

Question and answer information regarding Great Bedwyn Parish Council's decision to not support the development of Bedwyn Dkye Field. Raised during 9th September 2021 Full Council meeting public recess.

Q1. GBPC Solution: 1.5 new homes per annum over 15 years. Where exactly are these 22 fill-in location within the current village settlement boundary? [The NDP survey identified only about 6 sites as potentially available.]

A. This has not been specified.

Q2. What mixture of housing will these 22 homes be? [The Wilts Council Housing Needs Survey of July 2017 identified a current not future need of about 14 additional subsidised and shared ownership homes. A NDP survey of the present Housing Associations with local property confirmed that none of them had a policy of replacing singleton social homes sold by them, not building any new ones here. One HA said it might consider building an estate of proven need social or shared homes, if one location were offered.]

A. This has not been specified.

Q3. The number of 40 new homes was chosen by the Parish Council at the last meeting was not from any plan, so where did it come from? [The PCC has never indicated that the whole field nor even half of it would be sold, just enough to secure finance for the long-term fabric of the Church and meet local affordable housing needs; CofE policy is that sale for housing of church land, whether diocesan or local as in this case should include a significant proportion of affordable housing.]

A. Cllr Barry proseed the agenda item and recalls a figure of circa 40 was recently stated as a reasonable number by Mick Goss, PCC. However, we cannot yet find a written record of this. We will keep searching and there is a chance Cllr Barry may be mistaken. However, we have found 2 records which support at least this number and therefore we consider the number of circa 40 to be a reasonable number to base the motion upon and certainly it's reasonable to assume a higher number would have led to the same motion outcomes. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 16 April 2021 state you said in public discussion "the field could support 70 houses". Your email to the Clerk of the Parish council of 18 May 2021 states in relation to the number of houses on Bedwyn Dyke field "about 15 social needed, therefore plus the developer's margin of c45".

Q4. How have the views of GB (and indeed LB) residents been ascertained since GBNDP was paused in 2017? [It was Wilts Council which stopped completing GBNDP work for procedural reasons, because of the boundary problem. There has been nothing since then to prevent GBPC carrying out a further survey of residents' views on the proposed optimal outline solution, as approved by the then GBPC.]

A. No formal survey has been carried out since the GBNDP survey. Therefore current views are based on communications by residents and councillors' views.

Q5. What is the professional evidence for a large area of Bedwyn Dyke Field containing significant archaeological remains? [No evidence was found in NDP research on historical Wiltshire maps of buildings on that field, unlike known remains in fields in the southern area of the village and around Tottenham House.]

A. Information has been submitted from a parish resident and amateur archaeologist and the attachment and the following is an extract.
"Professor Andrew Reynolds FSA FSA Scot FRHistS FRGS, Professor of Medieval Archaeology at University College London and his team, mainly from UCL and Durham University are excavating on an unscheduled stretch of the East Wansdyke. Professor Reynolds is not alone in arguing the case that Bedwyn Dyke is a continuation of the Wansdyke per se, and, it is believed by several authorities, forms a further arm of the well-established Eastern section of the historic Dyke, possibly running through Shalbourne and as far as Inkpen. Research is ongoing. I refer you to pp20-21 and fig 2.3 (p30) in the attached article by Professor Reynolds and Dr Alex Langlands. The archaeological sensitivity of the immediate area next to the dyke at the eastern end of Bedwyn Dyke Field (if not of the whole) cannot be over-emphasised."

Q6. How does GBPC intend to accommodate the slightly larger population which local employers and businesses would welcome? [GB Primary School has for some years relied on about one third of its pupils coming from outside its catchment area, but currently it is short of its pupil target, and it has a dwindling number of its staff (now only one third) can afford to live locally. Post Office, Store, Surgery, and Pub all see dwindling custom.

A. It has no specific plans in this area.

Q7. Assuming that GBPC accepts that there needs to be a long-term policy for our community to have a sufficient balance of genuinely affordable housing for less affluent young families, what is its Plan B? [It is one thing to give up on a proposal, even pro tem, but it seems an evasion of duty not to have some alternative.]

A. The Parish Council has not formally adopted such a policy. However, the minutes of the July meeting show that sufficient genuinely-affordable housing was an important element of the debate. Also the minutes show that some councillors felt that an average of 1.5 hours per annum could still bring affordable housing.

Resident's Proposal: GBPC makes clear publicly that it would consider an outline proposal from residents or others as to how, what size, and where to provide a small mixed estate of social and market housing. And once a proposal is agreed as feasible GBPC should then carry out a short formal survey of all GB households in order to assess the degree of local support or opposition.

Response: Thank you for the proposal. Your suggestion for a survey is one that was also raised during the debate during the July meeting. Any subject can come

back onto the agenda after 6 months and also the July debate only concluded that the council did not support such development "at this time". If/when this subject does come back onto the agenda this will be considered.