

HIGH LEGH'S FUTURE



Summary of Draft High Legh Neighbourhood Plan April 2021



CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT HIGH LEGH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

We are consulting you on the draft High Legh Neighbourhood Plan which covers the whole Parish of High Legh. The draft Plan has been developed over several years following our analysis of feedback from earlier community engagement and evidence gathering. It is therefore, based on our understanding of the views and needs of local people. It is important to us that we get your response to the draft Plan to check that we have properly understood and addressed the issues that you raised. **So please take this opportunity to have your say.**

This leaflet summarises the draft Plan. The full version, on which we are seeking your views, can be found on the Parish Council website (www.highleghparishcouncil.gov.uk) together with all supporting documents.

A comments form is enclosed which should be completed and delivered to the postbox at High Legh Village Hall or 18 Gleyve, High Legh WA16 6PY. Alternatively, and preferably, an online response form is available at www.highleghparishcouncil.gov.uk

THE CONSULTATION RUNS FROM MONDAY 12 APRIL TO MIDNIGHT ON SUNDAY 30 MAY 2021

WHY DOES HIGH LEGH NEED A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

- It enables us to better-shape our area (based on the views of the community of High Legh), inform how development takes place and to have a greater say on the type, quality and location of any development.
- It will become part of Cheshire East's statutory development plan for the area after it has been tested in a public examination which will be used to assess planning applications within the Parish
- It will only come into force if the majority of High Legh residents who vote in a referendum support it.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR...

- **August 2013** – Cheshire East Council approves the Parish Council's application for the Parish to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area
- **June 2015** – a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group of residents was set up and organised a number of engagement and consultation exercises with local residents. Two key exercises which have been used to shape the vision, objectives, policies and proposals within the draft Plan were:
- **May 2016** – 'Which Way for the Future of High Legh?' Survey – asked residents to provide views on a variety of issues including the need for additional housing, business and community facilities and the most appropriate location for these. It also asked for people's views on a village centre and environmental, design, heritage and transport related issues. There was a very good 55% return rate which provided a reliable body of evidence for the preparation of the Plan.

- **April 2018** - High Legh Neighbourhood Plan Further Consultation and Questionnaire – to get greater clarity following the views expressed in the 2016 survey this asked residents to provide their views on three options for potential future development:

- 1. Joining the Dots:** no new housing and some improvements to existing facilities.
- 2. Completing the Square:** 50-75 new homes and the creation of a new village centre located to the north-east of the Village along with improvements to the existing infrastructure and facilities.
- 3. Creating a New Half:** 100-125 new homes, the creation of a new village centre and additional community facilities to the west of the Village along with improvements to the existing infrastructure and facilities.

Again, there was a high return rate of 48% providing a reliable body of evidence. The majority view supported the 'Completing the Square' option.

As well as the above work we have commissioned, following tendering exercises, a number of studies to support the draft Plan including:

- **April 2019** - High Legh, Green Belt Assessment, April 2019.
- **May 2020** - High Legh Neighbourhood Plan 'Indicative Concept Masterplan for the "Completing The Square" option, as consulted upon by the High Legh Parish in May 2018'.
- **December 2020** - High Legh Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide.

THE VISION FOR HIGH LEGH

"High Legh will be a vibrant, thriving, safe, predominantly rural, friendly community, encouraging prosperity and engagement by residents of all ages, local farms and other businesses. It will be a place where people can live, access work, learn, play and enjoy a high quality of life.

It will protect its rural and green open feel and will support a limited amount of high-quality sustainable development to meet local housing and community needs. New development will be fully integrated into and in keeping with the character of the area. Agriculture will remain a valued feature of local life and we will ensure we have the infrastructure required to support local needs."

THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

To achieve this Vision, the Steering Group identified 19 objectives under 10 themes as follows:

1 Sustainable Growth

- **SG01:** Create a more sustainable parish through limited development of an appropriate size and scale which minimises harm to the Green Belt and is fully integrated into the fabric and infrastructure of the parish.

2 Housing

- **H01:** Provide new housing that meets identified local housing needs to provide a balanced residential community.
- **H02:** Provide new housing of high quality and sustainable design which maintains a sense of open space and reinforces and enhances the character of the parish.
- **H03:** Minimise the impact of new housing on the existing road infrastructure, particularly around local facilities.
- **H04:** Ensure new housing includes provision of footpath links with existing residential areas.

3 Local Economy

- **LE01:** Support the provision of modern and sustainably designed agricultural and business premises of an appropriate scale and in accessible locations which provide opportunities for local economic growth and employment.

- **LE02:** Retain High Legh's function as a rural working parish with new business premises of an appropriate scale providing opportunities for local economic growth and employment.

4 Retail

- **RL01:** Improve retail facilities for the local community.

5 Community, Leisure and Recreation

- **CLR01:** Support and improve existing community, leisure and recreational facilities to meet future need and enhance community health and well-being.
- **CLR02:** Provide a village green as the focus for events, activities and any new community facilities helping to sustain the vitality, health and well-being of the local community.

6 Heritage and the Built Environment

- **HBE01:** Land and buildings which reflect the Parish's agricultural and cultural heritage should be protected, enhanced and promoted to the local community and visitors.
- **HBE02:** Provide new development of high quality and sustainable design which reinforces and enhances the character of the Parish.

7 Natural Environment

- NE01: Enhance and protect the natural character and assets of the Parish by protecting and enhancing open spaces, landscape character and valued wildlife habitats.
- NE02: Ensure new development provides public open space and planting to enhance the Parish's stock of natural resources and establish green infrastructure links.

8 Travel and Accessibility

- TA01: Improve the safety and efficiency of moving around the village for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- TA02: Improve public parking provision associated with High Legh Primary School.

- TA03: The network of footpaths will be protected, enhanced and expanded allowing improved integration and access within the Parish.

9 Infrastructure

- I01: New development should, where necessary, provide or contribute to improvements in the physical and green infrastructure in the Parish and village through s106, CIL and other funding as it becomes available.

10 Sustainable Design and Carbon Reduction

- SD01: New development will be designed to minimise energy use and reduce waste and incorporate renewable energy generation.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

To ensure the Vision and Objectives are realised the draft Plan has 26 policies grouped within 11 key themes. Once approved, these policies will be used, together with the existing policies in the Cheshire East Local Plan, to determine any planning applications in High Legh:

1. Achieving Sustainable Development – Policy HLSD1

seeks to support proposals that demonstrate they achieve sustainable development in accordance with the policies set out in the Plan.

2. High Legh Development Strategy – Policy HLDS1

sets out the overall strategy for how and where the parish will accommodate new development. New development will be supported, in principle, within the Settlement Boundary (see right) which includes land allocated for up to 75 houses on land to the east of High Legh in the plan providing it doesn't conflict with other relevant policies. Development beyond the settlement boundary will be determined against relevant Green Belt policies.

3. High Legh Settlement Boundary – Policy HLSB1

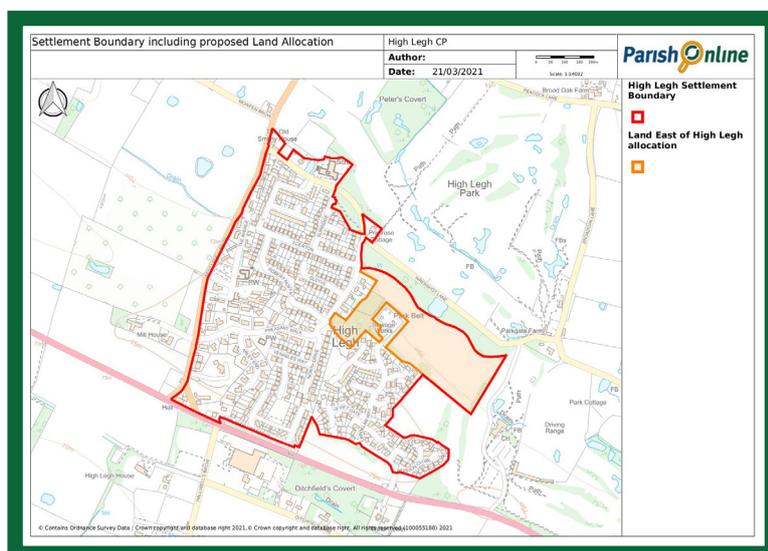
designates a boundary around the village of High Legh as shown on the map to the right. The policy supports development within the settlement boundary providing it meets certain criteria.

4. Housing Policies

- Land east of High Legh - Policy HLH1 identifies a 6.15ha site to the east of High Legh, for development of up to 75 homes and associated open space and infrastructure. There are a number of requirements that development must satisfy. This includes the mix and type of housing to meet need particularly in terms of downsizing and first-time buyers, the main access coming from the east off the A50/High Legh Park Golf Club junction and the provision of up to 1ha of woodland with community access.
- New Residential Development within the Settlement Boundary – Policy HLH2 supports new housing development within the settlement boundary providing it meets certain criteria.
- Housing Mix – Policy HLH3 sets out the expected mix of new housing development. All development should have, unless there is evidence to demonstrate a different need, the following mix: at least 50% of should have 1-2 bed spaces; at least 30% should have 3 bed spaces; and at least 20% should have 4+ bed spaces. 30% of houses on development of 11 or more should be affordable homes. Provision for sheltered and extra care housing will be supported as part of the mix of market and affordable housing.

5. Local Economy Policies

- Protection of agricultural buildings - Policy HLE1 seeks to protect agricultural buildings from redevelopment or change of use unless the applicant can demonstrate the proposal meets certain criteria.



- New micro and small business development - Policy HLE2 seeks to support proposals for small scale business development within the settlement boundary providing it meets a number of criteria.
- Protection of existing local business sites - Policy HLE3 seeks to protect 11 key local business sites within the Parish for continued business use unless certain criteria can be met. The location of the local businesses is shown on the key map.

6. Community Infrastructure Policies

- Protection of existing built Community Facilities - Policy HLC1 seeks to protect 4 key community buildings within the Parish unless certain criteria can be met. The location of the community buildings is shown on the key map.
- New Community Facilities and Community Infrastructure Levy - Policy HLC2 seeks to utilise funding secured from development in the Parish to go towards community related projects which are identified in section 6 of the draft plan.

7. Development and Infrastructure Policies

- Development and Infrastructure - Policy HLI1 seeks to ensure that new development has the appropriate infrastructure, utilities and services necessary to serve it without causing an unacceptable adverse impact on existing provision and creating a worsening of existing problems. Infrastructure provision may need to be phased on larger development.

- **High Quality Communications Infrastructure – Policy HLI2** supports the development of ultra-fast broadband. New infrastructure to support telecommunications installations must meet criteria relating to public exposure, design and impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- **Electric Vehicle Charging Points - Policy HLI3** seeks to ensure that all new development makes provision for electric vehicle charging points.

8. Travel Policies

- **Cycling, Walking and Disability Access Routes - Policy HLT1** seeks to ensure new development provides safe routes for cyclists, pedestrians and the mobility impaired. The policy also identifies a key route to be provided between The Avenue to Robert Moffat through St. John's church land as shown on the key map. It also identifies key Movement Routes through the village where proposals to enhance travel for pedestrians and cyclists will be supported.
- **Active Travel Routes - Policy HLT2** identifies the provision for two key routes to encourage active travel between the village and key local facilities as shown on the key map; a route from the village to the Bears Paw Inn and from the village to the High Legh Park Golf Club.
- **Transport, Access and Movement - Policy HLT3** seeks to ensure that new development will be acceptable in terms of highway capacity, junction and access arrangements, parking and other associated transport issues.
- **High Legh Primary School on-site drop-off and parking provision - Policy HLT4** supports proposals for a drop-off area within the school site or on land immediately adjacent to it. This will reduce the highway safety issues associated with existing drop-off and pick-up on roads within the vicinity of the school.
- **Traffic Management and Transport Improvements - Policy HLT5** requires that development proposals may need to provide highway improvements and traffic calming measures within and around the village.

9. Natural Environment Policies

- **Local Green Space - Policy HLG1** seeks to protect 8 open spaces, as shown on the key map, to be designated as Local Green Space unless the development is considered appropriate to its function or there are very special circumstances.
- **Local Biodiversity - Policy HLB1** seeks to ensure there is a 10% net biodiversity net gain on all development sites. The policy also designates areas as Neighbourhood Nature Conservation Sites to be protected for their biodiversity value.
- **Landscape Character and Visual Impact - Policy HLLC1** seeks to ensure that development proposals enhance and are integrated into the area's natural and historic landscape character and visual amenity. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments will be required for all major developments.

10. Historic Environment Policies

- **Non-Designated Heritage Assets - Policy HLHE1** seeks to protect buildings identified as having an important local historic or architectural significance such as those which are locally listed.
- **High Legh Neighbourhood Heritage Area - Policy HLHE2** designates an area which includes a grouping of important local buildings associated with the former West Hall. The policy seeks to protect the special local architectural and historic interest of this Area and ensure new development within them make a positive contribution to its local character and distinctiveness.

11. Design Policies

- **Character and Design - Policy HLD1** seeks to ensure, through the implementation of the High Legh Design Guide, that proposals contribute towards the local distinctiveness of High Legh and demonstrate high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and architecture.
- **Energy Efficient Buildings - Policy HLD2** seeks to ensure that all new development is built to zero carbon emissions standards and that all new residential developments generate 100% of their energy requirements from on-site renewable or low carbon sources.

KEY PROJECTS AND ACTIONS

A range of projects and initiatives have also been identified to help make the Parish a more sustainable place to live, work and visit. These will be prioritised by the Parish Council and an action plan for their delivery produced. Money from the Community Infrastructure Levy and S106 agreement commuted sums will be used to help fund these projects and initiatives. The action plan will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

- **High Speed 2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail** – we will continue to look to minimise the impacts of these national projects on High Legh including impact on residences and businesses, issues of design, management of the construction works to minimise and mitigate impact, flood prevention and management of the environmental and ecological impacts.
- **Village Green** – we will explore the delivery of a village green within the proposed land allocation close to the existing village with the landowner. It will be designed to be easily accessible by foot and bicycle from the existing village and any new development.
- **Drop-off zone adjacent to High Legh Primary School** – we will engage with the Primary School, Cheshire East Council and the landowner to prepare and deliver a scheme to provide an off-road car park and drop-off zone for the school.
- **Cycle and Pedestrian infrastructure** – we will engage with the landowners, Cheshire East Council and stakeholders to explore the viability and delivery of the routes identified in the neighbourhood plan.
- **Locally Listed Buildings** – we will undertake a community survey to find potential nominations for locally listed buildings to submit to Cheshire East Council.

NEXT STEPS

Following this consultation which ends at midnight on Sunday 30 May 2021 the estimated next steps will be:

- **Review and re-draft of the Plan following consultation responses (by September 2021);**
- **Submission of the plan to Cheshire East Council (by November 2021)**
- **Regulation 16 statutory 6 week consultation by Cheshire East Council (date to be confirmed);**
- **Independent examination (date to be confirmed); and**
- **Referendum and adoption (dates to be confirmed).**

If you have any queries regarding this please contact the Parish Clerk at clerk@highleghparishcouncil.gov.uk or tel 01925 754818