



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Good News!

After two years of public consultation and consideration, the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan is reaching its final stages of preparation and consultation before a public referendum later this year.

This newsletter gives a summary of progress to date, the proposal, and a brief summary of the planning policies drawn up to deal with them, now and in the future.

This is your opportunity to be brought up-to-date and for you to give any feedback prior to the Plan being submitted.

If you have any questions about this newsletter. Please contact:-

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Email :

Christine.Walton@great-aycliffe.gov.uk

Facebook:

GreatAycliffeNP Group

We need your comments on the Plan and proposed policies.

Hard copies of the Plan and supporting information can be found at:-

- The Library
- Pioneering Care Centre
- Oak Leaf Sports Complex
- Great Aycliffe Town Council Offices
- Most Community Centres
- Most Residents Groups
- Newton Aycliffe Youth & Community Centre
- The Excel Centre
- The Work Place

Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan

Vision:

"To make Great Aycliffe a vibrant community the Neighbourhood Plan will seek, to enhance the natural environment, support and encourage high quality housing, local jobs and improved retail and leisure facilities in a healthy, green and attractive town"

TELL US YOUR VIEWS

We will be undertaking a 6 week Pre-Submission public consultation as required by Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 from :-

MONDAY 25TH APRIL 2016 TO MONDAY 6TH JUNE 2016

Your comments will be reviewed and, if required, amendments made; then there will be a further six-week consultation undertaken by Durham County Council, followed by an examination by an Independent Inspector and finally a **referendum for the whole of Great Aycliffe Parish later this year which will be a simple 'YES' or 'NO' vote.**

It's All About The Future and You!

The Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan was launched in July 2014, with a town-wide questionnaire. Since then, we have taken every opportunity to speak to residents about their wishes for the future, with over 40 consultation events being held throughout the parish. We have spoken to residents' associations, PACT meetings, Mothers' Union, Rotary, Youth Council, women's groups and at numerous public events. The picture to the right, taken at the Community Fair last year, shows the many hundreds of responses we received in the town-wide questionnaire.

Your comments have been used to develop the Plan—thank you!

Your Issues—Our Proposals

The Consultation results identified six main topic areas as priorities for residents. These were:

- Environment
- Housing
- Retail, Leisure and Economy
- Aycliffe Village
- Sustainability and Climate Change
- Transport and Access

You told us you wanted to keep the pleasant environment of Aycliffe, with its green and open feeling and large amount of community space.

You said that good housing was very important, for young and old alike and that a shortage of bungalows should be addressed.

Retail was a popular subject, with most people wanting to see an improved retail provision on the town.

Residents of Aycliffe Village told us that they would like to retain the village's traditional character.

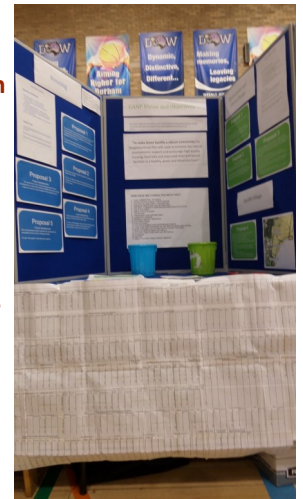
You told us that you were concerned about climate change and sustainability and making Great Aycliffe a better place for future generations.

Transport and access were very important topics—with parking problems in residential areas receiving many comments

You can let us have your comments by :-

- **Writing to—Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe DL5 6QF**
- **Email—Christine.walton@great-aycliffe.gov.uk**
- **Facebook—GreatAycliffeNP**
- **Survey monkey— [surveymonkey.com/r/GANPPreSub](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GANPPreSub)**

We developed a number of proposals to meet your priorities and they gained overwhelming support during the Your Issues, Our Proposal Consultation undertaken in November 2015. Turn to the next page for details of our policies to help deliver your objectives and our proposals.



Aycliffe Nature Park



The policies of the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan are set within the context of the National Planning Policy Guidance and the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan as the County Durham Local Plan has been delayed.

These are a summary of the main points only, full details and policy wording may be found at:- great-aycliffe.gov.uk/info/neighbourhood-plan-4/consultation-2/

A Brief Overview, Proposed Policies—the main points

Environment—Proposals

- To protect the larger traditional green areas from future development, except where there is an overwhelming need and demand to alleviate parking problems.
- To protect the existing and encourage new wildlife corridors by developing a specific policy.
- Ensure the tree-lined avenues are kept to retain the uniqueness of Newton Aycliffe.
- To develop a green wedge policy to ensure Aycliffe Village maintains a buffer zone from any potential development encroachment.

Proposed Policies to support the Environment Proposals

Policy CH1—Landscape Character and Townscape

This policy states that any new developments must respect the landscape character of the parish and its settlements and must maintain the original green and open feel of the town.

Policy CH2—Protection of Accessible Local Green Open Space

This was a major priority for residents so we have mapped and categorised all of the green space in Great Aycliffe and this policy specifies that development will only be permitted in special circumstances and under certain criteria.

Policy CH3—Amenity Open Spaces and Recreational Areas

Any open spaces not identified in CH2 above, may not be built upon except in specified, exceptional circumstances.

Policy E1—Green Corridors

Green corridors for wildlife and open areas for recreational activities, such as cycleway, will be protected from development.

Policy E2—Aycliffe Village Green Wedge

A 'green wedge' of open land to the north and south of Aycliffe Village will protect it from development encroachment.

Policy E3—Conservation Area

This policy will ensure the protection of the Aycliffe Village Conservation Area.

Policy E4 Tree Retention and Removal and Policy E5 Tree Protection

These policies are designed to preserve and promote the green and leafy character of Great Aycliffe. Any new development must meet specific criteria in order to protect or replace existing trees in the same location and planting to increase biodiversity and green corridors will be encouraged.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

(This is a financial contribution to off-set infrastructure needs with the parish and may be received as a result of future development).

We proposed:

- That the Town Council are consulted in advance where CIL or Section 106 monies will be available.
- To set local priorities for the investment of CIL or Section 106 monies.

Proposed Policy to support CIL

Policy CIL1—Contributions

This policy sets out the priorities you told us were important for the use of any CIL monies forthcoming from new development. We have prioritised off-street parking, improved and linked up footpaths and cycleways.

This will be in addition to any infrastructure provision which is required.

Housing—Proposals

- Request an enhanced percentage of bungalows or older persons' accommodation within 600m walking distance from the Town Centre, Cobbler's Hall and Neville Parade as a substitute to the affordable homes provision.
- That gardens can be made smaller or of a communal nature to make bungalows more viable.
- To avoid small, one bedroomed dwellings, a multi-purpose room should be included in any design that can be used as a bedroom, dining room, study or storage giving greater flexibility to the accommodation.
- To specify a minimum garage size or an option to provide a drive, within the curtilage of the property, with a car port on new developments. If only a drive is provided, safe cycle storage should be included.
- Guidance in the character assessment must be followed. Adequate green space included in new developments inline with Lord Beveridge's vision.
- Developments built to the highest energy standards will be encouraged.



Proposed Policies to support the Housing Proposals

Policy H1—In-Fill Developments

We will support proportionate, in-fill development provided that is in keeping with the local area.

Policy H2 - Dwellings Appropriate to the Needs of Residents

A minimum of 25% of the 1, 2 and 3-bed dwellings provided in new developments will be required to meet the Lifetime Homes Standards, in order to cater for the needs of all residents.

Policy H3—Parking Standards for New Residential Development

We will require the provision of a minimum number of off-road parking spaces in new developments in order to ensure the free-flow of traffic.

Policy H4—Parking Mitigation

In order to reduce parking problems in the parish, this policy requires any garage included in the design of new housing to be of sufficient dimensions to accommodate an average-sized family car.

Policy H5—Provision of In-Curtilage Parking and Storage

In new developments where no garage provision has been made, there must be a parking area, within the property curtilage, and suitable provision for bicycle and/or storage must be made.

Policy H6—Energy Standards

Having energy efficient homes was an important issue for residents, therefore developments designed to the highest energy standards, as set out in the code for sustainable homes, will be encouraged.

Policy H7—Bungalow Provision

To assist older people to have more suitable accommodation, this policy will seek a 10% bungalow provision (two bedroom, or one bedroomed with a multifunctional room) on new sites of 10 or more dwellings.

Policy H8—Affordable Housing

This policy will help provide affordable homes for all residents, preferably on a suitable, previously developed site.

Policy H9—Provision of Facilities and Services

Proposals for new housing will be required to demonstrate provision of appropriate new facilities on-site and provision of, or contributions to, off-site facilities such as improved drainage, parks, play areas or footpaths.

Policies AV1—Enhanced Bungalow Provision and AV2—Garden Provision

These policies apply specifically to the site adjacent to Woodham Community College, which has been identified in the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan as being suitable for a larger allocation of bungalows as it is close to town centre services. Provision has been made for smaller gardens or community garden space to benefit older or less physically able people.

Policy DB1—Large Scale Development Requirements

Where development of more than 30 houses are planned, this policy sets out criteria for several factors, such as character, appearance, parking provision and provision of services.

Retail—Proposals

- Should a suitable site near the Town Centre, that meets the sequential tests required be identified, we will support and encourage change of use from garage/ workshop (B2) to retail (A1) without the need for a change of use planning application, if it could be developed for retail.
- We will keep retail changes under review and undertake a detailed assessment when the Neighbourhood Plan is reviewed in 5 years.
- We will support and encourage the development of a small 'retail row' within Aycliffe Business Park to serve the needs of the businesses and their employees
- That local labour market agreements are in place to ensure jobs are offered to local people first.

Proposed Policies to support the Retail Proposals

Policies R1 and R2 concern **Economic Retail Viability for betting Shops and Pay Day Loan Shops** and will limit the numbers of such establishments to ensure a diverse range of shops and facilities is provided.

Policy R3—Restrictions on Change of Use will ensure that local centres, such as Cobbler's Hall, will retain a predominantly retail provision.

Policy R4—Local Jobs

Support will be given to the development of employment activities that diversify the current offer in Great Aycliffe.

By far the most important topic for residents and the most difficult to tackle.

An improved retail offering was the key objective for residents—and unfortunately the one that we can do the least about. As you know the Town Centre is privately owned and, at the moment, there is no commercial interest in locating new retail business in Aycliffe. However, any retail proposals which come forward in the future will be approved, provided they meet statutory requirements.

A reminder, once again, that the Town Centre is privately owned and we have very little control over anything which happens there.

A number of other policies have been developed to try and address a number of other issues which residents felt were important they are:-

Policy T1—Parking Impacts on Existing Infrastructure

Development proposals which rely on parking on existing streets will not be accepted except under certain criteria.

Policy T2—Design Finish, Off-Street Parking

This policy requires areas provided for limited off-street parking to use geo-grid or a similar material to allow grass to be the dominant finish.

Policy T3—Cycling Provision and Walking Routes

Development proposals must provide safe, accessible and attractive cycle routes or public footpaths through the site.

Policy EE1—Domestic Scale Renewables

This policy encourages energy efficiency and, where appropriate, energy production from renewable and low carbon sources, which was identified as a priority by residents.

Policy EE2—Community-Led Efficiency Projects

The Neighbourhood Plan will support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy where they meet local needs and provide a positive local benefit.

Policy EE3—Business Energy Efficiency

The Neighbourhood Plan will support efforts by local businesses to develop low carbon and renewable energy, where these are subordinate to the primary business and are also in accordance with the wider design aspirations of the Plan.

Hard copies are available at the locations on the front cover. Electronic documents are available at www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk/info/neighbourhood-plan-4/consultation-2. You can let us have your comments to help deliver the objectives and therefore the vision for the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan using any of the options detailed on the front page.