

# 'Namasté'

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Co-ordinator  
Ashton Keynes Neighbourhood Plan  
(by email)

Dear Sir,

## **AKNP Draft Plan - Pre-Submission Consultation Survey**

The draft Ashton Keynes Neighbourhood Plan (AKNP) is, in essence an excellent piece of work. It addresses all of the key issues and reflects villagers' views, but, I believe, could be enhanced in certain areas. Nearing the end of the Plan's consultation stage, a land owner/developer has proposed a development that is at odds with both the strategic aim of the Plan, and its spirit. The comments below deal with both the enhancements I believe could/should be made and the issues arising from this new development proposal; both of which are linked.

Ref	AKNP Draft Plan	KN comment
1.	<b>P4 5.1 Housing Objectives Objective HS4:</b> <i>"To keep all new developments on sites within the settlement boundary to a maximum of 15 homes."</i>	<p>I don't think this is the intention, but this objective implies that developments can take place outside the settlement boundary and can be unlimited in size!</p> <p>The objective should state, explicitly, that new development should be restricted to the existing settlement boundary, in compliance with WCS Core Strategy 1 which states: <b>The settlement boundaries of the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages, as defined by former District Local Plans, will be carried into this strategy and retained.</b></p> <p>Clearly, if the AKNP seeks to make a specific exemption to this, such as the site SHLAA Reference 484, this should be highlighted as such.</p> <p>In addition, there needs to be a clear statement that the maximum number of homes of 48 for site SHLAA Ref 484 means maximum and that it will not be the start of a development of some 300 homes, as originally proposed.</p>
2.	<b>P4 5.1 Housing Objectives Objective HS6:</b> <i>"To ensure that the design and</i>	Climate change is a hot topic at present (no pun intended!).

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	<p><i>location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding."</i></p>	<p>It is a fact that the earth's climate has always changed and will continue to change until it ceases to exist. Changes to the climate have resulted in periods of both cooling and heating, both of which can be expected to continue. Indeed, over the last 20 – 30 years 'experts' have told us that, by now, we would experience mini ice ages and drought and desert-like conditions.</p> <p>I presume resilience will be expected to deal with both of these changes.</p>
3.	<p><b>P4 5.2 Housing Policies</b>  <b>Background</b>  <b>Intent:</b>                      5<sup>th</sup> bullet point  <i>"Housing should be provided at a scale that is appropriate to the character of the Village and will enable new residents to integrate easily into village life."</i></p>	<p>I think this is the appropriate item against which I should comment in respect of the so-called Public Consultation held by Partridge Homes on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015, relating to a proposed housing development to the north of Gosditch, adjacent to AK primary school (the site known as Mill Field or Taylor's Field).</p> <p>As an opening statement, to call the 'presentation' a 'public consultation' is stretching things somewhat and it was completely lacking in professionalism and any substantive detail!</p> <p>To propose a development within a Conservation Area, that appears to want to increase the number of residential properties in the village by 10% (when the WCS sees a requirement for 15 homes over the next 10 years); on a site outside the settlement boundary, on the flood plain, and sitting on Water Source Protection Zone 1; and to claim this will safeguard the flood plain as well as enhancing safety along Gosditch, stretches credulity way beyond breaking point!!</p> <p>We have a school that is full, infrastructure that is creaking at best and village and perimeter roads that would benefit from fewer vehicle movements, not more.</p> <p>This whole idea is clearly opportunistic, based on a landowner seeking windfall profit, and which takes no account whatsoever of Wiltshire's Core Strategy or the draft AKNP. It suggests a developer who has absolutely no concept of the village, its residents, its history or the adverse environmental, social and economic impacts his scheme would cause! It should be vigorously rejected!</p> <p>It appears to be completely at odds with the Ashton Keynes Conservation Area Statement 1998<sup>1</sup>, the extract from which, below, highlights how inappropriate such a development would be.</p>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ashtonkeynesneighbourhood.com/index.php/documents/supporting-documents/conservation-area-statement-1998>

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		<p><b>KEY AREAS OF CHARACTER</b></p> <p>There are specific items including those above, which contribute to the character of a Conservation Area, the focus of preservation and enhancement for which it was designated. At a general level of the entire Conservation Area, these have been illustrated separately on the following pages as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protected buildings and features.</li> <li>2. Buildings constructed before 1900.</li> <li>3. Significant trees and foliage.</li> <li>4. Valuable open space, paths and water courses.</li> </ol> <p>It is worth noting that the proposed development has a boundary with Dairy Farm, Ivy Cottage and cottages in Church Walk, all of which are listed buildings in a Conservation Area. There is normally a requirement to conserve the settings of listed buildings in a Conservation Area, something this development would conspicuously fail to do.</p> <p>It also raises concerns with respect to a significant increase in traffic through and around the village.</p>
3.	<p><b>P7 5.3 Housing Site Allocations Context and Intent</b></p> <p><i>"The Ashton Keynes site assessment procedure showed that large-scale development is not supported by the community and that if new housing is needed in Ashton Keynes it should be delivered through a number of smaller sites, or on a larger site within the Parish but outside the existing settlement boundary."</i></p>	<p>The reference under this heading to . . . <i>"on a larger site within the Parish but outside the existing settlement boundary"</i> . . . referred, specifically, to potential development of the former Cotswold Community Site (your ref SHLAA 484) and should not be allowed to be applied to any other part of the Parish.</p> <p>Under this scenario, it supports my comments in item 2. Above.</p>
	<p><b>P19 6.1 Infrastructure Objectives Objective IN2:</b></p> <p><i>"To improve road and pedestrian safety in the Parish by careful planning of new development, and implementing measures to mitigate road safety hazards."</i></p>	<p>Within this section of the Plan</p> <p><i>Policy INP2 Road and Pedestrian Safety states:</i></p> <p><i>"1. Development proposals that lead to an increase in road and pedestrian safety risk will not be supported, particularly where they involve reductions in road visibility for drivers and pedestrians at bends, corners and junctions."</i></p> <p>This is clearly a sensible Policy! The proposed Mill Field development (discussed above) is proposing an access from the B4696, which will add to the dangers inherent in this designated lorry route. The only alternative to this would be an access from Gosditch, which would be more dangerous and add to the problems already experienced from school attendance, functions held at the school and village through traffic.</p> <p>Clearly, the Mill Field proposal falls foul of INP2, providing another justification for refusal.</p>

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	<p><b>P31 7.5 Improving Car Parking Context and Intent Policy AMP5 Car Parking</b> <i>"g. P5 provision of a public parking site for the primary purpose of vehicles transporting pupils to the village school will be supported subject to funding and deliverability."</i></p>	<p>I would be the first to support any intention to ameliorate the traffic and parking problems associated with the school! However, I fail to see how providing a parking area, with an access off the B4696, will achieve anything other than making the situation worse.</p> <p>To reach the proposed P5 area, the vast majority of motorists will either have to negotiate the dangerous bends in Cox's Hill before turning onto and adding to the traffic on the B4696, or travel along Gosditch, passing the school, to the difficult B4696 junction to access the B4696 and then turn into the new area.</p> <p>Those passing the school will stop at the school and not make use of the P5 area. Many of those using the P5 area can then be expected to drive along Gosditch, passing the school on their return journey!</p> <p>I suggest this idea needs a radical re-think!</p>
	<p><b>P34 8.1 Environment Objectives</b></p>	<p>It seems to me that the proposed Mill Field proposal, or any similar proposals are/would be completely at variance with the policies laid down in this section.</p>

Yours faithfully,



**Keith R Newman**