

 <p><b>Nuneaton &amp; Bedworth</b> United to Achieve</p>	<p><b>Borough Plan Review</b> <b>Issues &amp; Options consultation draft</b> Response Form</p>	<p><b>Ref:</b></p> <p>(For official use only)</p>
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**Please return to Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council by 6<sup>th</sup> August 2021 via:**

**Email:** [planning.policy@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk) or

**Post:** Town Hall, Coton Road, NUNEATON, CV11 5AA.

#### **Data Protection**

We will treat your data in accordance with our Privacy Notice:

[www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/info/21004/access\\_to\\_information/410/privacy\\_notice/7](http://www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/info/21004/access_to_information/410/privacy_notice/7).

Information will be used by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council solely in relation to the Borough Plan review. Please note that all responses will be available for public inspection, and cannot be treated as confidential. Representations, including names, may be published on our website. By submitting this response form you are agreeing to these conditions. The Council is not allowed to automatically notify you of future consultations unless you 'opt-in'.

Do you wish to be kept informed of future stages of the Borough Plan review?

Yes

This form has two parts –

Part A – Personal details

Part B – Your response.

#### **Part A**

	<b>1. Personal details*</b> * If an agent is appointed, please complete only the title, name and organisation boxes below but complete the full contact details of the agent in 2.	<b>2. Agent's details (if applicable)</b>
Title		<b>Ms</b>
First name		<b>Sue</b>
Last name		<b>Green</b>
Job title (where relevant)		<b>Planning Manager</b>
Organisation (where relevant)		<b>Home Builders Federation (HBF)</b>
House no. and street		<b>c/o 80 Needlers End Lane</b>
Town		<b>Balsall Common</b>
Post code		<b>CV7 7AB</b>
Telephone number		<b>07817 865534</b>
Email address		<b>sue.green@hbf.co.uk</b>

## **Part B**

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### **Duration of Borough Plan**

Question 1. Do you agree that a Plan period of 2023 - 2038 is appropriate? If not, which other plan period would you recommend? Please justify your answer.

The HBF agree that a fifteen-year timeframe for the plan period is appropriate.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 2. Do you agree that the existing evidence base set out above needs to be updated or replaced? Please justify your answer.

The HBF agree that the Council's existing evidence base should be updated and replaced. As set out in the 2021 NPPF, all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up to date evidence, which should be adequate, proportionate and focussed tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned (para 31). If the Council is proposing to adopt any optional technical standards and / or to set other policy requirements, robust justifying evidence should be provided.

When considering specific policy requirements, the Council is referred to the Government's proposed changes to Parts L (Conservation of Fuel & Power), F (Ventilation), M (Access to & Use of Buildings), R (Physical Infrastructure for High-Speed Electronic Communications Networks) & S (Electric Vehicle Charging in Residential & Non-residential Buildings) of the Building Regulations and the Government's proposals for biodiversity gain set out in the Environment Bill. As set out in the 2021 NPPF, the Borough Plan Review (BPR) should also avoid unnecessary duplication (para 16f).

In plan-making, viability is inseparable from the deliverability of development. At the plan making stage, the Council's Viability Assessment should test individual developments and plan policies. Viability assessment should not be conducted on the margins of viability without a robust approach to viability assessment, land will be withheld from the market and housing delivery targets will not be achieved.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 3. Are there any other evidence base studies which require updating? If so, what are they? Please justify your answer.

The BPR should be positively prepared to provide a strategy, which as a minimum seeks to meet its own Local Housing Needs (LHN) of 429 dwellings per annum in full and is informed by agreements with other authorities so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated (para 35a). The Council should prepare and maintain one or more Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) identifying the cross-boundary matters to be addressed and the progress of co-operation in addressing these matters. This cross-boundary working will include meeting housing needs across the Coventry & Warwickshire Housing Market Area (C&WHMA).

(Expand box if necessary)

### **Employment**

Question 4. Which of the options set out below do you favour for the location of future employment areas? Please set out why.

- Option 1 – Provide new employment through extension of existing employment estates with no focus on a particular area within the borough.
- Option 2 – Provide new employment in close proximity to the A5.
- Option 3 – Provide new employment in close proximity to junction 3 of the M6.

No comment.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 5. Are there any other reasonable options for the locating of new employment areas that have not been set out above? Please justify your answer.

No comment.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 6. Which of the options set out below do you favour for dealing with non-employment uses on existing industrial estates? Please set out why.

- Option 1 – Continuation of the protection of existing employment uses from non-employment uses.
- Option 2 - Set out the types of non-employment uses that would be allowable in existing employment uses.
- Option 3 - Set out the existing employment areas within which non-employment uses would be acceptable.
- Option 4 - Restrict the number of non-employment uses that each employment area can accommodate.
- Option 5 - Remove any form of protection of existing employment uses from non-employment uses.

No comment.

(Expand box if necessary)

### **Green Belt**

Question 7. Which of the options set out below do you favour for the locating of new residential uses? Please set out why.

- Option 1 - Prioritise the existing urban areas of the Borough followed by land in the countryside that is not Green Belt, and then Green Belt land.
- Option 2 - Prioritise the existing urban areas of the Borough followed by land in the countryside no matter whether it is designated as Green Belt or not.
- Option 3 - Prioritise to the most sustainable locations no matter whether it is designated as an urban area, countryside, or Green Belt.

As set out in 2021 NPPF, where fully evidenced and justified Green Belt boundaries can be altered in "*exceptional circumstances*" through the preparation or updating of Local Plans (para 140 & 141).

The Council should examine all reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development by making as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites, optimising the density of development and discussions with other C&WHMA authorities (see HBF answer to Question 3 above). Whilst the Council should make as much use as possible of brownfield sites in existing urban areas as set out in 2021 NPPF (para 119), the Council should avoid "town cramming", which would provide insufficient variety in house typologies to create balanced

communities with the right types of new homes to meet the housing needs of different groups. There will be a limited capacity for higher densities and more taller buildings, which will only be appropriate in certain locations. A blanket approach to the intensification of housing densities everywhere would be inappropriate as a range of differing densities will be needed to ensure development is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. The setting of residential density standards should be undertaken in accordance with the 2021 NPPF (para 125), whereby in the circumstances of an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs then a minimum net density in suitable locations such as town centres and those benefiting from good public transport connections may be appropriate. The future deliverability of intensely developed residential schemes will also be dependent on the viability of brownfield sites and market demand for high density urban living post Covid-19.

As densification alone will not meet all residential development needs because of insufficient availability of brownfield sites, restricted capacity and competing demands from employment / residential uses in the existing urban areas, the 2021 NPPF sets out that the Council should promote sustainable patterns of development by considering the location development in urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, in towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or in locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary (para 142).

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 8. Which of the options set out below do you favour for the locating of new employment uses? Please set out why.

- Option A – Prioritise land that is in the countryside that is not Green Belt followed by Green Belt land.
- Option B - Prioritise land that is in the countryside no matter whether it is designated as Green Belt or not.
- Option C - Prioritise to the most sustainable locations no matter whether it is designated as countryside or Green Belt.

No comment.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 9. Is there another reasonable hierarchy for selecting land for development, particularly housing, but including employment uses? If so, what would this look like? Please justify your answer.

No comment.

(Expand box if necessary)

## **Housing**

Question 10. Do you agree that there should be a review of the existing allocated sites? Please state why.

The Council should undertake an accurate assessment of availability, suitability, deliverability, developability and viability of all existing and proposed site allocations.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 11. Which of the spatial options do you favour for the location of future housing? Please set out why.

There are disadvantages associated with pursuing any one Spatial Option in isolation. The preferred Spatial Option for Nuneaton & Bedworth is likely to be a combination of :-

- Option 1 – locating new residential development within existing settlement boundaries ;
- Option 2 - small scale, sustainable urban extensions focused on key transport infrastructure (the M6, A roads, railway stations, cycle routes) ;
- Option 3 - locating new residential development in non-Green Belt areas ; and
- the release of land from the Green Belt (see HBF's answer to Question 7 above).

The preferred Spatial Option should meet the housing needs of both urban and rural communities. As set out in the 2021 NPPF *“to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services”* (para 79). Unless there are significant constraints or sustainability issues, all rural villages & settlements should be considered for appropriate levels of sustainable growth for homes and jobs.

The preferred Spatial Option should ensure the availability of a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable land to deliver the housing requirement. This sufficiency of housing land supply (HLS) should meet the housing requirement, ensure the maintenance of 5 Years Housing Land Supply (YHLS) and achieve Housing Delivery Test (HDT) performance measurements. Housing delivery is optimised by the widest possible range of housing site sizes and market locations, which provides suitable land buying opportunities for small, medium and large housebuilding companies. The widest mix of sites provides choice for consumers, allows places to grow in sustainable ways, creates opportunities to diversify the construction sector, responds to changing circumstances, treats the housing requirement as a minimum rather than a maximum and provides competition in the land market. A diversified portfolio of housing sites also offers the widest possible range of products to households to access different types of dwellings to meet their housing needs. As set out in the 2021 NPPF at least 10% of the housing requirement should be accommodated on sites no larger than one hectare or else demonstrate strong reasons for not achieving this target (para 69a).

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 12. Are there any other potential spatial options that need to be considered? If so, please specify.

No comment.

(Expand box if necessary)

### **Net Zero Carbon Emissions**

Question 13. Should the new Borough Plan seek to set targets for tree planting in large scale developments (option 1)? If not, why not. If so, should these targets be based on area or number of trees? Please justify your answer.

No (see HBF's answer to Question 16 below).

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 14. Should the new Borough Plan seek to require an orchard in large scale developments (option 2)? If not, why not.

No (see HBF's answer to Question 16 below).

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 15. Is there a definition of large-scale development that would be appropriate to use? If so, please set out what this is.

No (see HBF's answer to Question 16 below).

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 16. Should the Borough Plan set no targets for tree planting in the Borough (option 3)? If so, why so?

The 2021 NPPF (para 131) sets out the Government's objective to incorporate more tree planting within development because trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined and that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as community orchards). This para also sets out that the Council, applicants, tree officers and highway officers should work together to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users and to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees. Footnote 50 identifies that in specific cases, there may be clear, justifiable and compelling reasons why tree planting would be inappropriate. The 2021 NPPF sets out a more collaborative, flexible, case by case policy approach than the Council's enumerative approach to tree planting proposed under Questions 13, 14 & 15 above. The Council should be encouraging the inclusion of more trees in development rather than imposing arbitrary targets for tree planting.

(Expand box if necessary)

## **Town Centres**

Question 17. Which of the options set out below do you favour for the protection of primary and secondary frontages in the town centres? Please set out why.

- Set out that use class E and use classes A4 and A5 (as was) are acceptable uses.
- Set out that use class E are acceptable uses but not use classes A4 and A5 (as was).
- Set out that use classes E and F1 are acceptable uses.
- Set out that use class E and C3 (residential) uses are acceptable.

No comment.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 18. Are there other uses not set out above that should be included as acceptable in primary and secondary frontages in the town centres? If so, which ones and why.

No comment.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 19. Which of the options set out below is appropriate for setting out the extent of the primary and secondary frontages in the town centres? Please set out why.

- Option A - Remove any designations of primary and secondary frontages.
- Option B - Reassess and redraw the extent of the primary and secondary frontages.
- Option C - Retain the designation of primary and secondary frontages as set out in current Borough Plan.

No comment.

(Expand box if necessary)

### **Transport**

Question 20. Should policies SA1 and HS2 be amended to give greater emphasis to the importance of cycling and walking connections/infrastructure being provided (option 1)? If not, why not.

The importance of cycling and walking connections / infrastructure should be emphasised.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 21. Should the new Borough Plan be amended from that set out in policy HS2 to require new developments to install vehicle charging points (option 2)? If so, what should the requirement be. If not, why not.

It is recognised that electric vehicles will be part of the solution to transitioning to a low carbon future. As set out in the Department of Transport consultation on Electric Vehicle Charging in Residential & Non-Residential Buildings (ended on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019), the Government's preferred option is the introduction of a new requirement for Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) under Part S of the Building Regulations. The inclusion of EVCP requirements within the Building Regulations will introduce a standardised consistent approach to EVCPs in new buildings across the country. It is the HBF's opinion that it is unnecessary for the Council to amend Policy HS2 because of the Government's proposals under Part S of the Building Regulations.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 22. Should the new Borough Plan leave policies SA1, SA2 and HS2 unchanged (option 3)?

No further comment (see HBF's answer to Question 21 above).

(Expand box if necessary)

## **Other Matters**

Question 23. Should the new Borough Plan require, through policy, new development to meet, as a minimum, a 10% biodiversity gain? If not, what should be the target for biodiversity gain? Please justify your answer.

The Council's policy approach to biodiversity net gain should align with the Government's proposals as set out in the Environment Bill including a mandatory national requirement for biodiversity gain and transitional arrangements. In the Government's opinion, 10% strikes the right balance between the ambition for development and reversing environmental decline whilst providing certainty in achieving environmental outcomes, deliverability of development and costs for developers. The Government also intends to make provision for a transition period of two years. The specifics of this transition period will provide clear and timely guidance on understanding what will be required and when.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 24. Do you agree that design codes are best dealt with as supplementary planning documents? Please justify your answer.

The Council's policy approach on design should accord with the 2021 NPPF, the latest NPPG, the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code. This approach should provide specific local guidance rather than repeating national policy or guidance. The use of any Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should not convey development plan status onto a document, which has not been subject to the same process of preparation, consultation and examination, contrary to the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (Regulations).

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 25. Do you agree that the key issues for the Borough Plan review have been identified ?. Please justify your answer.

As set out in the 2021 NPPF, the BPR should take account of changing circumstances affecting the Borough or any relevant changes in national policy (para 33). Whilst key issues for the BPR have been identified, the Council should also identify the individual policies to be reviewed, for example, the Council's affordable housing tenure mix should accord with the 2021 NPPF expectation that at least 10% of homes will be available for affordable home ownership (para 65) and the 24 May 2021 Written Ministerial Statement requirement for 25% of affordable housing to be First Homes.

(Expand box if necessary)

Question 26. Are there any other issues that need to be considered and addressed ? Please justify your answer.

No comment.

(Expand box if necessary)



