



Little Birch & Aconbury

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

RESIDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

SEPTEMBER 2016

Dear Resident,

The parishes of Little Birch and Aconbury are developing a joint Neighbourhood Development Plan, for the area shown on the enclosed map. The Plan will guide development in the two parishes over the next 15 years, dealing with such things as new housing, protecting the environment, and the local economy. It's really important that as many people as possible tell us what they think about the future of the area. Please help us by completing this short questionnaire.

Your questionnaire has been hand delivered and will be collected in approximately 2 weeks. All residents of Little Birch and Aconbury aged 16 and over are being asked to complete the questionnaire. We've kept it short and sweet – there's just 24 questions, and most can be answered with a **X**. Of course, there's also space for you to add comments if you wish.

We won't be able to identify you from your answers, and the information you give us is for the sole use of drawing up our Neighbourhood Plan. Please do print any comments clearly so that they can be taken into account.

Overleaf you'll find some 'frequently asked questions' with more information about the Neighbourhood Plan. You can also find further details on the website at <http://littlebirchparishcouncil.org/>

If you complete and return the enclosed prize draw form, you'll be entered in the Prize Draw. See details on enclosed sheet. To ensure anonymity, the draw form will be kept separate from your completed questionnaire when we collect it.

If you have any queries, or need another questionnaire, you'll find a contact number on the back of this questionnaire. The questionnaire can also be printed from the website.

Finally, many thanks for your time and help.

Yours faithfully,

John Jones, Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Frequently asked questions



What is the Neighbourhood Plan?

- A locally-prepared statutory planning document to guide Herefordshire Council Planning Dept decisions on land use and development within the two parishes of Little Birch and Aconbury, giving the community a greater say.
- It will provide landowners and developers with a clear understanding of what is (and is not) acceptable in terms of future development. They will have to take the Plan into account if they want planning permission for their projects.

Who is involved in its preparation?

- The Plan is being put together by a Steering Group made up of Parish Councillors and local residents, with representation from both Little Birch and Aconbury.
- The Group meets regularly in Little Birch village hall – meetings are open to the public and publicised locally, so do come along.

Why are we preparing the Neighbourhood Plan?

- To influence, inform and provide clear guidance over the scale, nature and location of new development within the two parishes.

What topics will the Plan look at?

- The Plan will tackle key land use planning topics – such as new housing, protecting the landscape, woodland and open spaces, the design of new buildings, and the local economy.

What is the process for developing the Plan?

- **Consultation** – Through the open meetings held earlier this summer; this questionnaire, and other future public meetings and events.
- **Drafting the Plan** – developing policies to deliver what you tell us you want to see. This will be done over the coming winter and into 2017.
- **Further consultation** – when the Plan has been drafted, there will be a further opportunity for discussion, with a six week consultation period.
- **Submission to Herefordshire Council**, leading to an **independent examination** and a **referendum**. Provided a majority of those who vote agree, the Plan can be **adopted** – it will then be part of the statutory development plan.



We are expected to make provision for around 18 new homes in the next 15 years, to meet County Council planning requirements. The Neighbourhood Plan can be used to stipulate where this new housing is to be built, as well as influence its scale and type – tell us what you'd like to see.

Q1: What size of new homes would you like to see up to 2031?

Please mark with a cross one box per row.

	YES	NO	NO OPINION
Starter homes (2 bedrooms)			
Family homes (3 bedrooms)			
Larger family homes (4 or more bedrooms)			
Bungalows			
Flats/apartments including houses turned into flats.			

Q2: What type of new housing should be built?

Please mark with a cross one box per row.

	YES	NO	NO OPINION
Privately owned homes			
Privately rented homes			
Housing Association rented homes			
Shared ownership homes (i.e. part buy, part rent)			
Supported/sheltered accommodation for older people			
Self-build			
Live/work – homes with workshops			

Q3: How should new homes be provided?

Please mark with a cross one box per row.

	YES	NO	NO OPINION
As individual new houses within areas of existing dwellings			
Through smaller developments of say 3-5 new houses in more than one place			
As a single development of say between 10 and 15 new houses			



Q4: How should the Plan guide new housing?

The new homes will be guided towards existing areas of housing, to avoid building isolated dwellings in the open countryside and protect farmland and the environment. There are alternative ways of defining such existing settlement areas – which would you prefer to see?

Settlement boundaries: we could draw boundaries around the main settlement areas to show on a plan where new development can go. Whilst this would offer certainty, we think this approach might not be well-suited to our parishes, where dwellings are relatively scattered.

Criteria approach: an alternative would be to describe the extent of the main existing settlement areas. New homes would be required to locate within or adjacent to these. This would be a more flexible approach.

	Please mark with a cross one box to show your preferred approach.
Draw boundaries around the main area of settlements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Describe the main area of settlements	<input type="checkbox"/>
No opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q5: Are there any specific locations you think are suitable for new homes in Little Birch or Aconbury? If so, where, and why?

Q6: Are there any specific locations where houses should not be built? If so, where, and why?

Q7: Do you have any other comments on housing, including housing need? This is your chance to tell us.

Traffic, Transport and Access



The Neighbourhood Plan deals mainly with land use and development, but can also be used to inform and influence other aspects of the environment – like highways and roads. There is also the chance to seek improvements to local transport facilities in tandem with new development – for instance, requiring developers to build new footpaths.

Q8: How important to you are improvements to the following? Please mark with a cross one box per row, where 1 is not important and 4 is very important.

	1	2	3	4
Road safety				
Reductions in traffic speed				
Pedestrian safety				
Road maintenance				
Maintenance of ditches, drains and verges				
Traffic calming				
Number of passing places				
Footpath and bridleway maintenance				
Signage on roads and paths				
Facilities for pedestrians and cyclists				

Q9: Do you have any other comments on traffic, transport and access?

This is your chance to tell us.

Jobs and the local economy



There is the opportunity to include policies in the Plan to guide new economic development in and around the parishes.

Q10: What types of employment should the Plan encourage?

Please mark with a cross all that apply.

Agriculture and farming-related	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forestry and related activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Livery and stabling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food and drink production	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tourism, leisure and crafts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storage and distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offices/small businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pubs, restaurants and cafes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shop/Post Office	<input type="checkbox"/>
Light industrial and manufacturing	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q11: How should the Plan provide for jobs and the local economy?

Please mark with a cross all that apply.

Protecting existing employment sites from changes of use	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting the extension of existing businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting the conversion of rural buildings for this purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encouraging home-working, e.g. through live/work	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q12: Are there any specific locations you think suitable for new employment development? If so, where, and why?

Q13: Do you have any other comments on jobs and the local economy?

This is your chance to tell us.



Q14: How important do you think the following facilities, services and amenities are in meeting the current and future needs of the local community?

Please mark with a cross one box per row, where 1 is not important and 4 is very important.

	1	2	3	4
Mobile phone reception				
Broadband				
Little Birch Village Hall				
The Castle Inn				
Local bus services				
St Mary's Church				
Aconbury and Athelstan's Woods				

Protection of the distinctive local environment is a particular concern. The Plan can include policies to protect open land from development; recognise areas at risk of flooding, and support local renewable energy projects.

Q15: Do you think that more leisure and recreational facilities are needed? Please tell us how and where this could be achieved. Are there any other community services you would like to see provided, if possible?

Protecting our environment



Q16: Has your property, land or access suffered from flooding in the last 10 years because of any of the following? Please mark with a cross all that apply.

River/stream overflow	<input type="checkbox"/>
Field run off	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foul drainage overflowing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road run off (drains, ditches unable to cope)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have not suffered flooding	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q17: Which of the following ways of protecting and enhancing the local environment are important to you?

Please mark with a cross where 1 is not important and 4 is very important.

	1	2	3	4
Protecting important views and vistas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying land for local green space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying special local features of significance eg orchards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New development to be in keeping with surroundings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q18: If there are any particular local features, open spaces or views that you think should be protected, please describe them below. Examples could include cider orchards, Higgins Well, the Holy Thorn, the Parish Field and Aconbury Hill Fort.



Q19: Which of the following ways of producing local renewable energy should the Plan encourage? Please mark with a cross all that apply.

	YES	NO	NO OPINION
Wind turbines			
Solar power			
Ground heat pumps			
Biomass units			

Q20: Do you have any other comments on the local environment? This is your opportunity to tell us your views on conserving and improving the local environment.

Information about you



This will help us to understand the views of different groups within our parishes, and to see how representative the results are of the community as a whole.

Q21: Are you:

Male	
Female	

Q22: How old are you?

16 -17	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 – 64	65 – 84	85 or over

Q23: How long have you lived in Little Birch or Aconbury?

Less than 1 year	
1 – 2 years	
3 – 5 years	
6 – 10 years	
Over 10 years	

Q24: Which parish do you live or have land in?

Little Birch	
Aconbury	

Have your say



We've tried to cover what we think are the main issues in this questionnaire, but if we've missed anything you think should be included, please tell us below. Remember, the Neighbourhood Plan will be in place for the next 15 years, so it's important we make sure that everything is covered.

Thank you



Thank you for taking the time to complete this Questionnaire.

Your questionnaire was dropped off by hand by a Steering Group volunteer – details below – and who will be back to collect it in a fortnight or so.

Put your completed questionnaire into the envelope provided and seal it, ready for collection.

If you want to be entered in the draw, fill in your Prize Draw form and hand it separately to the collector.

You can find more details about our Neighbourhood Plan, and print another copy of the questionnaire if required, at <http://littlebirchparishcouncil.org/> Alternatively, if you have any queries or need another questionnaire, please contact:

Name:

Phone no.: