

Compton Neighbourhood Development Plan Report, September 2020

The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) team has continued working over the past couple of months to ensure that the Draft NDP, compiled by the Steering Group and their Working Groups, is now nearing completion and is moving forward.

In addition, we have also compiled a consultation report of all NDP activities to date, surveys, meetings with individuals, organisations & businesses, posters, leaflets, Compilations etc, and ordered the evidence to support the report in such a way as to make it simple for an external examiner to trace how the plan has been developed. This is an essential, but very much 'behind the scenes' activity that has taken some substantial time and effort.

As part of the ongoing process, the Draft NDP was sent to West Berkshire Council (WBC) for screening to see if it would need a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). The SEA would be to determine if our NDP would have any significant effects on the environment and the HRA to determine if it would have significant impact upon the integrity of nature conservation sites of international importance, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. We are pleased to say that after West Berkshire consulted with the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England they have confirmed that our NDP does not require a SEA nor is it subject to HRA.

Now this has been confirmed we are putting the final details into the Draft NDP so that it can be submitted to the Parish Council for approval. Once approved, the Parish Council can publish the Draft Plan and a 6-week consultation period to invite comments from residents, local businesses, wider stakeholders and Statutory bodies can begin before the final version is submitted to West Berkshire District Council for wider consultation and Independent Assessment. This process finishes, however, with a village 'referendum' on the report which requires a simple majority to pass and thereby gain more influence with WBC.

More on that as details become clearer, but in the meantime, many thanks to all of those who took the time and trouble to send comments to WBC regarding the recent outline planning application by Homes England regarding the Pirbright site. With well over 300 individual letters, it was very heartening to see so many people quoting the work of the NDP team when making their individual cases on the application. So far, we have not been informed of any progress within WBC regarding the application, but please watch out on the Compton NDP website and the Compton Facebook site for any further information in due course.

Also, a big thanks to those who volunteered and distributed leaflets for us. In these difficult COVID-19 times, this help was very much appreciated by the NDP team.