



LOCAL PLAN 2036 UPDATE

23rd March 2018

Dear fellow resident

We thought that the time had come to provide you with an update on where we are in terms of our objections to the change to the planning status of Bluntisham from “Small Settlement” to a “Local Service Centre.”

There has been a lot of work going on since we last communicated with you back in February of this year. The disappointing thing is that we have nothing positive to report. It probably merits a reminder, that our submission to HDC, MP & the Secretary of State was regarding the change in status of Bluntisham to a Local Service Centre & was independent to any planning applications for significant development.

As a result of our submission to the Proposed Local Plan 2036 we have received acknowledgement from HDC & Secretary of State of our submission & confirmation that they will be included when the Proposed Local Plan 2036 goes before an independent inspector for a decision. A decision is not expected until September 2019 at the earliest. HDC have confirmed that they are happy with the Proposed Local Plan 2036 & will not be changing its content and our status. It is clear from all correspondence from HDC that they consider that all necessary consultation took place throughout the process, something which we the Parish Council, residents of Bluntisham, Cllr Francis, Cllr Carter & our MP Shailesh Vara do not agree with.

So, and this is where the two major planning applications now come into play; HDC Planning Department are still to make a recommendation on both the proposed Station Road & Colne Road developments (potentially 165+ dwellings) & have now categorised them as “departure applications”. This is planning language that means that neither of the applications adhere to the current planning guidelines, this is a legal requirement which should have been applied when the applications were originally received in May 2017. This change is not as significant as the fact that HDC planning can assess these and any other applications against the Proposed Local Plan 2036 and allocate weight from the Proposed Local Plan 2036 in any recommendations they make. As you know the Parish Council has opposed both developments on planning grounds so both would have to go to the HDC Development Management Committee (DMC) for a decision. A body made up entirely of District Councillors who voted unanimously for the Proposed Local Plan 2036 & the change therein to the status of Bluntisham.

As a result of these developments we invited HDC Officers, Cllr Bull, The Leader & members, Steve Criswell our County Cllr & Shailash Vara our MP to attend a public meeting in Bluntisham on the evening of 29th March 2018. It is hugely disappointing to advise that with the exception of our District Cllrs (Cllr Francis & Cllr Carter) and our MP offering to send a representative, all of the other people we invited turned down our request to attend. We can only presume, with the exception of the County Councillor, that none of them were prepared to meet with residents of Bluntisham and justify the change in our planning status. The Parish Council & representatives have been invited to attend a private meeting with HDC at HDC HQ. But we continue to strive for a public meeting to enable you to voice your feelings and concerns.

The 4 questions we asked HDC to address at the meeting were:

- What has changed in Bluntisham since the last Local Plan 1995 & 2002 to justify the change in status now?

- Why were other villages that have the same facilities as Bluntisham not classified as Local Service Centres? (The PC have identified at least 3 other villages within the district these include Earith, Great Gransden, Ramsey St Marys & Elton with private medical facilities)
- Who suggested the change and why were we not made aware or consulted on the change?
- What weight will be applied from the Proposed Local Plan 2036 to planning applications decided from this point onwards?

These queries were addressed in a letter to the PC from the Planning Policy Manager & are shared within this update. The PC is not content with this response & we will continue to work & maintain our profile of objection.

What are the Parish Council doing.....

- Seeking legal guidance with regards to where we stand & what potential avenues are open to us.
- Communicating with our MP to keep him in the loop & his assistance in applying pressure on HDC members.
- Two FOI applications to HDC concerning communication with the relevant developers & details about who raised what issues that led to our change of status in the Proposed Local Plan 2036 statement of consultation.
- Remind all members of HDC DMC of our objections and the lack of weight that should be applied to any planning application using the Proposed Local Plan 2036 and for what reasons.

Will we achieve our goal? At the moment it appears that the odds are stacked against us and that HDC & its Planning Officers are determined that they can impose the Proposed Local Plan 2036 upon us. It is clear beyond doubt that the status change took place after the consultation window closed & no amount of planning "speak" or "rules" will disguise this fact. The Proposed Local Plan 2036 updates the rules by which HDC abide & vastly increase the opportunity to build & allows HDC to avoid costly appeals. Unfortunately a speculative and well timed planning proposal in Bluntisham, in our opinion, provided the justification for change in our status. The limits to our infrastructure remain. None of these developments will deliver any improvements to our infrastructure. We will continue to oppose the change & make the voice of the village heard far and wide when the Proposed Local Plan 2036 is applied in any form to proposed development in Bluntisham ahead of it going in-front of the Planning Inspectorate.

The Parish Council urge you to respond to this update if you have any specific questions you would like the parish council to raise with HDC on behalf of Bluntisham. If these questions can be put in writing to the clerk, who will collate and send onto HDC for answers.

Yours truly

Mark Berg
 Chairman
 Bluntisham Parish Council
 c/o 9 Bramley Grove
 Bluntisham
 Cambs



Huntingdonshire

D I S T R I C T C O U N C I L

Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street

Huntingdon. PE29 3TN Tel: 01480 388388 mail@huntsdc.gov.uk Fax: 01480 388099
mww.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Dear Ms. Davidson,

15^b March 2018

I refer to your email dated February 2018 where a representative from HDC who has been involved in the Local Plan process and also someone who will be part of the key decision makers within the planning department is invited to attend an open meeting in Bluntisham village with your MP, Mr. Shailesh Vara on Thursday 29th March at 7pm. Unfortunately, it is not possible for a representative from Huntingdonshire District Council to attend this meeting but it is noted that there are 4 specific queries that have been raised and responses to those queries are set out below.

What has changed in Bluntisham since the last local plan 1995-2002 to justify the change in status?

The adopted Huntingdonshire Development Plan is comprised of:

- The Core Strategy (2009)
- Saved Policies from the Local Plan 1995 and the Local Plan Alteration 2002
- The Huntingdon West Area Action Plan
- Made Neighbourhood Plans for St. Neots and Godmanchester.

The Core Strategy, Huntingdon West Area Action Plan, Local Plan 1995 and Local Plan Alteration 2002 will be replaced by the Local Plan to 2036 when it is adopted.

The Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995, policy H15, identified Bluntisham as a 'rural growth village' where the development of housing estates was allowed on sites identified in the Local Plan. That policy was superseded by policy STR5 in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002 which identified Bluntisham as a 'group village'. That policy was then superseded by policy CS3 in the Core Strategy 2009 which identifies Bluntisham as a Smaller Settlement where residential infilling will be appropriate in the built up area of the village.

The new Local Plan to 2036 has to identify land for at least an additional 20,100 new homes during the period 2011-2036. This inevitably means now allocating land that wasn't previously required to meet previous need and looking for new opportunities to meet the identified need. There has also been some criticism that the District was over-reliant on a number of large strategic sites to meet the identified need, and the Government is also keen to promote more small and medium sized sites to support small and medium sized builders. This led the Council to reassess the opportunity to accommodate a small amount of the

required development in those small settlements with the most facilities. Ultimately, this led to the proposed designation as Local Service Centres of settlements that don't have the range of services as Key Service Centres but have more facilities (namely schools, a shop, a public house and opportunities to access healthcare) than most other small settlement.

- Why were other villages not included as LSCs even though they have the same facilities as Bluntisham?

If you believe there are other villages with the same facilities, they should also be included. These can be proposed to the Planning Inspector for inclusion as the Local Plan moves forward.

- Who suggested the change in status & at what point were Bluntisham made aware of this change via consultation?

As part of the exploration of a range of options to help ensure that the identified need over the 2011-2036 would be met, and also to ensure that it could be demonstrated that there were sufficient deliverable sites to meet the specific need over the next 5 year, officers explored a range of options. The inclusion of Local Service Centres as one of the ways of ensuring this was supported by Members at the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy and Growth) who considered the Local Plan 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 on the 12 December 2017. The papers for this meeting were publicly available from the December 2017. The Council's Cabinet and Full Council considered the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 on the 12 December. The papers for those meetings were available from the December.

An email was sent to all parish clerks, including Bluntisham Parish Council on Thursday 21 December highlighting that Full Council endorsed the Plan and that they will have received an email from the system on Monday the 18^h December inviting representations on the Plan up to 5pm on the 5 February 2018.

- How/what weight will be applied to the new local plan 2036 ahead of the adoption to existing/new planning applications in the district, including Bluntisham?

Paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out how weight should be applied to planning policies, and states that it is "according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this (the National Planning Policy) Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)."

The weight to be afforded will be for the decision maker of the planning applications to determine. Planning applications 17/00906/OUT and 17/01015/OUT will be referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) and they will decide the weighting to be attached. The number of unresolved objections to the policy limits the weight that can be attached to the policy. In respect of any future applications they will be considered on their

own merits against the development plan and any material considerations. They will be referred to the DMC where they do not accord with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

When those applications are referred to the DMC the Parish Council and objectors will be invited to address the DMC before any final decision is taken.

Please note that our offer to meet with representatives from Bluntisham Parish Council, resident representatives, your MP, and District Councillors still stands, and we would be happy to host such a meeting here at Pathfinder House.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clara Kerr', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Clara Kerr
Planning Service Manager (Policy, Implementation and Strategic Development)
Development Services
Corporate Delivery
Huntingdonshire District Council

Refered to question of concerns will be shared 2-3-18. 228.
Appendix 2.



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local
Government
2 Marsham St, Westminster, London SW1P
4DF

Tracey Davidson
Biuntisham Parish Council
9 Bramley Grove
Biuntisham
Huntingdon
Cambridgeshire
PE28 3XG

www.gov.uk/dclg

Our Ref:3642124
Your Ref:

Date:26 February 2018

Dear Tracey Davidson,

Thank you for taking the time to contact The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Unfortunately due to the Secretary of State's role with in the planning system we are unable to comment on a specific Local Plan, its evidence base, or any proposal for new policies. We are however able to inform on factual elements for instance the stage that a Local Plan is at and provide general comments in relation to the plan.

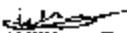
Through all its reforms the Government has put plans and local communities at the heart of planning, the Government does not approve plans, and is clear that councils and their communities are best placed to take decisions on local planning matters in their area without unnecessary interference from central government.

As we stated in our Housing White Paper- *Fixing our Broken Housing Market*, having an up to date plan in place is essential to planning for our housing requirements; providing the clarity that communities and developers deserve about where new homes should be built; and ensuring that development is planned rather than the result of speculative applications.

I understand that the Huntingdonshire Plan has recently undergone a second round of consultation when ready Huntingdonshire District Council will submit the plan for a public examination before an independent inspector. The independent Inspector's role is to examine whether the submitted plan is sound. For a plan to be sound it must be positively prepared, justified, effective, legally compliant and consistent with national policy.

This will include showing that the council's proposals are supported by a robust evidence base, and that they have sought and considered the views of local communities and interested parties

With thanks again for your time,


William Burrows
Policy Adviser
Development Plans



VACANCY PART TIME GROUNDSPERSON/HANDYPERSON

Bluntisham Parish Council are looking for a reliable person to keep the parish grass verges neat and tidy and strimming the footpaths. The suitable person will be able to work flexible hours to suit themselves, weather permitting, and will be paid monthly. Working approximately 15 – 20 hours per month during the growing season, approx. 7 months of the year. This post would ideally suit a local person who has an interest in keeping the village tidy.

All equipment provided and training provided. Good rates of pay for the right person.

For more information please contact the clerk using the details below.

Closing date 6th April.

Tracey Davidson

9 Bramley Grove, Bluntisham

07725 308115

bluntishamclerk@gmail.com

Do you fancy becoming a parish councillor....?

It's election time again and you have until 4pm on Friday 6th April to submit your nomination.

Full details can be found on Huntingdonshire District Council's website, visit www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk or if you would like an informal chat about what is involved then please contact the clerk or any one of your parish councillors.

Philippa Hope

Martin Crowhurst

Frank Hudson

Mark Berg

Kathy Searle

Roger Steel

Gary James

Rob Gore

Cynthia Curtis