Parish Council applied to Blaby District Council on 16 February 2016 to designate Leicester Forest East Parish in its entirety as a Neighbourhood Area. The correspondence is attached as *Appendix A*. The decision notice is on the Blaby District Council website.

A formal engagement period provided members of the public and other key stakeholders an opportunity to submit comment on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area and proposed Neighbourhood Planning Body for Leicester Forest East.

Blaby District Council checked that the application was appropriate and undertook the appropriate notification process. The designation was made on 27 May 2016.

Stage 3: Preparing the plan

Leicester Forest East Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee is a Committee of Leicester Forest East Parish Council. The Committee has an elected Chair and an approved constitution.

The Advisory Committee has worked to produce a draft plan, ensuring that it:

- Is in general conformity with the Blaby Local Plan;
- Has regard for national planning policies;
- Is in line with other legal frameworks;
- Is mindful of the need to contribute to sustainable development;
- Has been prepared on the basis of sound governance arrangements.

Leicester Forest East Neighbourhood Plan seeks to establish specific and local planning policies for the development and use of land in the Parish. The neighbourhood plan establishes a vision for the future taking into account the data gathered through community engagement and consultation alongside demographic and socio-economic data. The Parish Council appointed *YourLocale* as consultants to help create the plan.

The Advisory Committee met on:

18.12.18	13.12.16	13.4.16
30.5.18	8.11.16	9.2.16
4.7.17	4.10.16	5.1.16
11.4.17	9.8.16	15.12.15
17.1.17	11.5.16	3.11.15

Minutes of all Advisory Committee meetings can be found on the Leicester Forest East Parish Council website or as a hard copy version.

On 28 February 2017, three theme groups were launched. Local people were engaged in order to pull together and prioritise ideas emerging from the first consultation event and to start to work up

their plans. Around 20 people were involved in the theme groups, undertaking valuable research and assessment.

The remit of each Theme Group (see Appendix B) was to explore the suitability of issues important to the local community including the following:

a. Housing and the built environment Theme Group

- Tenures and type of housing;
- Affordable housing requirements;
- Number, type and density of houses;
- Design;
- Location of housing/assessments for residential site allocations;
- Limits of Development.

b. Environment (natural and historic) Theme Group

- Protection of specific sites through designations such as 'Local Green Space';
- Areas of separation;
- Wildlife corridors;
- Biodiversity;
- Important views;
- Trees and hedges;
- Conservation area/heritage assets;
- Protection of cycle ways/paths;
- Energy Efficiency/renewable energy.

c. Sustainability Group (Economic growth/Community facilities/transport):

Economic growth

- Current retail and employment infrastructure;
- Opportunities for growth;
- Relationship between availability of employment and population, commuting;
- Location, number and types of jobs, apprenticeships, manufacturing, retail;
- Potential links with neighbouring communities;
- Relationship between local skill base and available employment;

Community facilities

- Community infrastructure;
- Schools;
- Open spaces;
- Community centre;
- Analysis of what is needed and what is being provided in relation to new buildings;
- Activities for all the population including growing elderly population;

Transport

- Car parking;
- Road infrastructure;
- Speeding;
- Disabled access;
- Congestion;
- Public transport.

The groups continued to meet into 2018 before producing draft chapters for consideration by the Parish Council.

Communications

Below are listed the main ways that information about the Neighbourhood Plan has been communicated with local people and stakeholders.

1. **Village noticeboards** displaying details of consultation events and meetings.
2. **Leaflets/ flyers** were distributed to each household in the Parish inviting residents to attend the Open Events and promoting the questionnaire. Every household received a hard copy of the questionnaire and flyers advertising each drop-in consultation were posted through every door in the parish.
3. **Leicester Forest East Parish Council website:** agendas, minutes, monthly updates, the questionnaire and all consultation results were posted on the web site as they became available. Each Parish Council meeting received an update on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan.
4. **Stakeholder letters/email:**
 - A letter was sent to all stakeholders in spring 2016 advising them that the parish council was producing a Neighbourhood Plan and providing advance notice of the open event in September that year.
 - All stakeholders were contacted by letter in advance of the Regulation 14 consultation period between 12 October and 23 November 2018. Owners of all proposed Local Green Space sites were contacted separately by letter.

Consultation methodology

The consultations aimed:

- To inform as many people as possible of the existence of the neighbourhood planning process
- To seek the views of people from the community on the proposals being developed by the Advisory Committee.

Activities:

As well as meetings of the Advisory Committee and the work of the theme groups the following activities were undertaken:

- a. The intention to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and an invitation to contribute toward the process was widely publicised by leaflets and in the Parish newsletter
- b. Notices were placed on the Parish noticeboard asking people to get involved and informing them of progress;
- c. All meeting agendas, minutes and key documents were posted on the Parish Council website;
- d. The Neighbourhood Plan was included as a regular agenda item at Parish Council meetings. Minutes of all meetings are publicly available on the Parish Council website;
- e. A good working relationship was established with the District Council including dialogue and meetings at key stages;
- f. A staffed open event about the Neighbourhood Plan was held in September 2016. At this event people were asked to give their thoughts and ideas on priority issues for the Plan. The event was extensively publicised;
- g. A community questionnaire was undertaken in April 2017;

- h. Agencies with a statutory or other significant interest in the Plan were invited to submit their comments in writing by email and letter, at appropriate stages of the planning process, according to the regulations.
- i. Formal consultation at Regulation 14 took place between 12 October and 23 November 2018

Formal Consultations

Several consultations have taken place, each building on the evidence of the last.

An initial community consultation event took place in the Parish on 10 September 2016 (Appendix C). It was advertised by a leaflet delivered to each household in the Parish (Appendix D).

Summary of findings

Comments were made which reflected a range of opinions. However, attendees demonstrated a consistency of opinion in some key areas:

Housing

Out of a total of 4 combined comments on the Housing section there emerged no real consensus but individual comments highlighting the need for any additional housing to meet the needs of elderly residents and sufficient car parking spaces whilst retaining as much green space as possible.

Heritage

2 respondents cited the Old Library in Holmfield East; while 3 people referred to the art deco building housing the Forest House Motor Company. A further 2 highlighted the Red Cow pub as being of significance in terms of local heritage, although it is in fact in the Kirby Muxloe Parish.

Community Facilities

6 comments were made in total in this section, with 2 people wishing to see the library staffed for all the hours stated, and another again highlighting the FH Motor Company garage building as needing to be retained, but unsure in what way.

Access and Highways

This section attracted the largest number of responses – 10. In the case of any additional development, the three themes were: the potential for levels of RTAs to increase, especially in the A47 Kings Drive/Sainsbury's area; road traffic congestion becoming greater, with Kings Drive and Hambleton Close in particular being named; the need for safer cycle paths.

Environment

There was a single response to the environmental displays. Respondent stated: "low surface noise on M1"

Anything Else?

The desire for the art deco Forest Motor Company building to be repaired and retained as a building of interest was reiterated by one person. 3 comments related to various aspects of the wish for the area to be cleaner and tidier in terms of pet fouling, tree tidying in Spider Park and more flower tubs. One general statement expressed concern that a recent development destroyed the local wildlife environment, and a specific comment was made about the need for longer hours of lighting on Hambleton Close.

A comprehensive Community Questionnaire was delivered to every household in April 2017 (Appendix E).

The questionnaire contained 33 questions and was based on important themes established following initial consultation work by the Leicester Forest East Parish Council. These themes are our parish; housing; parish facilities; education; transport; business; community events and general comments.

The survey took place in May 2017. It was available to complete electronically and as a paper copy. There are 158 responses to the questionnaire.

The general findings were as follows:

What do you enjoy about living in the Parish?

Green spaces are valued the most highly by respondents whilst the feeling of being part of a community and community events are considered important but less so than the other options. Over 30 comments appear in the appendix.

Housing

There is a general feeling that there is sufficient housing in Leicester Forest East. However, bungalows and housing for the elderly are considered to be the most needed house type. 21 comments appear in the appendix.

Development

Overwhelmingly the most important feature for respondents is the need for off-road parking for two vehicles. Traditional semi-detached and detached housing is preferred and larger gardens are viewed as desirable. 27 comments appear in the appendix.

How many houses

88% of those responding feel that current infrastructure can accommodate no more than 200 new houses. This is half the proposed number of new homes. This indicates, less a direct concern about new homes being built, but a firmly held view that infrastructure and facilities need to be improved significantly to be able to accommodate the volume of new development planned.

Type of housing

Owner occupation is clearly the favoured option: 94% of respondents feeling this is important or highly important.

Social rented housing is the least important: 67% of respondents feeling that this is not very suitable or not suitable at all. Five comments appear in the appendix.

Facilities

Medical facilities are overwhelmingly considered the most important: 99% of respondents feeling it to be important or highly important. 27 comments appear in the appendix, the most frequently mentioned facility being the community run library for which there appears to be a sense of significant goodwill and support.

Use of existing facilities

General stores/supermarkets, the pharmacy, post office, parks and doctors are clearly the most used by those responding. 15 comments appear in the appendix, some questioning the existence of a garage!

Amenities needed

A DIY shop features at the top of respondent's wishes; followed by a greengrocer/flowerist, a youth centre and more recycling facilities. Further comments appear in the appendix, within which the library is mentioned again, this time with regard to its potential for further development as a community resource.

Education

The primary school received a favorable response with fewer than 11% feeling that it is poor. However, this question is notable for the number of people who are unfamiliar with the educational facilities of the Parish. This perhaps reflects the fact that 77% of respondents are over 50.

Transport

There is clear concern about speed of vehicles in Leicester Forest East – fewer than 11% are not concerned by this. Fewer than 16% are not concerned about parking issues in the Parish. 65 wide ranging comments appear in the appendix – this question attracted more comments than any other.

The average number of vehicles in the households of those responding is two and respondents state that nearly all of these are parked off road, within the boundary of their homes.

Of those responding, 40 travel to work by car, four walk, three go by bus, two by bicycle and one by taxi.

A total of 730 miles was travelled to work by the 84 people who responded, making an average of nearly 9 miles travelled to work. The longest journey for a daily commute was 55 miles and the lowest was a quarter of a mile.

Business

Respondents commenting on this question suggested there was a need for some business start-up advice; requested small affordable units/workshops for small businesses to use; asked for promotion in the local newsletter. Direct public transport to the train station was suggested too. One respondent said, "Local business is key, but local government needs to interact with them to assist. The 45% rise in business rates and substantially increased traffic does not help small local companies".

Regulation 14 consultation took place from 12 October to 23 November 2018.

All comments and the changes made to the Pre-Submission Draft of the Neighbourhood Plan are attached as Appendix F.

The Advisory Committee's mandate was to drive the process, consult with the local community, gather evidence to support emerging policies and deliver the Plan.

Contacting Stakeholders

The first task was to contact statutory and local stakeholders and announce the commencement of the Neighbourhood Plan process. The following stakeholders were contacted at the outset and later at Regulation 14 stage:

Statutory Stakeholders

British Gas Properties, Aviary Court, Wade Road, Basingstoke Hampshire, RG24 8GZ

British Telecommunications Plc, Customer Wideband Planning Group Post Point BSTE 0301, Bath Street, Nottingham NG1 1BZ

Deb Roberts, Planning Liaison Officer, The Coal Authority, 200 Lichfield Lane, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 4RG thecoalauthority@coal.gov.uk

East Leicestershire and Rutland CCG, Suite 2 and 3, Bridge Business Park 674 Melton Road, Thurmaston, Leicester, LE4 8BL

Rachel Jordan, Historic England, 2nd Floor, Windsor House, Cliftonville Northampton, NN1 5BE
rachel.jordan@HistoricEngland.org.uk New email: eastmidlands.businessofficers@historicengland.org.uk

Homes and Communities Agency, 5 St Philip's Place, Colmore Row Birmingham, B3 2PW
Ms Aoife O'Tool, Highways Agency, Level 9, The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham B1 1RN

FAO Mr D Holdstock, National Grid, AMEC Environment & Infrastructure UK Limited, Gables House, Kenilworth Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 6JX

Miss C Jackson, Consultation Service, Natural England, Hornbeam House, Electra Way, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 6GJ

Network Rail Infrastructure Limited, Kings Place, 90 York Way London, N1 9AG

Mr Peter Davies, Severn Trent Water Ltd, Hucknall Road Nottingham, NG5 1FH

Stuart Patience, Planning Liaison Officer, Anglian Water Ltd, Planning & Equivalence Team, Thorpe Wood House, Thorpe Wood, Peterborough, PE3 6WT spatience@anglianwater.co.uk

Leicestershire Police, Force Headquarters, St Johns, Enderby, Leicester, LE19 2BX

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue, 12 Geoff Monk Way, Birstall, Leicester LE4 3BU

Nik Green, Communities and Places Officer, Leicestershire County Council, Nik.Green@leics.gov.uk

Geoff Platts, Environment Agency, Lower Trent Area, Trentside Offices, Scarrington Road, West Bridgeford, Nottingham, NG2 5FA geoff.platts@environment-agency.gov.uk

CPRE info@cpreleicestershire.org.uk

Voluntary Action Leicestershire admin@vasl.org.uk

Leicestershire Ethnic Minority Partnership Prakash@lemp-leics.org.uk

Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups info@gypsytravellerfederation.org

Interfaith Forum for Leicestershire equality@leics.gov.uk

Leicestershire Centre for Integrated Living. 5-9 Upper Brown Street, Leics, LE1 5TE

Roy Holland. Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland roy.holland@ageukleics.org.uk

Lucy O'Doherty, Blaby DC. lucy.o'doherty@blaby.gov.uk

Adjoining Parishes:

Braunstone Town; Darren Tilley enquiries@braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk

Leicester Forest West: Michael Moore michael@sjmnet.com

Kirby Muxloe: Beverley Greenwood kirbymuxloepc@btconnect.com

Leicester City Council: 115 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1FZ

Councillors/MP

MP: Edward Agar edward.argar.mp@parliament.uk

District Councillors: cllr.david.clements@blaby.gov.uk cllr.lindsey.dracup@blaby.gov.uk
cllr.stuart.coar@blaby.gov.uk

County Councillor: richard.blunt@leics.gov.uk

The same groups, individuals and organisations have been consulted as part of the Regulation 14 consultation arrangements.

Conclusion

Comments from respondents to the Regulation 14 Consultation have helped to shape the draft Neighbourhood Plan prior to submission to Blaby District Council.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan is now ready to be submitted at Regulation 15 stage to Blaby District Council, who, once the draft Plan has been validated, will publicise it for a further six weeks and then forward it, with accompanying documents and all representations made during the publicity period, to an Independent Examiner who will review it and check that it meets the 'Basic Conditions'.

If the Plan successfully passes this stage, with any modifications, it will be put forward for referendum.

The referendum question will be a straight "yes" or "no" on the entire Plan, as set out by Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. People will not be able to vote for or against individual policies. If more than 50% of those voting vote for the Plan, it will be brought into force ('Made') and become part of District-wide planning policy.

This Consultation Statement and the supporting Appendices are provided to comply with Section 15(2) of part 5 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.

Holly Mann
Clerk
Leicester Forest East Parish Council
November 2019