

We have been receiving a number of queries from supporters about what happens next, after eight months of very busy campaigning. To the relief of all of us, no doubt, we are now in the calm but anxious period when the Boningale Homes planning application and our 1120 objections are in the in-tray of the County's Planning Officer Lynn Parker. However, we do expect Boningale Homes to submit more documents in response to the fantastic number of objections submitted. If their documents alter the application significantly, another public consultation may be opened and we will have go into battle again.

When will Shropshire Council make the decision?

Given how large and contentious the proposals are, the decision is likely to be made at a Shropshire South Planning Committee Meeting. The next one is on the 26th November 2024 at 2:00pm. However if this proves too soon to consider all the documentation and objections, (and especially if a new consultation is considered necessary), then the decision will be delayed.

If the Planning Application is refused: Boningale Homes would have the option to appeal to the Government's Planning Inspectorate. Given the size of this application it is most likely that this would be dealt with at a Public Inquiry. We should add that, although some Conservative commentators are claiming that the Government have declared war on the Green Belt, this is not consistent with Government statements and if necessary, ministers will be reminded of their assurances that good quality Green Belt will be protected except in 'Exceptional Circumstances'.

If the Boningale Homes Planning Application is granted: There is a 6 week period for those opposing the decision (AVAG and others) to apply for a Judicial Review challenge on the grounds that the decision was legally flawed. AVAG are closely monitoring progress of the planning application, and the implications, costs and timings of all options. We will keep you updated as events progress.

The Local Plan & NPPF

In addition to the immediate issue of the Planning Application, we must bear in mind that Shropshire's Local Plan is currently in draft form only, and the important National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is due to be radically revised. Both have implications for our campaign. Angela Rayner, who is responsible for housing policy, has said that the Government's view is that Local Plans are the best way to ensure local people have a proper say in the development of their county and therefore should be completed and in force wherever possible.

So what's happening with Shropshire's draft Local Plan (2016-2038)?

The Local Plan process started over 7 years ago and has gone into the Examination phase. Planning Inspectorate (Government) Hearings started on Tuesday the 15th of October and will continue until the 6th of December. Participants include the Planning Inspectorate, Shropshire Council and any parties who disagree with the Local Plan. Two key hearing sessions happened a few weeks ago, after this magazine's deadline. However, Albrighton's session is on the 19th of November and the 5 year Housing supply session is on the 28th. Boningale Homes are making a number of representations and AVAG will monitor them as well as the Planning Inspectorate's responses.

When will the decision be made whether to adopt the Shropshire Local Plan? Early to mid-2025 is our best guess, but it is subject to a number of unpredictable factors.

Scenario 1: If the Local Plan IS NOT adopted (worst possible outcome for our campaign)

- Work on the next Shropshire Local Plan would start again with a 'Call for sites' from developers and potential speculative proposals for Albrighton would reappear.

Scenario 2: If the Local Plan IS adopted BUT with changes required:

- Shropshire Council could be asked to propose changes to the Local Plan and these may be put out to Public Consultation to ask for our views again
- The Government Inspector may also say that work has to start work on the next Local Plan immediately. If this happens a new Call For Sites will have to start; probably later in 2025,

- with all the consequences mentioned above.
- The government is keen for new Local Plan processes to take around three years under the new NPPF regime, so the target would be 2028.

Scenario 3: If the local plan IS adopted and NO changes are required:

- The adopted Local Plan is adopted and would theoretically not need to be redone until the 2030s. However this seems unlikely given the new NPPF proposals.

Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Consultation on reform proposals finished on 24th September. Thank you for everyone who submitted responses. These new rules will have a significant effect on any new Local Plans and future Planning Applications. We are closely monitoring the outcome of this and will keep you updated. It is expected to be published in the New Year due to the enormous volume of responses to the recent public consultation.

FUN-draising Update!

Thank you to everyone who has supported our fundraising campaign over the last madcap 8 months. We have raised over £14,000 - which has paid for substantial amounts of professional and legal work.

Our latest FUN-draising events have been a fantastic success:

Albrighton Players 'Consuming Passions' play by Alan Ayckbourn on 12th September. A fabulous performance by Albrighton Players of this time-spinning comedy mystery - and a massive THANK YOU to all the actors and crew. A great time was had by all, with raffle prizes donated by Rosellos, Village Spice, Village Wines, Village Coffee and Debbie Mountford's scrumptious cakes!

Micky Quinn Sports Evening on 4th October. We had an incredible turnout of nearly 100 people in the Red House for a raucous evening of football, racing and comedy moments. It was great to get a sports mad village together in aid of a fantastic cause. Thank you for your support.

*For more AVAG information keep an eye on
albrightongreenbelt.co.uk and our Facebook group.*