

BAGNALL PARISH COUNCIL

PLANNING POLICY

Bagnall Parish Council is committed to adhering to planning procedures in accordance with local and national planning policy.

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is the umbrella council under which Bagnall Parish Council sits and we are therefore subject to its Local Plan 2016-2031 (adopted Sept 2020).

We recognise that planning policy may be subject to change both nationally and within SMDC's Local Plan, but Bagnall Parish Council remains committed to resisting any development which would risk the character or ethos of Bagnall. We want to maintain a sustainable community which provides work and habitation for its many inhabitants.

We believe that areas might exist, both within and outside the village, where small designed housing provides for a growing population. Nevertheless, we will resist development which does not build on the parish's unique strengths or which would degrade the quality of our environment.

We do not hold prior discussions with prospective developers. In the event of a proposal being made public, we reserve the right to consult residents and make comment.

The village itself is designated a conservation area to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of the village – in other words, the features that make it unique. This means that planning exerts certain rules that restrict the work you can normally do without planning permission, such as replacing a door or window, or altering gutters and downpipes. Bagnall also has an 'Article 4 Direction' which prohibits cladding (of any kind) on external walls.

Should any potential transgressions to the planning guidelines be notified to or identified by the Parish Council, the following steps will be undertaken:

1. All instances will be discussed by the Parish Council at their next meeting to determine:
 - If the development falls within Permitted Development
 - If the development fits the Parish's character and ethos
 - If the development contravenes any planning permissions given by SMDC
2. If the instance is deemed to be complicit with current planning guidelines, no further action will be taken.
3. Should the instance still fall within a transgression the Parish Council, in the first instance will write to the homeowner to highlight the issue and ask them to comply.
4. If no rectifying action is taken by the homeowner, the matter will be referred to the Planning Enforcement Officer for their attention.

Solar Panel / Battery Storage Facilities

In 2022 residents were consulted to ascertain how they wished the Parish Council to respond to applications for the above facilities. The instruction received was to actively challenge all applications and therefore our policy is:

- To promote the use of agricultural land to reflect the growing importance of food security and that its use for large ground-mounted solar installations and battery storage units should be avoided in all circumstances.
- The redevelopment of brownfield and previously developed sites should be encouraged.
- Ground-mounted solar energy installations and associated battery storage units should not be permitted in designated protected areas such as Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Rural Areas Beyond the Green Belt to preserve the special qualities of these areas.
- Due diligence and a full assessment must show that there are no brownfield sites available prior to considering Green Belt or green fields for development.
- Where land is suitably located for housing, roof-top solar energy generation should be integrated. Alongside this, planning conditions should require the inclusion of roof-top panels in the specification for new commercial developments.
- All applications relation to proposed large solar installations and battery storage units within this rural setting should be accompanied by a comprehensive landscape impact appraisal, indicating the loss or change in character of landscapes. This includes the impact on views from publicly accessible land, footpaths, and other rights of way.

All applications must be reviewed by the planning authority, taking into consideration the cumulative impact on landscape character of multiple installations, including any other visible energy infrastructure such as wind turbines. Each should be accompanied by a detailed description on how facilities will be decommissioned and disposed of and a guarantee that there is insurance cover to address all costs.

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan – Small Villages (*Extract from the full plan*)

Below is an extract from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council's Local Plan on planning relating to the smaller village areas.

Smaller Villages Area Strategy

6.58 The smaller villages have a more limited role as service centres, but they are vital to the rural areas particularly in terms of providing for local housing and rural employment needs. A major issue for smaller villages is the loss of local population through lack of housing opportunities. The proposed strategy for the smaller villages therefore seeks to allow an appropriate level of sensitive development which enhances community vitality.

6.59 Development on a large scale would be unsustainable in these villages, as it will generate a disproportionate number of additional journeys outside the village and may undermine the spatial strategy. Development will be strictly controlled in order to

ensure that the character and life of the settlement is not undermined. Boundaries are not defined for smaller villages, however, some are set within the Green Belt by virtue of the alignment of the Green Belt boundary. Limited development, including infill will be supported subject to this policy and Green Belt policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework¹.

The following are identified as smaller villages:

- Bagnall
- Blackshaw Moor
- Boundary
- Bradnop
- Caverswall
- Checkley
- Consall
- Cookshill
- Cotton
- Dilhorne
- Draycott
- Foxt
- Froghall
- Heaton
- Hollington
- Hulme
- Kingsley Holt
- Leekbrook
- Longsdon
- Lower Tean
- Meerbrook
- Oakamoor
- Rudyard
- Rushton Spencer
- Stanley
- Stockton Brook
- Swinscoe
- Whiston
- Winkhill

These settlements shall provide only for appropriate development which enhances community vitality or meets a social or economic need of the settlement and its hinterland.

The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions:

1. Enhance community vitality by:
 - Protecting and enabling services and facilities which are essential to sustain rural living;
 - Improving connections by public transport and other transport measures to neighbouring larger villages and market towns;
 - Supporting the provision of local, mobile and electronic services which increases the range and quality of services
 - Supporting the implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and Local Green Spaces
2. Meet community, social or economic need by:
 - Enabling limited new housing development, including small infill schemes in accordance with Policy H 1
 - Allowing for rural exceptions housing in appropriate locations (in accordance with Policy H 1). This will be additional to the housing provision for the rural areas.
 - Enabling small-scale new employment development including 'live-work' developments which are for a rural enterprise or an existing authorised business use;

¹ See end of paper for NPPF

- Supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises Supporting the development of appropriate ICT and new means of communications to enable homeworking and small businesses reliant on e-technology.

Ensure that new development reflects and enhances each village's special character and heritage by protecting and enhancing the setting and historic character of the village, including heritage assets.

Any development proposal that might have the potential to affect a European or Ramsar Site must itself be subject to appropriate assessment.

Other Rural Areas Strategy

6.60 The concept of sustainability argues in favour of concentrating most development in or adjoining existing built-up areas. However, there can be cases where some development and diversification of use in the countryside can be beneficial and sustainable. For instance, some farm businesses may benefit from diversification and an increased number of visits to the countryside can help the rural economy. However this needs to be appropriate to the character of the countryside which also needs to be sustained.

6.61 Where development in the open countryside is justified, the preference will be for the re-use or redevelopment of existing buildings. All development in these areas will be strictly controlled, both in terms of its scale and type in order to ensure that the character and role of the countryside and the green belt is not undermined.

6.62 Within these areas there are some smaller settlements and hamlets which are not identified in Policy SS 9 as 'Small Villages' because their predominantly open character, loose-knit nature and lack of services and facilities.

6.63 The development of renewable energy sources will also often be in rural areas, but such development will almost always have an environmental cost as well as benefits. Such proposals must be weighed against the continuing commitment to protect the environment. The scale and design of such schemes will therefore be of paramount importance and should accord with Policy SD 2.

6.64 Historically development of a large scale has taken place in a number of areas in the countryside of Staffordshire Moorlands, often associated with past industrial activity or specific needs. These are brownfield sites and where these are no longer needed it is necessary to consider whether an alternative use would be appropriate. The complete or partial redevelopment of such major developed areas may offer the opportunity for environmental improvement without adding to their impact as well as helping to meet the needs of the rural areas and improve the rural economy. Two such areas were identified in the Core Strategy at Bolton Copperworks, Froghall and the Anzio Camp Blackshaw Moor. Policies DSR 5 and DSR 6 provide development criteria for these sites.

6.65 The policy also places considerable emphasis on tourism. This is identified in the spatial strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategy as a major opportunity to sustain the rural economy and strengthen the role of the District

within the region and North Staffordshire. 6.66 The District has a close link with the Peak District National Park in terms of tourism and the policy seeks to encourage and promote tourism opportunities that could ease pressures on the Park itself, provided this would not increase pressure on areas of biodiversity interest.

6.67 The Green Belt serves a number of purposes which are derived from Government policy in the NPPF and the former Staffordshire Structure Plan. The Green Belt keeps land open and free from development over a long period, which extends beyond the plan period, in order to give assurance that its boundaries will endure. National policy on Green Belts is set out in the NPPF and will apply to the whole of the Green Belt. The Green Belt Review assessed the Green Belt in the District against the five purposes of the Green Belt. The Green Belt boundary (as revised) is identified on the Policies Maps.

Policy SS 10 Other Rural Areas Strategy

The other rural areas comprise the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages. These areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside.

The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions:

1. Meet housing requirements and specific needs by: Restricting new build housing development in the countryside to that which has an essential need to be located in the countryside in accordance with Policy H 1;
 - Allowing the conversion or replacement of an existing rural building in accordance with Policy H 1;
 - Allowing extensions or additional domestic outbuildings to existing dwellings provided they are appropriate in scale and design and do not have a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling and the character of the rural area. The Council will assess schemes having regard to the original dwelling, in cases where cumulative change has occurred;
 - Allowing suitable development which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset in accordance with Policy DC 2;
 - Allowing rural exceptions housing (in accordance with Policies H 1 and H 3); Allowing community facilities where that need cannot be met in a settlement within the hierarchy. In such cases the development should be in a sustainable location close to an existing serviced settlement.
2. Sustain the rural economy by:
 - Enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified
 - Supporting the diversification of existing farm enterprises

- Supporting the development of appropriate ICT and new means of communications to enable homeworking and small businesses reliant on e-technology;
3. Enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by:
 - Giving priority to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape;
 - Limiting uses which generate a substantial number of regular trips in areas that are not well served by public transport;
 - Ensuring renewable energy schemes are of an appropriate scale, type and location;
 - Recognising and conserving the special quality of the landscape in the Peak District National Park (in accordance with Policy DC 3);
 - Encouraging measures which protect and enhance the biodiversity, geological resources and heritage of the District.
 4. Regenerate underused major developed areas in the countryside including:
 - Bolton Copperworks, Froghall and Anzio Camp, Blackshaw Moor (in accordance with policies DSR 5 and DSR 6).
 - Development of these areas shall be complementary to and not undermine the role of the towns and larger villages nor shall it undermine wider strategic objectives. It shall also avoid or minimise environmental impacts and congestion and safeguard and enhance natural and cultural assets.
 - Facilitating the appropriate redevelopment of other major developed areas where the proposed development brings positive benefits to the area and any resultant environmental or highways concerns could be adequately addressed and minimised. Such proposals will be expected to provide supporting information that demonstrates clearly that the redevelopment will complement the overall development strategy for the District.
 5. Enhance tourist opportunities by:
 - Supporting sustainable tourism developments and measures in the Churnet Valley in accordance with Policy SS 11 and the Churnet Valley Masterplan SPD;
 - Allowing for small-scale tourism developments in other areas (in accordance with policy E 4); Establishing strong linkages between recreational and tourist resources; Recognising and developing the close linkages to the Peak District National Park
 6. Maintain the Green Belt within Staffordshire Moorlands. Strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.

Any development proposal that might have the potential to affect a European or Ramsar Site must itself be subject to appropriate assessment.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

13. Protecting Green Belt land

133. The government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

134. Green Belt serves 5 purposes:

- (a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- (b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- (c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- (d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- (e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

135. The general extent of Green Belts across the country is already established. New Green Belts should only be established in exceptional circumstances, for example when planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or major urban extensions. Any proposals for new Green Belts should be set out in strategic policies, which should:

- (a) demonstrate why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate;
- (b) set out whether any major changes in circumstances have made the adoption of this exceptional measure necessary;
- (c) show what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development;
- (d) demonstrate the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with strategic policies for adjoining areas; and
- (e) show how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the Framework.

136. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period. Where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans.

137. Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its

identified need for development. This will be assessed through the examination of its strategic policies, which will take into account the preceding paragraph, and whether the strategy:

- (a) makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;
- (b) optimises the density of development in line with the policies in [chapter 11](#) of this Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport; and
- (c) has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground.

138. When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. Strategic policy-making authorities should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary. Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously developed and/or is well-served by public transport. They should also set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.

139. When defining Green Belt boundaries, plans should:

- (a) ensure consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development,
- (b) not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open,
- (c) where necessary, identify areas of safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period,
- (d) make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following an update to a plan which proposes the development,
- (e) be able to demonstrate that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period; and
- (f) define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

140. If it is necessary to restrict development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness

of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.

141. Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

142. The [National Forest](#) and [Community Forests](#) offer valuable opportunities for improving the environment around towns and cities, by upgrading the landscape and providing for recreation and wildlife. The [National Forest Strategy](#) and an approved Community Forest Plan may be a material consideration in preparing development plans and in deciding planning applications. Any development proposals within the National Forest and Community Forests in the Green Belt should be subject to the normal policies for controlling development in Green Belts.

Proposals affecting the Green Belt

143. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

144. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very Special Circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

145. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- (a) buildings for agriculture and forestry,
- (b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it,
- (c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building,
- (d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces,
- (e) limited infilling in villages,
- (f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and

(g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:

- not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
- not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

146. Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

- (a) mineral extraction;
- (b) engineering operations;
- (c) local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- (d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
- (e) material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
- (f) development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

147. When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.