

Borough Councillor Update – June 2019

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Large development in Harrold

Gatesby Estates are proposing a large development in Harrold on the Odell Road.

The application number for the outline application for up to 90 dwellings at Odell Road, Harrold is **19/00842/MAO**. The application can be viewed via the following link (<http://www.publicaccess.bedford.gov.uk>) and using the reference number **19/00842/MAO**. The consultation period ran until the 29th May 2019 although the Borough will accept comments up to the date the application is determined. The likely committee date where the application will be considered is unknown at this stage. The Borough Council has instructed a Landscape Consultant to assess the site and this report should be available within two weeks. Alistair Burt MP has asked the Secretary of State for Housing to call in this application. The Secretary of State will consider this request once the Borough's Planning Department has concluded its investigations into the suitability of the site. The Borough Council has been asked to keep the Secretary of State informed.

Local Plan

The Council approved its Local Plan, determining sites for housing and employment growth, for submission to the Planning Inspectorate on the 5th December. Following the removal of the proposed Colworth Garden Village and its planned 2500 homes (because it was too close to the Santa Pod Raceway) the Local Plan period has been shortened from 2035 to 2030. That lowers the housing need figure from 7855 to a minimum of 3636.

The final allocations are set out in the below table taken from the report.

Policy 3S – Amount and distribution of housing development

A minimum of 3,636 new dwellings will be allocated and distributed as follows:

- i. Bedford urban area: 2,532 dwellings (of which 1,785 dwellings will be delivered by 2030)
- ii. Urban extensions: 210 dwellings
- iii. Stewartby strategic brownfield allocation: 1,000 dwellings (of which 100 dwellings will be delivered by 2030)
- iv. *Criterion deleted*
- v. Key service centres: 2,000 dwellings
- vi. Rural service centres: 260 dwellings

In the settlements listed below, it will be necessary to identify sites to meet the following levels of development, generally in and around defined Settlement Policy Area boundaries. Other than in Roxton, all sites will be allocated in Neighbourhood Development Plans:

- i Bromham – 500 homes
- ii Clapham – 500 homes
- iii Great Barford – 500 homes
- iv Sharnbrook – 500 homes
- v Carlton – 25-50 homes
- vi Harrold – 25-50 homes
- vii Milton Ernest – 25-50 homes
- viii Oakley – 25-50 homes
- ix Roxton – 25-50 homes (see Policy 28)
- x Turvey – 25-50 homes
- Willington – 25-50 homes

The absence of Colworth Garden Village means that consideration was given to alternative options; this included the viability of the proposed Garden Villages at Thurleigh Airfield, Twinwoods and Wyboston as well as the proposed Stewartby Brickworks development covering land to the south of Bedford. The three alternative Garden Villages have been rejected for a variety of reasons. It is not clear why the 'Brickworks' option has been rejected; that is a brownfield site and capable of taking 1000+ homes, not just the 100 it has been allocated.

This rejection of a brownfield site and at the same time the selection of yet another greenfield site in Sharnbrook for 500 houses is not easily explained and is almost certain to be challenged.

The Planning Inspectorate is currently undertaking Examination of the Borough Council's Local Plan 2030 with hearings on the following dates at Borough Hall:

Wednesday 29 May 2019 – Friday 31 May 2019

Tuesday 4 June 2019 – Friday 7 June 2019

Tuesday 18 June 2019 – Friday 21 June 2019

Monday 24 June 2019 – Thursday 27 June 2019

The Examination will assess whether or not the Local Plan is legally compliant and 'sound' in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Individuals and representatives of groups who responded to the Council's consultations in 2018 may be asked to make representations, if they indicated at the time that they would like to do so. Members of the public are welcome to attend the hearings. Further details can be seen at www.bedford.gov.uk/examination

Covanta Incinerator

Work has started on the Covanta waste incineration facility in Stewartby following an unsuccessful attempt by campaigners in November 2018 to halt the scheme.

The Bedfordshire Against Covanta Incinerator's (BACI) judicial review of the permit issued by the Environment Agency, which had given the go ahead for the scheme, was dismissed but there is now likely to be a further hearing at the Court of Appeal in July.

The facility is due to open by 2022. A recent BBC report stated that it will power 112,000 homes a year by incinerating 500,000 tonnes of non-recyclable waste.

New Chief Constable

Bedfordshire Police has appointed Garry Forsyth as its new Chief Constable following the resignation of Jon Boutcher. Mr Forsyth, the current Deputy Chief Constable, will take on the role in July.

Proposed Development at Aspects Leisure Park

A public consultation was recently held by planning consultants Barton Willmore in relation to proposals to develop the Aspects leisure park in the town centre. The plans include the development of 100 new apartments as well as a refurbishment of the site. No further details are available at this stage.

Community Safety Partnership Consultation

A new consultation from the Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is asking residents for their views on crime and anti-social behaviour.

The (CSP) is comprised of: the Borough Council; Bedfordshire Police; the Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service; the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, and; the Probation Service. These organisations work together to tackle crime and disorder.

The consultation ends on the 2nd August. The response form can be seen here: <http://www.forms.bedford.gov.uk/csp/>

Foster Care

'Foster Care Fortnight' was held from the 13th – 26th May to raise awareness of the continuing need for the Council to recruit foster carers to support children in care. For more details of how to become a foster carer call 01234 718718 or search 'Bedford Foster Adopt'

Over 70s Exercise Classes

The Council is running a programme of exercise classes for over 70s during the summer. The sessions, covering sports such as archery and table tennis, cost £4 each and will be held at the Athletics Stadium, Bunyan Centre and Bedford Central Library. For further details call 01234718835 or search 'Bedford Council exercise classes'