

**Response to South Bucks District Council – Consultation on Green Belt**  
**December 2016**

**PART B RESPONSE**

**A. SUITABILITY**

Preferred Option 9 specifies 3 areas for proposed release from the Green Belt:-

- The Area South East of the Town between the M40 and the Pyebush Roundabout to Junction2 Link. (Ref 1.15, 53b modified)
- North of Wilton Park to the west of the relief road (Ref 1.13, 47b modified)
- Wilton Park and the Cricket Club (Ref 1.14, 47a modified)

Beaconsfield Town Council gives qualified support to Preferred Option 9, and makes three conditions:-

- (1) that South Bucks District Council can demonstrate that exceptional circumstances, as defined in the relevant Act, do exist.
- (2) A defensible boundary in relation to the area ref 1.13 (47b modified). No housing to be built to the west of the relief road beyond which the land must remain as green belt. We do not approve any further development in respect of 1.14 (47a modified), beyond the existing footprint.
- (3) Beaconsfield Town Council gives qualified support to the Area references 1.14 and 1.13 (47a and 47b as modified), subject to the two being combined as a single development and master planned as such. Without this condition we do not feel that key infrastructure issues will be properly addressed and the unstructured small developments of the recent past will continue unabated with negative consequence.

The area south of Pyebush Roundabout between the A40 and the M40 offers the opportunity to expand the scope of employment opportunities in the Town, and to relocate businesses from the centre where direct access to the motorway network will offer benefit. Noise levels in this area suggest that opportunities for residential development are limited.

**B. TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT AND REQUIREMENTS**

Beaconsfield Town Council believes that growth in the Town is essential in order that the community continues to prosper. Without growth it is likely that there will be decline as the existing population ages and the needs of the next generation are ignored.

For these reasons it is vital that any new development focuses on the following groups:-

- Key workers
- Those with a proven local connection
- Those who wish to downsize from existing accommodation some of whom may require a degree of “on site” support

For the Town Council to support release of Green Belt land the development must not only address the key issues of infrastructure but also achieve the maximum amount of affordable housing. In this context the development must seek to include an appropriate volume of housing capped at a maximum of £350,000. These homes will be starter homes that are affordable to rent or buy. Appropriate structures to manage and maintain the housing and public areas such as Community Housing Trusts should be explored. This must all be clearly stated in the planning brief and a clear restriction on development. Specifically, this should be within the area ref. 1.13 (see above).

The new development should be self-sufficient on incoming and outgoing mains services, and mechanisms be employed to fund infrastructure. In addition to concomitant new infrastructure, existing

Town infrastructure will require upgrading and maintaining where subject to intensification of use in line with the increasing population to minimise negative impacts, e.g. roads. There will be a need to introduce new traffic management and calming measures for all roads affected by the new development.

Existing open spaces around the town, actively used for civic, recreational and leisure purposes must be retained and protected. In addition new open space and sporting facilities must be added in order to meet the needs of the enlarged population.

There has been concern about the approaches to the Town, and particularly the setting of the Old Town Conservation Area. Areas are well wooded especially to the A40 and A355 and it is considered desirable that sensitive landscaping and woodland screening be employed to areas of new development.

New medical centre and facilities are already under discussion however these discussions must be reviewed both in terms of perceived future population growth and the suitability of any proposed locations, to ensure ease of accessibility to a wide range of user.

Equally important is the need to provide adequate education facilities and school places at all levels and in all areas of the Town, and the likely need to locate and fund at least one new school as neighbouring Districts increase their population and school place demand. There may be scope for more mixed secondary education.

It is not felt necessary to make further provision for gypsies and travellers as the area already accommodates an adequate settlement at Wapseys Wood.

***Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Neighbourhood Plan***

*CIL is being considered as part of the Emerging Local Plan. Levied on planning applications it gives the Town Council 15% and is one essential funding source for local infrastructure. Release of the Green Belt should therefore be conditional on CIL being in place. The Town Council has not yet sought the designation of Beaconsfield for a Neighbourhood Plan, but has told SBDC it is minded to do so. As well as the CIL contribution rising to 25% to assist implementation of a Neighbourhood Plan, a plan would allow holistic planning by the community of the Town complementary to the Local Plan.*

**C. COMMENT ON DRAFT TECHNICAL WORK ON THE SELECTIONS**

BCC have now published their planning application for the A355 Relief Road, single carriageway 7.3m wide. They have included traffic modelling. The Relief Road will relieve traffic on the old Park Lane section and improve A355 north-south flow, and ease the London End junction. It has been planned for Wilton Park and some spare capacity. It will not solve Beaconsfield town centre congestion and might shift patterns of movement. In our view more work is required to demonstrate the adequacy of the Relief Road over time.

In the Green Belt assessment traffic modelling was done showing increasingly worse congestion in Beaconsfield with increases beyond those anticipated in the number of houses, particularly at the Gregories Road and Penn Road junctions, as well as along the A40. Assessing how these new housing areas are accessed and implementing town-wide road improvements will be necessary, just to minimise deteriorating road conditions.

Further consideration should also be given to the impact on Beaconsfield of the single access and egress at Junction 3 of the M40 motorway. A new northbound junction 3A has been considered by Wycombe District and the effects of such should be evaluated with regard to traffic movement and congestion in Beaconsfield taking into account the additional number of vehicles related to the anticipated population growth. Any resultant works required to be funded by Section 106 or similar related obligation.

Car parking requirements will need to be reviewed within both existing and new areas of the enlarged town. Specifically, there is a need to investigate space for out of town parking to support a Park & Ride or Hopper Bus Scheme.

Links to Seer Green Station must be investigated and proposed in order to reduce impact on Beaconsfield Railway Station.

Further development work will require a detailed framework masterplan, with infrastructure needs such as schools and medical facilities as well as roads and mains, with timing, phasing and so on. These needs should be assessed holistically on a town-wide basis to ensure any complementary enhancements required to the existing town are integrated. We therefore strongly recommend that at least three nominated representatives from the local community including from the Town Council work with SBDC and landowners and developers as part of a multi-disciplinary group having responsibility to safeguard the interests of the existing local population.

**D. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

The Town Council understands that the local land owner, Hall Barn Estates, are willing to discuss the release of green belt land, not included as part of Preferred Option 9. This land is situated along the corridor between the A40 and the M40. There may be additional opportunities here that South Bucks District Council may wish to explore.

12<sup>th</sup> December 2016