



# East Hagbourne

## NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN - 2018 to 2033

12-Month Review: April 2020

# Summary

The East Hagbourne Neighbourhood Plan (EHNP) was submitted for referendum on 14 March 2019 and the Plan was supported by 93.5% of those voting on a 41.3% turnout. It was adopted by South Oxfordshire District Council at a full Council meeting on 11 April 2019 and so becomes part of South Oxfordshire District Council's Development Plan.

Section 6 of the EHNP report sets out the provisions for monitoring the Plan and calls for reviews to take place at twelve months, on adoption of the emerging SODC Local Plan, at five years, and towards the end of the Plan lifetime.

This document, which constitutes the 12 month review, has been prepared by the EHNP Steering Group and endorsed by East Hagbourne Parish Council (EHPC) at its meeting on 23 April 2020.

The purpose of this review to assess the extent to which the Neighbourhood Plan objectives have been implemented in practice and the contribution of the policies and projects contained within it towards meeting those objectives; and secondly to rectify any errors and omissions.

Our conclusions are:

We have reviewed the EHNP carefully after one year of experience in its application.

- We are encouraged that the policies are generally being incorporated into planning decision and that the Plan has been referenced by EHPC in commenting on planning applications and by the SODC Planning Officers in reaching their decisions.
- We consider the EHNP policies to be robust and to not require any changes at this time.
- The background text of the NP Report correctly states the situation at the time it was written and approved. Some figures, in particular current housing infill numbers have evolved and are noted in this review, but the NP text has not been changed.
- The EHNP has provided a solid framework for the Parish Council in addressing Community needs outlined in the Plan.
- We have reviewed changes in the wider planning environment and consider that the Plan remains robust. In particular, the EHNP appropriately responds to the new emphasis on the effects of climate change expressed by SODC.
- We have corrected a very few typographical errors that do not affect the understanding of the text.
- Some items for future consideration are included in section 4.

# East Hagbourne Neighbourhood Plan Review

## 1. Implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan

Since its adoption by SODC, the Neighbourhood Plan has full weight in deciding where any development should take place and the type and character of the development.

### a. The impact of the Plan in planning decisions

19 planning applications have been decided or are still pending decision since the EHNP was approved on 11th April 2019. In addition, two applications discussed while the EHNP was close to Referendum included discussion of the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

EHNP policies have been cited, where relevant, in SODC's decision notices and have been discussed in Delegated Reports, where these are available. 19 of the applications have been approved, one withdrawn and one is pending decision. 12 applications were non-contentious and the Parish Council raised no objections.

Two conversions of agricultural buildings were approved under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order, UKSI 2015 No596, as amended, for which the provisions of the SODC Local Plan and the EHNP do not hold weight. For one of these, a subsequent full application was made to demolish and rebuild very close to the original site, to which EHPC objected. The Delegated Report argued that the existence of the prior permitted development was a material factor and the application was approved at Committee. It was acknowledged that the application did not comply with SODC CSR1 or EHNP H1. A total of five agricultural building conversions have been approved under permitted development in the Great Mead area. Three of these are in the open paddock area which is cited as an Area of Local Distinctiveness in EHNP Policy VC4, however the permitted development process did not allow consideration of the policy in these cases.

Of the remaining six applications where the Parish Council made detailed comments:

- An application on Blewbury Road was to demolish a bungalow and replace with two houses. The Parish Council cited NP policies in its comments and the design was modified before approval to moderate the impact of the development on the landscape and neighbours.
- A retrospective application for a summer house to a listed building in the Conservation Area which neighbours considered out of keeping was approved. The Planning Officers specifically considered EHNP policies VC3 & VC5 and considered the development compliant.
- A second retrospective application at the same site is more contentious. Changes have already been made without planning permission which affect the appearance of the site, which is in a sensitive part of the Conservation Area. Planning permission has now been refused and is expected to go to appeal. The Parish Council cited policies SD1 and VC5 in its comments.
- A proposal for outline permission to build a house in a back garden on New Road was withdrawn after the Parish Council noted that insufficient detail had been provided to evaluate the proposal or apply the EHNP policies.
- A proposal for an annex to the front of a house on Blewbury Road was approved after discussion, with conditions. The Delegated Report considered the EHNP policies and judged the development compliant with policies VC3 and TA3.
- A proposal to create a new road entrance to a house on New Road was permitted. The site is close to a road junction and in a busy area. The Parish Council objected on the

grounds of loss of a lay-by parking places and the inability of vehicles to turn-around on the site. Surprisingly, OCC did not object and the planning officer cited EHNP policy TA3 calling for adequate off-street parking as support for permitting development. We disagree and believe this is not an appropriate use of the policy, since 1-2 lay-by spaces, out of the main carriageway, will be lost for the gain of one off-road space.

EHNP Policy H3 allocates land adjacent to Hagbourne Village Hall as a site for 74 new houses. Two planning applications have been made since April 2019 for this development. A revision to the market housing mix has been requested: we do not consider this contentious and if anything it improves the provision of smaller market houses. It is still being considered by SODC.

The reserved matters application was submitted in July 2019 and delivers additional public parking spaces for the village car park as outlined in Community need CN7 of the EHNP.

Overall, we consider that the EHNP policies have been properly integrated and considered in SODC's planning process and that this discussion contributes to the objectives outlined in the Plan.

## **b. Progress towards the EHNP Objectives**

The EHNP outlined objective related to each policy area. In addition, 8 Community Needs and associated strategies were identified and included in the Plan as Section 5.

Our evaluation of the contribution of the EHNP to achieving these plan objectives so far is outlined below:

### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

SD1	Support sustainable development that meets the needs of residents now and in the future.
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We believe that the EHNP policies remain robust to deliver new housing in a controlled way through allocation and infill.

### **VILLAGE CHARACTER**

VC1	Preserve the independent and rural character of our village as Didcot expands. Conserve and enhance key views both into and out from the built areas and within the built areas
VC2	Conserve and enhance the heritage of the historic core of the village within and adjoining the Conservation Area together with its Listed Buildings and structures.
VC3	Protect the village envelope and surroundings from light pollution

The EHNP policies have so far proved beneficial in protecting the character of our village and community. In particular, Policy VC3 (Retaining small village character and promoting good design), under objective VC2, has been cited in a number of planning decisions.

Continued vigilance is needed by the Parish Council and local residents to guard against small developments carried out without planning permission which may be harmful to village character.

The Parish Council is placing increased emphasis on maintaining and improving the rural character and appearance of the village. A historic footpath sign has been renovated and with help from OCC, a damaged historical finger post has been replaced. Two new benches

have been installed at strategic locations and work will shortly start to clean and repaint several of the older benches around the village.

**HOUSING**

H1	Respond to housing needs of residents and provide a proportionate contribution to meet SODC’s housing requirements
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The figures for infill housing since 2011 in the EHNP were correct at the time the Plan was made and no changes to the text are proposed.

However, the current figures (March 2020) have now increased so that since May 2011, planning permission has been granted for a net 17 new dwellings of which 9 have been built. In addition, 3 dwellings have been granted permission self-contained annexes, which provide additional accommodation, but are not separate dwellings.

The allocated development in land adjacent to Hagbourne Village Hall is progressing through the planning process and on-course to deliver the expected 74 houses in an appropriate mix.

Together, these developments in progress total 91 dwellings, which on a baseline of 500 houses in East Hagbourne represents an 18% increase, exceeding the expectations of the emerging SODC Development Plan.

We believe that these developments demonstrate excellent progress towards objective H1 and to SD1.

**COMMUNITY**

CF1	Ensure that village infrastructure and facilities support village life now and into the future.
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This is an ongoing objective, but the EHNP provides support by clearly defining those facilities and assets that are important to village life.

**TRANSPORT AND ACCESS**

TA1	Maintain and improve road safety for all road users.
TA2	Promote mobility and maintain or enhance the quality of pavements without creating an urban appearance.
TA3	Ensure that new development does not add to the problem of on-street parking.

This again is an ongoing objective, but we can point to progress. The EHNP provides a framework for future improvements, building on the extensive work in the EH Parish Plan of 2011/2015.

The Parish Council is working with OCC to provide a 20mph speed limit through the centre of the village. Speed surveys have been conducted and we are hoping that the application will be received favourably by OCC, to relieve a community concern that has been present for many years. Funding remains uncertain and this is an area where CIL money may need to be applied.

The Parish Council is also close to installing village entry "gates" to act as a visual reminder for motorists to limit speed.

The Parish Council is working with OCC to maintain and improve pavements within the village, concentrating on those most in need of attention. It is possible that CIL money may need to be applied if OCC are not able to resource necessary work.

Discussions with the developers of the allocated site next to Hagbourne Village Hall have been effective in ensuring adequate parking for the new development to discourage parking on-road or in the public village car park which is already overloaded. We believe these efforts will be successful despite some earlier resistance from the Planning Officer.

## GREEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

E1	Maintain and enhance green spaces for the health and wellbeing of the community
E2	Maintain and enhance biodiversity
E3	Protect housing from flooding

The EHNP has been effective in clearly defining those open spaces that are valued by the community and worthy of protection. The Local Green Spaces have been supplemented by a number of "Assets of Local Distinctiveness".

Green spaces have been incorporated into the new development adjacent to Hagbourne Village Hall and have also been included in discussions of the smaller development on Blewbury Road.

Through the efforts of the Parish Council, riparian owners and our volunteer flood group, Hacca's Brook has been kept clear of excessive debris and growth so that the stream continues to flow well. In spite of the heavy and persistent rain no flooding of houses has been reported.

The full list of strategies to address Community Needs is shown below, with additional comments, where these are not addressed above

**Strategy C1** - Explore the feasibility of improving local access to medical services for those living in East Hagbourne.

- This remains a long term objective. Medical services are under pressure everywhere and the trend at present is for consolidation into central locations.

**Strategy C2** - investigate the feasibility of growing the village shop whilst maintaining the Post Office in its current designation, to better serve the village into the future

- Again, this is a long-term objective. Opportunities and needs need to be monitored into the future. The Shop Committee currently advises against a move.

**Strategy C3** - Review how community activities are supported by the existing facilities and how these might be improved

- Ongoing, see above

**Strategy C4** - Investigate how the existing volunteer force can be preserved and enlarged

- Again, an ongoing need. Many of the village volunteers are getting older, so new help is constantly welcomed. Finding new volunteers requires personal contact. It remains a challenge, but there encouraging signs that a pool of community-minded people exists in all age groups.

**Strategy C5** - Investigate ways of increasing bus services and their use by local residents

- The hourly bus service to Didcot and the surrounding villages is valuable and reliable, but sadly used by relatively few people. It seems it will continue to need support funding to survive and we hope that the new emphasis on climate change and sustainable development in SODC will help create the right environment for this.

**Strategy C6** - Transport & Road Safety

- The initiatives currently under way are outlined under "Transport and Access" above.

**Strategy C7** - Increase the number of parking spaces around the village hall and school and encourage development of an improved school travel plan.

- The new development adjacent to Hagbourne Village Hall will deliver a welcome additional 20 places in the Village Car Park.

**Strategy C8** - ensure high speed broadband is available to all areas of the village.

- When the Plan was made areas at the western end of the village were experiencing very poor broadband speeds. Through the initiative of local residents in conjunction

with BT, fibre broadband has been supplied to many houses in this area so the situation is now significantly improved.

Since April 11th 2019 the parish council has received one instalment of CIL money of £2458.47 on 24/04/2019. This was added to our existing CIL funds of £2090.82 which were received on 24/10/2018. The Parish Council has spent CIL money on one project, an upgrade to lighting in the village car park, which cost £2643.32.

We do not have precise figures for CIL monies allocated development adjacent to Hagbourne Village Hall. While we do not have a formal plan for spending CIL money, improvements to pavements and vehicle speed controls have been mentioned above. Other potential projects include a footpath from Manor Farm Lane to the railway bridge and updating or expanding existing playground facilities. The Parish Council will prioritise these and other projects as developments continue.

## 2. Planning environment

We have considered those changes in the wider planning environment that have occurred since the EHNP was made and whether these have any impact on our Plan

**The Emerging SODC Local Plan 2034:** The plan has been delayed by a few months, but its policies have not changed. Our Plan therefore remains consistent with the SODC Development Plan.

**Climate Emergency:** SODC has declared a Climate Emergency giving greater emphasis to climate change and sustainability. We believe our Plan is robust in this respect and in particular:

- Policy SD1 calls for developments to "take account of the predicted impact of climate change during the lifetime of the development".
- The supporting text to policy E2 recognises the need features to help wildlife species adaptation to climate change.
- Policy E3, Flooding, recognises that flooding is exacerbated by climate change.

**Permitted Development:** amendments to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order, UKSI 2015 No596, as amended, permit more relaxed rules for conversion of agricultural buildings to dwellings. Such developments bypass the normal planning process, so EHNP policies are not invoked in these cases. We have experienced 5 such conversions in one particular area of East Hagbourne, some of which lie on land where NP policies would have been invoked. While we are concerned that the regulations have bypassed the Neighbourhood Plan, the policies themselves remain appropriate and do not merit change.

**The NPPF has been updated:** The EHNP was examined under the provision of the 2012 NPPF. The NPPF was subsequently updated in 2018, but states that plans submitted before 24 January 2019 will be examined on the basis of the 2012 version of the NPPF.

The Basic Conditions Statement, prepared by CFO, evaluated the EHNP against both versions of the NPPF and found no non-compliances. We are therefore confident that plan is also consistent with the 2018 NPPF.

We consider that no changes in the planning environment impact the robustness of our Plan and no changes to policy are needed.

### **3. Correction of any errors or omissions:**

We have corrected a few typographical errors in the EHNP text. These corrections do not affect the understanding of the text.

### **4. Areas for future consideration:**

The EHNP still seems robust and we do not have any significant areas we wish were included or changed.

The EHNP Steering Group has noted two green spaces that merit conservation, but were not included in the Plan: at Ryman's Crescent and at Wilcher Close. We are not intending to change the Plan to include them at this point, but believe a mention in this review is merited.

Recent events have reinforced the need for a local policy on flooding and the value of policy E3. We propose no changes to the Plan at this stage, but note for future consideration:

- (a) The wider acceptance that more extreme weather events are likely as a result of climate change
- (b) A better understanding (through developer experience) that the ground in East Hagbourne does not drain easily and providing sustainable drainage is challenging. The importance of the surface waterways is therefore enhanced.
- (c) We have recent experience that inaccurate information on the Environment Agency flood map is causing difficulties for some house owners. A sale on one house that has no history of flooding has proved difficult, because the EA map does not discriminate at sufficient detail.

### **5. Conclusions**

We have reviewed the EHNP carefully after one year of experience in its application.

- We are encouraged that the policies are generally being incorporated into planning decision and that the Plan has been referenced by EHPC in commenting on planning applications and by the SODC Planning Officers in reaching their decisions.
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