



Cerne Valley *Neighbourhood Plan*

It's for you!



Spring 2013

The Cerne Valley Neighbourhood Plan has been developed following a series of initiatives designed to gather the opinions of residents. This is a short summary of the main points:

- The Cerne Valley is a special place to live, work and visit. People want to keep it that way, protecting the environmental qualities of the valley, whilst enhancing the communities they live in.
- One of the area's strengths is its sustainable nature. It is accessible to surrounding towns, having access to an enviable range of services and facilities for a rural location, whilst being a safe place to live, work and visit. The aim is to enhance the sustainability of the valley.
- There is an appetite for small scale housing development of high quality and sustainable in design, in keeping with the local character .
- In Cerne Abbas and Godmanstone, other than in exceptional cases, future development should be within the respective Defined Development Boundary (DDB). There will be a minor extension to the Cerne Abbas DDB in its North West corner to create some additional opportunities for new development. A DDB will be adopted for Godmanstone and density levels set for in-fill building.
- There is a requirement for a range of new housing stock to meet the needs of the communities in the valley. More affordable housing would be attractive to young people with families and people with limited incomes. Well designed quality housing will continue to both enhance the attractiveness of the area to live in and its sustainability. A growing need for additional smaller sized houses for retired people to downsize to has been identified, which would feed the "sustainability cycle" in terms of change of ownership benefits.
- There is support in general terms for the conversion of historic farm buildings to residential and/or business purposes subject to design being in sympathy with the area and the planning application meeting the required standards.
- The risk of flooding is a concern to residents of both Cerne Abbas and Godmanstone. Future planning applications will have to address and meet these concerns.
- A new school building to replace the one currently used by the Cerne Abbas First School is recognised as being a priority by residents. Land owned by Dorset County Council at Simsay in Cerne Abbas has outline planning permission for a new school to be built. The Plan requires that this land be safeguarded for the next 10 years.
- The plan identifies green spaces and other recreational spaces which will be protected.
- Future development must not harm the valley's landscape, geological assets, built heritage, archaeological sites and wild-life habitats.
- Tourism is important to the valley economy and people value existing businesses. The Plan seeks to support those businesses and attract new enterprises.
- The Plan identifies a number of new facilities which the communities would like added to existing community infrastructure assets e.g. a cycle path, village centre parking in Cerne Abbas and speed reduction measures in Godmanstone. Some of these facilities could be funded in full or part from monies generated through the Community Infrastructure Levy to support new development.

**Annual Village Meeting
Cerne Abbas Village Hall
Thursday 16 May 7pm**

Both village meetings will focus on the draft Neighbourhood Plan. This is your chance to ensure it represents your views on the future of the Valley. All residents are invited. Copies of the draft plan will be available on the website below and in the Cerne Abbas store. Any further representations to be sent by 5 July 2013 to the Clerk of the Cerne Valley Parish Council, 32 Back Lane, Cerne Abbas.

**Annual Village Meeting
Godmanstone Village Hall
Tuesday 21 May 7pm**

www.cernevalley.org



Jo Witherden of WDDC answers your questions

Q. Why is the Neighbourhood Plan important for Cerne Valley residents?

It's the best way for local residents to shape how their villages will grow over the coming years, and what changes may take place in the countryside, as it will set in place the planning policies for the type, location and design of new buildings.

Q. Are other regions in Dorset also developing Plans?

Yes. So far three other neighbourhood areas have been agreed in West Dorset, at Buckland Newton, the Piddle Valley and Loders (near Bridport). There is a lot of interest from other parishes.

Q. What happens if I disagree with the proposed Neighbourhood Plan policies?

The parish council will be consulting on the plan so make sure you take this opportunity to put in writing what you think needs to be changed and why. And if you live in the area, and are on the electoral role, you will get to vote in the referendum.

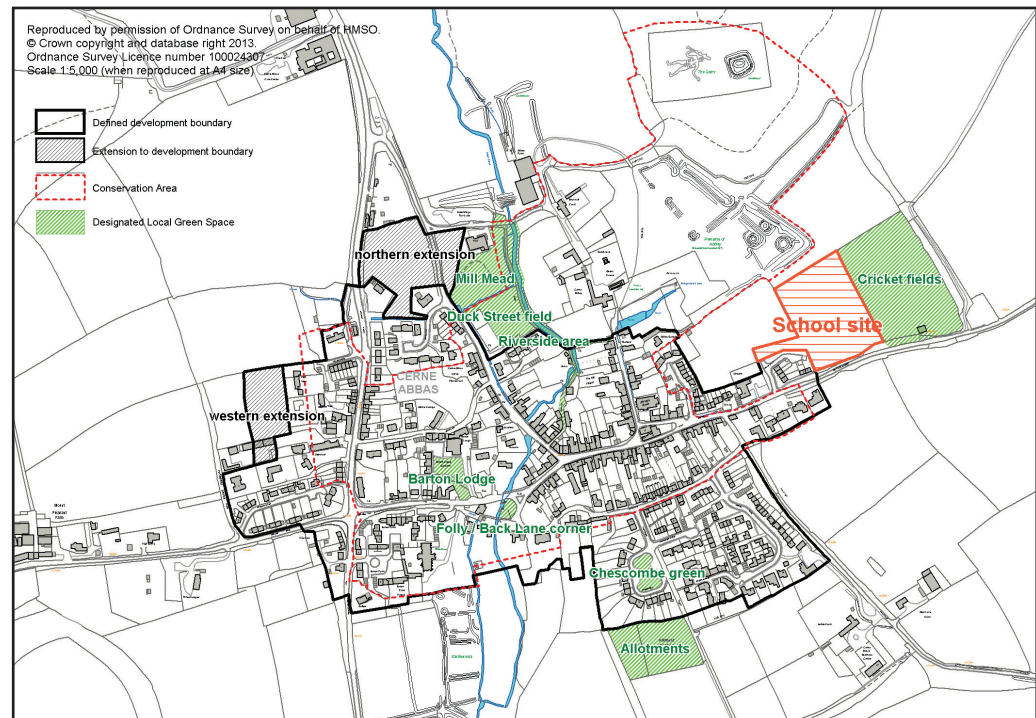
Q. Do I still have to apply for planning permission for an extension?

Yes, unless it is already allowed under permitted development rights. The neighbourhood plan is setting policies but isn't changing what is or isn't permitted development (it's not a neighbourhood development order).

Q. What are the next steps in the process?

After the parish council have consulted on the plan, they will need to consider and respond to the comments that have been made. They can then submit the plan for examination. This looks at whether the plan passes certain tests – mainly whether the necessary steps have been taken along the way, and whether the plan is broadly in line with the strategic policies set out in national planning policy and the local plan for West Dorset. If the tests are met, then a referendum will be held to make sure the majority of people (those that actually vote) agree it should be approved. If it does get a thumbs-up, then it becomes part of the development plan for the area.

Cerne Abbas Proposed Defined Development Boundary



Godmanstone Proposed Defined Development Boundary

