



DRAFT Ongoing Consultation Report

for the delivery of

Elford Neighbourhood Development Plan

on behalf of:

Elford Parish Council

April 2016



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Timetable of sessions	4
3. Community Meeting, 3 rd February 2016	7
4. Schools Workshops, February 2016	11
5. Visions and Objectives Workshop, February 2016	12
6. Theme Groups Workshop, March 2016	15
7. Community Walkover, March 2016	17
8. Residents Survey, April 2016	19



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Lichfield District parish of Elford is currently in the process of writing a Neighbourhood Plan in response to the UK Government's localism agenda and empowerment of communities to have more influence in planning decisions in their local area.
- 1.2. This Consultation Report summarises the consultation activities undertaken to date. As consultation will be undertaken throughout the preparation of the plan, this report will remain a 'work in progress' until a final submission version of the plan has been completed. As such, this draft version of the report is a snapshot of the consultation work and findings as of mid-March 2016. The final consultation report will also include details of the consultation work and responses to be undertaken on the draft and final versions of the completed plan, and may include overall assessment of the consultation process.
- 1.3. The formal consultation stages of the project began in January 2016 and since then a team of consultants have been working closely with local residents, the Parish Council and the neighbourhood plan steering group to consider and agree the scope and purpose of the neighbourhood plan. The first stage of the consultation strategy has been to engage local residents in the process of collecting their thoughts, opinions, ideas and suggestions on what they value Elford, and aspects that they think might be improved. Consultation of local residents has taken a number of forms, in order to engage as wide and as representative a sample as possible. A series of meetings and community events have so far been undertaken.
- 1.4. This report is current as of 27th April 2016.

2. Timetable of sessions

- 2.1. The approach to the consultation to date has comprised traditional methods of inviting local residents to meet for open discussions. The table below provides the schedule of these meetings and sessions to date.
- 2.2. Future efforts may include other means including as surveys and face-to-face meetings with key groups and local businesses.

Time	Details
Evening of Wednesday 3rd February 2016, Elford Village Hall	
	<p>Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning / Thinking About Elford</p> <p>This session was publicised and run as: <i>“An opportunity to talk about all aspects of Elford - good and bad, problems and opportunities. BPUD will provide a broad introduction to neighbourhood plans - how they work, what is involved, and what they can achieve.”</i></p> <p>A presentation was given by BPUD on neighbourhood planning, followed by a ‘Thinking Hats’ session on Elford. This was followed by an extensive Q&A about NDPS. Residents were then asked to consider life in Elford from a variety of angles, in order to stimulate a thorough discussion about what they might want to address through the planning system, working in groups. Notes were recorded in each group and summarised by BPUD staff assisting with the sessions. The notes are summarised in section 3.</p> <p>Attended by approximately 45 local residents.</p>
Afternoon of Wednesday 17th February 2016, Elford Village Hall	
	<p>Schools Workshops: <i>“Open to all Elford children to talk about their experience of life in the village, and to share their opinions and ideas. Primary school pupils between 2pm and 3.30pm, secondary school pupils between 4 and 5.30pm.”</i></p> <p>The sessions were held at Elford Village Hall in February half-term week, and were attended by four primary school children and four secondary school and college students. The students advised that they numbered about half of the people of their age living in the village.</p> <p>The primary school session was designed to help the children think about their local area, to begin to engage with their own environment. This involved four activities:</p> <p>‘Draw your perfect house – what is in it, who is in it, what is around it?’, followed by discussion</p> <p>Think about and discuss your journey to school – what do you see, what do you like and dislike? – The children were asked to note or draw these onto a large simplified map of the village.</p>

'Cool Wall' – the children were given piles of photos of buildings, urban scenes and phenomena, and asked to decide whether they thought they were cool or uncool, to stick them to a wall under corresponding labels, and to then discuss their responses.

Finally the children were asked to think about how they would like Elford to have changed when they grow up, and to draw their ideas onto the village map. The ideas were mainly imaginative and fantastical, including sweetshops, flower gardens, unicorns, and a rollercoaster, but some more grounded ideas included a doctor's surgery and cycle paths. The children were asked to explain why they thought their suggestions would make the village a better place to live.

The **session with older students** was designed to be more consultative, with the participants considered to be valued members of the community with practical insight and understanding of the village. BPUD took the opportunity to briefly introduce the group to concepts and practice of town planning, to set the context for the neighbourhood plan and the session itself. The cool wall exercise was repeated, with extensive discussion that mainly focussed on architectural styles and building character. The group generally expressed a preference for architecture in keeping with the established character of the village.

A broad discussion was then held to establish the students' views of Elford, to explore what they liked and disliked, what they would wish to protect, and how they would like the village to change.

The session was finished by asking the students to think about the long-term future of the village, by challenging them to write a postcard from their future self to their present day self, explaining how Elford would have changed over the next 20-30 years. These postcards are transcribed at section 4.

Evening of Wednesday 17th February 2016, Elford Village Hall

Vision and Objectives Workshop: *"Following on from the first session, we will decide exactly what our objectives for the plan should be, and what our vision is for the future of Elford."*

Participants were asked to consider what the specific vision and practical objectives that the neighbourhood plan should achieve.

The output from the previous session had been summarised and organised into a number of themes, with specific issues amongst these themes noted. The themes were *Our Assets and Strengths, Development concerns, Our changing village – the future, Services we need – now and in the future, and Protecting our environment.* Participants were divided into groups and asked to attempt to draft a plan objective which, if achieved, would address their concerns and aspirations for each theme. Group members noted their ideas and suggested draft objectives on large sheets, on which were printed the themes and key issues. The groups were advised to attempt to devise objectives that began with the phrase *"By the end of the plan period, Elford will be..."* Each group rotated around each table to consider the themes in turn, spending around ten minutes on each. At the end of the session, each group was asked to sum up the input that all of the groups had contributed to the final theme they had arrived at.

The comments from this session are summarised in section 5.

Evening of Wednesday 2nd March 2016, Elford Village Hall

Neighbourhood Plan Theme Groups Workshop: *“Groups will be formed to focus on the specific themes that we will address in the plan. If there’s a particular issue you’re concerned about, join in!”*

The purpose of the session was explained as being to confirm the vision and objectives for the neighbourhood plan and to begin thinking about specific policies that might address these. Using the feedback from Vision and Objectives session, BPUD prepared five suggested objectives that were considered to address the broad themes that arose at the first session, and an overall vision which summed these up. These were 1) Local Services 2) Housing 3) Building design, local character and heritage, 4) The natural environment and the rural economy, and 5) Managing development. The suggested vision was ‘

“The residents of Elford Parish want their village to become a place that supports a stronger, safer and more sustainable community.

“In achieving this, Elford will become better connected, offer a wider range of services for residents and visitors, and provide the right housing to support the viability of the community.

“This will be achieved while protecting Elford’s unique character and distinct qualities. This will include preserving and enhancing the character of the village’s buildings and streets, and protecting the natural features and landscape.”

The suggested objectives were printed on large blank sheets of paper, set out on separate tables. Participants were organised into five groups, and asked to review the objective at their table, discussing amongst themselves whether they agreed with the suggestions, and noting any disagreements, or suggestions for changes or additions.

A brief presentation was then given about planning policy, setting out how they should be written to be effective, how they function, and how planning policy documents are typically structured.

The groups were then invited to consider ideas for draft planning policies that would help to achieve each objective, freely circulating around each ‘theme table’ and adding their comments. The suggested policies for each theme were then recapped and discussed amongst the wider group.

The session was attended by approximately 35 residents.

The modified objectives and policy suggestions are noted in section 6.

Morning of Saturday 12th March 2016

Community Walkover – *“We will take a tour of the village to look at issues and opportunities ‘on the ground’”*

Attended by 16 residents. Residents were led in three groups on three walking routes in and around the village, with discussion on various planning issues. Participants were asked to make notes on a themed worksheet (themed along the draft plan objectives). A summary of these points is provided in section 7.

3. Community Meeting, 3rd February 2016

- 3.1. In January 2016, the Parish Council distributed a leaflet to all houses in the Parish, introducing the neighbourhood plan, and publicising the six initial consultation events. The first of these was a community meeting held in the evening of 3rd February 2016 at the village hall. The meeting was well attended, with around 40 residents, most of whom left contact details to receive updates about the NDP project, and a number expressing interest in joining a potential steering group.
- 3.2. The meeting began with a presentation by BPUD on the purposes, scope and possibilities of neighbourhood planning. BPUD took an extensive and robust range of questions on these matters.
- 3.3. The session then proceeded to a 'thinking hats' workshop, where attendees were asked to think about Elford in a number of different ways. The outcome of these discussions are summarised overleaf.

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	White Hat “What do we know about the Parish” Facts and figures	Red Hat “What should the NP do?” Your emotional gut reaction	Black Hat – “Barriers to achieving the vision” Risks, Drawbacks and Constraints	Yellow Hat - “What assets can help achieve the Vision?” - Opportunities, Benefits, Rewards	Green Hat “What policies and strategies can we put in place?” Ideas, Solutions, Policies	Blue Hat “What can we do to make this happen?” Summary and Next Steps
Residents response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 650 people - 240 houses - Pub - Bus service – hourly and daily to Tamworth - 6 buses per day (no Sunday service) (45 minute return journey) - Morning Post Office/Coffee shop - Village hall - Church/Church house groups - Walled garden - Primary School - Cricket Field - Football ground - Children’s playground - Social club - Lessons; French, art, yoga, palates, salsa, drumming - Community events - Social club - Football/cricket club - No shop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sense of community - Ambience - Environment - Beauty - Security - Fears; possible quarrying, lagoon/odour/traffic , Loss of services/amenities - Hopes; mains gas, broadband, shop. - Not enough young families in village/availability of affordable housing. - Smaller housing required – downsizing - Concerns about school - Keeping facilities e.g. Walled garden, cricket field as they are. - Traffic concerns – lagoon traffic - Concerns about large amount of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Areas becoming a giant water disposal site. - Encourage mixed development - Specifically encourage affordable housing for young families and residents to downsize. - Flood plan - Public perception - Very restricted – conservation area - Perceived attractiveness to outsiders (especially young families) - Balance requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walled Garden - Well-kept Church - Community Spirit - Improving school - Thriving pub – good food - The environment - Village hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allocating sites for housing - Controlled development - Wider engagement with the local community – widen the core group of the village - A lot of people outside the village come to enjoy the facilities - Flood map modelling – to-date with the EA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lagoon action plan – encourage villagers to inform Local Council of every complaint. - Review tenancy agreement. - Assess what benefits will be gained from allocating a certain quantum of housing. Research into what is putting people off from moving into the village when houses are available. - Aim to get more residents to the next meeting. - Comprehensive questionnaire to all residents - Find out who the landowners are? - Fibre optic broadband – support local business

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No pre-school - No facilities for older residents - Regular community events held - Well-kept village - Community police man - Neighbourhood Watch - Conservation Area - Listed Buildings – 2 - Playground - River and flood plain - Few footpaths - Bypass - Areas owned by Birmingham council - Poor Broadband - Playing fields - Mobile Library - River Tame - Open green spaces - Allotments - Picnic Area - Pumping station - Close to Ventura Park (Tamworth) - Commuting (easy access to motorways/airways) - No through road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> housing - Keeping village individual - Peaceful/quiete - Grown or decline - Stay much as it is without the dump - Preserve village centre – traffic - Home farm traffic - Type of housing required - Maintain amenities - Improve flood river management 				

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	- Aging population					
Interpretation of responses		<p><i>Hopes;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preserve character and community belonging. - Controlled/manged growth to accommodate changing population of young and old. - Preserve greenspaces and wildlife (including sports/recreation). - Positive traffic management. <p><i>Fears</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact from sewage lagoon. - Declining community. - Impacts of heavy vehicles. - Not enough young families. - Concerns over loosing local amenities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The shadow of the lagoon may undermine positive improvements. - There is a restriction of heritage assets. - View of living here is different to reality. - (over) Development – would development offer a solution and where would development be located. Potentially introduce a settlement boundary. - Poor use of facilities - Physical access – roads and Bridges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ‘off’ road nature - Intimacy and belonging of the village. - River frontage and conservation area. - School improvements. - Architecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allocating sites for housing. - Flood map and modelling. - Succession planning – accommodate older and attract ‘middle’ (families). - Support village amenities – pub and social club - Demographic evidence planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allocate a single site and seek to ensure the benefits are delivered. - Opportunity to tackle the lagoon. - Employ a consultant to assess flooding. - Seek to achieve a higher attendance at meetings. - Involve housing associations. - Carefully consider housing mix. - Socio-economic profiling - A community questionnaire.

4. Schools Workshops, 17th February 2016

“Postcards from your future self”

Elford 2036

As I grown up I have noticed many benefits occurring in the village such as, the new playground put up for the youths which includes a skate park. This is particularly good because in the summer you see all the children of the village out in the sun socialising rather than in their room ‘slobbing out’ and watching TV. However, I have noticed that the river is still prone to flooding, this really isn’t good because it often floods into the elderly homes and they often can’t move houses due to their strong bond with the village.

Dear Future Self,

How Elford has changed:

- *There is now a shop*
- *Still lots of Greenland*
- *There is lots more things to do for all ages: youth club, skatepark, coffee mornings, clubs, fairs and festivals.*
- *The primary school is still amazing.*
- *There is more regular buses to go to more places.*

Elford in 2036:

There is a large area for the youth of the village to spend their time. There is many more young people in the village you can socialise well. There are improvements to flood defences so the elderly do not need to worry about flooding. There is still a sense of belonging in the village and you are still able to go out of the house and know everyone you meet. There is a reduction in crime. The cricket club hasn’t been broken into for years. There is a really good village shop that provides everything you need.

Dear me!

There will be more people and a skatepark.

5. Visions and Objectives Workshop, 17th February 2016

The tables below summarise the comments and suggestions given in response to the proposed plan themes.

Our changing village – the future

Suggested objective

- *Preserve rural character and village community with sympathetic controlled development*
- *Provision for aging and younger populations but meeting 21st century aspirations*

Other comments

- Are there enough young families in the village?
- Informed decision-making (on development)
- Retain character
- What is the village behaviour?
- Proper agricultural use of farmland
- Villagers retain control of the plan
- Is the current use of housing wrong?
- Starter homes and retirement homes.

Our Assets and Strengths

Suggested objectives:

To maintain and develop the sense of community, ambience, feeling of village life, facilities

Other comments

- Other assets – Boat house, oil club, locally sourced supplies (meat, veg, logs)
- Ratify current proposed Conservation Area extension
- It is a village – Midsomer without the murders!
- Secure and protect
- Prioritise the people element and develop new generation
- Succession planning
- Maintain funding
- Don't what's not broken
- Cul de sac village
- Outside spaces – views and landscapes
- Size – small and compact

Development concerns

Suggested objectives

- *To positively plan for new controlled development that is evidence based to ensure the needs of a sustainable community is maintained/achieved.*
- *To ensure agricultural development is limited and controlled to avoid conflict with residents.*

Other comments

- Village Hall car park more accessible to public when hall not in use – school times
- Willingness of public transport to service the village
- Development to sustain – not to change
- Evidence and metrics to understand change
- Development which does not further nuisance issues at Home Farm
- Protect existing assets
- How effective is the NP in actually controlling/influencing development?
- Development needs to be absorbed into the village gradually e.g. infrastructure (sewage, roads, water etc).
- Defensible boundaries for housing to control development

Protecting our Environment

Suggested objectives

- *We want to protect our village environment, keeping our green spaces, enhancing footpaths, managing the river and its location.*
- *We need to keep our village security and improve if necessary. Keep our roads safe. And keep our village attractive to us who live here and anyone who visits it.*

Other comments

- Farmland to be used (for) agricultural processes only.
- Managing/restricting traffic flow through heart of village (chicane)
- Manage and protect woodland areas
- Protect Conservation Area
- Create and preserve network of footpaths
- Create more green open space
- Develop to expand sports including tennis/hockey/astroturf – but more land around
- Reinstate land drainage
- Security of the village
- Neighbourhood Watch – are we still in it?

Services we need – now and in the future?

Suggested objectives

- *To develop and understand a plan whether we are looking to maintain and protect only – or develop and improve and change.*
- *Protect and maintain the services and facilities we have*
- *Provide the services and facilities the whole community (young and old) and visitors need*

Other comments

- Railway station? A) Not practical! B) Very important!
- Need circular footpath routes
- No facilities for older children
- Maintain and expand school
- Medical services
- 21st century and beyond communications

- Public services
- Petrol station and minimart on outskirts?
- Bus to Burton and Lichfield. Quick bus to/from Tamworth
- Broadband speed
- Better maintained footpaths
- Extra class for pre-school
- Mains gas

6. Theme Groups Workshop, 2nd March 2016

The suggested vision and draft objectives (and modifications suggested by participants), and the possible policies suggested to achieve them, are noted below.

Vision

"The residents of Elford Parish want their village to become a place that supports a stronger, safer and more sustainable community.

In achieving this, Elford will become better connected, offer a wider range of suitable services for residents and visitors, and provide the right housing to support the viability of the community.

This will be achieved while protecting Elford's unique character and distinct qualities. This will include preserving and enhancing the character of the village (including by controlling and restricting traffic flow, type and timings), and protecting the natural features and landscape."

(Alternations and additions suggested in the session are shown underlined)

Objective 1: Local Services

To sustain the village's existing services and to provide new ones, in order to improve the quality of life enjoyed by existing and future residents.

Policy ideas

- *A policy that supports the improvements of access to technology/ main utilities.*
- *A policy that supports improvements of transport links.*
- *Create understanding of public/footpath links.*
- *A policy that protects existing services – pubs, school etc. and protects against change of life of those services.*

Objective 2: Housing

To ensure that the village's population is sustainable by providing the right housing, in terms of type and tenure, to accommodate all ages, needs and lifestyles.

Policy ideas

- *A policy to encourage development of homes that meet resident's specific needs i.e. young family & downsize retirement homes.*
- *A policy to support division of houses to provide additional units.*
- *A policy that supports a development that is of a style that is sympathetic to the style of homes in the village.*
- *A policy which allows for housing but stops spread of development. Controlled policy.*
- *Policy to support housing that will ensure services/facilities will be delivered – shoot for the stars in terms of numbers and what we can achieve out of that.*

Objective 3: Building design, local character and heritage

To ensure that any new development achieves a high standard of design, respecting Elford's established character, rural location and heritage assets.

Policy ideas

- *Ensure open space is included in developments*
- *Mix of houses designed on any development – not rows of similar houses!*
- *In all cases, not to significantly increase traffic through village*
- *Variety is important*
- *Sympathetic development*
- *Self-build plots*
- *Building new houses to reflect rural older properties.*

Objective 4: The natural environment and the rural economy

To protect the local natural landscape and open spaces, to manage flood risk and to support appropriate use of farming land in the surrounding countryside which does not conflict with the quality of life enjoyed by local residents

Policy ideas

- *To support a small farm shop/enterprises that support the village ethos (not towns/district centres).*
- *To support local businesses that in size are commensurate with the size of the village.*
- *To encourage ecological diversity.*
- *Happy to support 'normal' farming practice but understand this is difficult to administer so that 'traditional' farming is not affected. (Accepting we live in a rural environment).*

Objective 5: Managing Development

To ensure that the quality of life enjoyed by the residents of Elford, and the character of the village and surrounding countryside, are not harmed by new development proposals, including in terms of residential amenity and traffic impact.

Policy ideas

- *Manage acceptability of agricultural development.*
- *No development of conservation area land/open green spaces.*
- *No development of protected open space/protected views.*
- *Limits on size of developments (so village not 'swamped')*
- *Limit developments which increase traffic on existing village roads.*
- *Specifically parking spaces etc. for any new developments.*
- *Developments not to risk flooding or drainage problems.*
- *To match the proposed Conservation Plan as defined by Lichfield District Council – this will be the control process.*

7. Community Walkover, 12th March 2016

- 7.1. A summary of the notes made by residents on the community walkover is provided below.
- 7.2. Where more than one participant noted the same or similar issue, these are noted by a multiplier (x).

<p>Main Objective: A Sustainable future for Elford</p> <p><i>“Don’t want village to become a town”</i></p> <p><i>How many new houses are needed to sustain a shop?</i></p> <p><i>Ensure school/pub/gardens/church etc are sustainable – need new blood and children for school</i></p>
<p>Local Services</p> <p><i>Protect local school and support expansion</i></p> <p><i>Enhance existing services</i></p> <p><i>Somewhere for bikers/tourists – cup of tea</i></p> <p><i>What type of shop would be supported here?</i></p> <p><i>Money towards school</i></p> <p><i>Balance of deliverability – not asking too much from developers, which may undermine our other objectives</i></p> <p><i>Teenagers play/other facilities in new development</i></p> <p><i>Sports and Social Club – underused, occasional functions (auction) – big site behind</i></p> <p><i>Walled garden</i></p> <p><i>Church / Walled Garden / Village Hall (package for functions)</i></p> <p><i>More joined-up thinking – making better uses of the cricket club/village hall/walled garden/church facilities (x3) – e.g. offering services, whilst the football club is being used, offering tea and coffee, food etc</i></p>
<p>Housing provision</p> <p><i>Types – bungalows needed (x2). 2/3 bed family homes. (x2)</i></p> <p><i>Identifying sites for housing - large area behind Sports and Social Club</i></p> <p><i>What mix of affordable provision?</i></p> <p><i>Solar panels (on new homes?)</i></p> <p><i>Webbs Farm – not particularly attractive open space. A previous application for housing development was refused.</i></p> <p><i>Sensitive development of “The Green” and Burton Hill?</i></p> <p><i>Building to east of A513 would seem to split village in half</i></p> <p><i>Affordable provision – first time buyers and down-scaling for older adults</i></p> <p><i>A small development for people to downsize to and a few starter homes in a location that does not</i></p>

impact on traffic in the village
0.6 primary school places per houses
Starter homes (x2) – 2 beds
Entrance areas of village
Retirement homes – type of people – want 2/3 beds

Building design, local character and heritage

Retain character and eclectic mix
Visual impact of renewables – solar
Renovate and improve exterior of social club – external cedar cladding?
Variety is not a bad thing but needs to be consistent with character of village
To limit ultra-modern development in other areas of the village. To avoid uniform-building development.
Any development to be sympathetic/ in keeping with the village style (x2)
Houses along Shrubbery would not be suitable
Sympathetic (x2) – not new designs!

The natural environment and the rural economy

Severn Trent – sewerage plant – needs better access as 6 wheel lorries have to back out onto Shrubberies

Managing development

Traffic resulting from football matches on Saturdays
Very large new development would risk creating ‘old’ and ‘new’ parts of Elford
Roads in front of Elford are wide enough for 2 cars passing – this is the area where development should be – instead of in centre of village – single track roads

Other issues

More footpaths needed (x2) – along river (x2) and the bridge (?)
CIL (x3) Money back on (?) development – 25% back on neighbourhood plan
River – using as an asset – Water Taxi from picnic area to gardens

8. Residents Survey, April 2016

8.1. Details to be added following completion of the survey

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