



# BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

To: All Town, District & County Councillors

Members of the Public & Press

Dear Member

## TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Town Council which will be held in the **Corn Exchange**, Market Place, Blandford Forum on **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018** to consider the following items. This meeting will start immediately after the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.

Linda Scott-Giles  
Town Clerk  
2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018

## A G E N D A

Prior to consideration of the following Agenda, there will be a democratic quarter of an hour, which may be extended at the discretion of the Council, during which time members of the public may speak. During the course of the meeting, members of the public and our elected representatives from the County and District Councils may indicate they wish to speak, and, at the discretion of the Chairman, and with the approval of the Members, they may be allowed to do so on points of information only. The Council may on occasion invite members of the public to comment on specific issues where points of information or their particular knowledge on a subject might prove of benefit to the Council. Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, belief or disability), Crime & Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights. Disabled access is available.

1. Public Session
2. Report from County Councillor
3. Reports from District Councillors
4. Apologies
5. To receive any Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
6. Town Clerk's Report & Correspondence
7. Civic Report
8. Recommendations and Receipt of Minutes  
None
9. To receive an update and consider any requests from the:
  - 9.1 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – Blandford +
    - 9.1.1 To confirm withdrawal of B+ Neighbourhood Plan Version 1 (paper attached)
  - 9.2 14-18 Working Group (First World War Centenary)
  - 9.3 Corn Exchange
    - 9.3.1 To receive the recommendations from the Corn Exchange working group and consider expenditure approval on the appointment of an architect (paper attached)

Minutes of the Town Council and Committee meetings are available from Blandford Library, the Town Clerk's Office and at [www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk](http://www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk)

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**To receive the recommendations from the Corn Exchange working group and consider expenditure approval on the appointment of an architect**

**Background**

At the Town Council meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018 it was resolved, unanimously, that in the matter of selecting an architect for the revised Corn Exchange project that:

**The Town Council delegates authority to the Working Group to review the proposals in full and for a recommendation to be brought back to a future Planning or Town Council meeting for a decision.**

At the working group meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018, Councillors considered the proposals and agreed to invite two of the architects to give a presentation to the working group on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

**Architects' Presentations**

At the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018, Company A and Company B presented their proposals to those in attendance, based on the specification they had been given. Extracts from the minutes of the meeting are below, summarising the different companies:

**Company A**

They explained that the practice is RPA Chartered and the four corners of the practice are conservation, residential, master planning and retirement living. Previous projects include the redevelopment and regeneration of the Georgian Royal William Yard, Plymouth, the full reconstruction of the Grade II\* Savoy Theatre, London, and Juxon House, St Pauls Churchyard, London.

They have been successful with all of the applications they have made on behalf of the Council, managed the façade scheme and have recently received approval for the façade lighting scheme.

They are aware that over time the needs of the Council have changed, and they are going to look at the front section only. They recommend thinking carefully to only tackle the front section and not to take on the Corn Exchange at the same time. They believe it is not a good idea to leave the rest of the building as is, or to do it later, as building works would have to come through the refurbished part and it would be damaged. Furthermore, potential funders would question what is happening to the whole of the project. They recommended enlisting the services of a professional bid writer for the project. Their concept plan is to relocate the staircase to the western side and to keep the kitchen and toilets on the eastern side.

**Questions from Councillors**

Cllr Lacey-Clarke asked if Company A is conservation accredited and they explained that they are reapplying for IHBC membership, however it is not critical to work on heritage buildings. It is a personal, not a practice accreditation. He has worked on many listed buildings in his career and has the support of the Conservation Officer and Historic England.

Cllr Carter enquired if there are any red lines on this project and they confirmed that they do not have any.

Cllr Lindsay asked if they could leave the glossary of the first proposals behind and work to new specifications. They confirmed that they are always looking ahead and want the best for this building due to the length of time they have been involved with it. They confirmed that they will respond to the brief given.

### Company A continued...

Cllr Lacey-Clarke wanted to know if they are happy to do a phased project and they confirmed that they would but advised to start in the middle of the building and work to the front to avoid damaging any completed works.

Cllr Stevens asked about the glazing in of the Shambles and the exact positioning as it seems to take away space on the current drawing and some Councillors would like to see glazing flush to the railings as in Crewkerne, for example. Company A agreed to look in to this in further detail as the approved scheme was to have the glazing set one metre back, which allows the gates to open. Cllr Stevens also enquired about the possibility of no steps into the building in order to be DDA compliant. Company A explained that there is no way to overcome this with the brief provided by Councillors and that there needs to be a ramp.

### Company B

They confirmed that they are RIBA accredited conservation architects and one of the Directors has a degree in conservation architecture. They have worked on a lot of Grade I and Grade II listed buildings and provide 3D visuals for presentations. They gave examples of their projects in Blandford Forum, some of which have won awards.

They have reviewed the Council's specification they have been provided with and they do not agree with some of the requirements and do not understand why they have been suggested. They would want to sit down with the Working Group and go through the list in great detail. For example, they stated that permission would not be granted for exposing the beams in the Shambles and could not understand why this was desired.

Company B went through some of the issues on the list and highlighted the glazing in of the Shambles, stating that unless it is really needed the money could be spent better somewhere else. They feel that it is not necessary and alters the appearance of the building and it would not be a lettable space. They agree with the specification to tidy up the cabling and cupboards within the Shambles and taking out the store rooms to make it a better shape and make it look more attractive. The ramp leading into the building needs to be removed and the toilets need to be enhanced, but not moved. The caretaker's office could be used for something else, such as a reception/ticket point.

The lantern light in the lobby is very dangerous and therefore illegal (it would not be permitted to be built like that now). The Town Hall could remain untouched. In the Council Chamber, they did not agree with the Council's brief and feel that the panelling should not be removed, and therefore the Town Hall and Council Chamber should stay as is.

Company B proposed that a lift (as part of an infill extension) could be installed on the outside of the building, between the Corn Exchange and the Town Hall/Council Chamber as it is currently an unused space. They feel that this would be a very simple, cost effective scheme and makes use of space that is already there. In the Corn Exchange a micro kitchen, and not a full kitchen, could be installed. Storage under the stairs could be changed and used for tables and chairs as this is such an important issue that must not be overlooked.

### Questions from Councillors

Cllr Lacey-Clarke clarified that planning permission had been approved already to expose the beams in the Shambles. He asked how confident they are that they would obtain planning permission for their proposals and they confirmed that they are very confident and have a great deal of experience with listed buildings and this is not a major alteration to the historic part.

Company B continued...

Cllr Lindsay expressed concerns about the kitchenette as the current kitchen is well used at the moment on a weekly basis. Company B explained that the kitchenette can be cooked in and they can include a serving area.

Cllr Carter asked if they have any red lines and they confirmed that they do not agree with anything specified for the Council Chamber.

Cllr S Hitchings asked if Company B have any thoughts about the Corn Exchange, with regards to the heating and the sound, and they confirmed that it depends on the priorities and the budget available as the whole room would need a lot of work doing to it.

### **Financial Implications**

The fees for Company A's proposal are as follows:

Stage 1 – Preliminary Design Fee, including 3D digital model: £7,850.00 + VAT (fixed fee)  
Stage 2 – Planning and Listed Building Consent: £6,250.00 + VAT (fixed fee)

The fees for Company B's proposal are as follows:

- To make a 3D sketch-up model of the existing building £2,500 + VAT
- Rewriting the brief in great detail £900-£1,500 + VAT
- Development of the design to pre-app stage £18,000-£28,000 + VAT
- Detailed design including statement of significance, heritage statement, schedule of works as required to make the planning application £28,000-£38,000 + VAT

### **Recommendation**

The working group made the following recommendation to full council:

Following discussions, it was PROPOSED by Cllr Robinson, SECONDED by Cllr Lindsay and AGREED (5 in favour, 1 against) that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

**Company B is appointed as the new architect for the Corn Exchange project using funds of approximately £70,000 from the Corn Exchange Regeneration budget line (1105) (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).**

Company B's proposal moves away from the concept plan and brief specified and approved by council on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and copies of their proposal are therefore available for Councillors to view in the office.

Linda Scott-Giles  
Town Clerk (on behalf of the Corn Exchange working group)  
1<sup>st</sup> May 2018

## **Neighbourhood Plan Update**

### **To confirm withdrawal of B+ Neighbourhood Plan Version 1**

#### **Background**

As previously reported to Council, Blandford + carried out an extensive review of the Neighbourhood Plan (v1) in January 2018 and concluded that in the absence of an 'in date' Local Plan, it would be essential to form a close and joint working relationship with NDDC to:

- Develop a new and more comprehensive Neighbourhood Plan (v2) that can allocate sites for development (housing, infrastructure and employment).
- Continue the work carried out by NDDC in its 'Issues & Options' Review
- Significantly reduce the lead time to adoption required for the Local Plan Review
- Ensure Blandford gets the essential infrastructure it requires e.g. to address Dorset County Council's urgent requirement for a new 2FE Primary School
- Redress the 5YHLS shortfall
- Identify and remedy the lack of employment land in Blandford
- Strengthen the planning strategy for Blandford, protecting the town and surrounds from unsuitable planning applications.
- Ensure Blandford is not impacted by possible delays in the Local Plan Review during the transition to a Unitary Authority.

DCLG has supported this approach through the offer of a new 'My Community' grant totalling £17,000, and through the offer of technical support (at no additional cost).

Blandford Plus met with North Dorset District Council on 5 April 2018. It was agreed at this meeting that the new Neighbourhood Plan will be used as the vehicle for continuing the work carried out by NDDC in its 'Issues & Options' Review, for allocating sites for development, and for reviewing the settlement boundary for Blandford Forum.

In light of the above, and with agreement from NDDC to a joint working approach through the new Blandford Plus Neighbourhood Plan (2018 – 2033), authorisation is now required from Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St. Mary Parish Council and Bryanston Parish Council to withdraw the current version of Blandford Plus Neighbourhood Plan (2015 – 2031).

Once confirmation has been received from each Council, a formal letter from Blandford Forum Town Council (as the Qualifying Body) will be sent to North Dorset District Council notifying them of the intention to withdraw. A formal notice explaining the situation, and the reasons for withdrawing the current neighbourhood plan will also be published on the B+ website, the Dorset For You website and in the local press. The Notice and Letter are appended to this paper for your information

The detailed specification for the new Neighbourhood Plan, along with the timetable for submission at the end of the year were agreed with NDDC on 1 May. Technical Support Packages have been agreed with Locality and work has commenced. In summary, progress is significant, and working relationships with all parties are positive and productive.

**Recommendations**

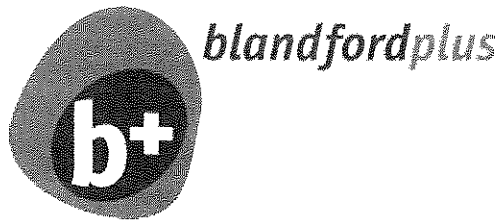
1. It is recommended that the Council agrees to:
  - Formally withdraw the current Neighbourhood Plan;
  - Give delegated authority for the day to day processes of developing a revised Neighbourhood Plan for the Blandford + area to Blandford +;
  - Approve expenditure authority of up to £17,000 from the Locality grant budget line, and the remaining £6,178 left in budget line 1013 that has been committed to providing a Neighbourhood Plan for the purposes outlined above.

Sally Gardner

Project Administrator

Facilitator to Blandford +

1<sup>st</sup> May 2018



## **BLANDFORD PLUS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (2016 – 2031)**

### **WITHDRAWAL STATEMENT**

**April 2018**

Following a six-week period of consultation held between February and March 2016, Blandford Plus (comprising Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St. Mary Parish Council and Bryanston Parish Council) submitted its Neighbourhood Plan to North Dorset District Council in July 2016.

An independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan, supporting documentation and representations received during the consultation was carried out by Deborah McCann BSc MRICS MRTPI Dip Arch Con Dip LD in early 2017, followed by a public hearing on 10 April 2017.

The examiner's final report (19 July 2017) found that the Neighbourhood Plan met the Basic Conditions as set out in Section 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 subject to two major modifications; these being the deletion of Policy 1 (Land to the North & East of Blandford Forum: proposals for 400 houses; a two form entry primary school; a community hub comprising a new general practice surgery and a community centre, and new business uses as an extension to the Sunrise Business Park) and deletion of Policy 10.4 (Designation of Crown Meadows as a 'Local Green Space').

On 31 July 2017, North Dorset District Council (NDDC) announced that its 5 Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) had fallen short to 3.42 years, thus rendering the North Dorset Local Plan 'Out of Date'. Because of this reduced supply, NDDC is now obliged to apply the national 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' which could potentially allow more development to take place, in areas that are not considered 'in line' with either the Local Plan or the Neighbourhood Plan.

Having considered the examiner's findings, Blandford Plus decided not to accept the modifications and therefore not to proceed to referendum, as per Section 17A(5a) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) & Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016. Blandford Plus believes that the shortfall in the 5YHLS would have made a significant and material difference to the way in which Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan was considered by the examiner, had she been aware.

Blandford Plus wrote to the Secretary of State on 5 September 2017 requesting that he intervene on behalf of Blandford Plus Neighbourhood Plan under the broader provisions of his planning powers. This request was accepted, and a report was commissioned by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in November 2017.

The report 'Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan Options for Moving Forward' recommended that, given the importance of Policy 1 to the Neighbourhood Plan, the best way forward would be to withdraw and modify the current Neighbourhood Plan, in parallel to making representations on the Issues and Options paper published by NDDC, and liaising with prospective developers.

Blandford Plus carried out an extensive review of the Neighbourhood Plan in January 2018 and concluded that, in the absence of an 'in date' Local Plan, a close and joint working relationship with NDDC would be essential to:

- Develop a new and more comprehensive Neighbourhood Plan that can allocate sites for development (housing, infrastructure and employment).
- Continue the work carried out by NDDC in its 'Issues & Options' Review
- Significantly reduce the lead time to adoption required for the Local Plan Review
- Ensure Blandford gets the essential infrastructure it requires e.g. to address Dorset County Council's urgent requirement for a new 2FE Primary School
- Redress the 5YHLS shortfall
- Identify and remedy the lack of employment land in Blandford
- Strengthen the planning strategy for Blandford, protecting the town and surrounds from unsuitable planning applications.
- Ensure Blandford is not impacted by possible delays in the Local Plan Review during the transition to a Unitary Authority.

DCLG has supported this approach through the offer of a new 'My Community' grant, and through the offer of technical support.

Blandford Plus met with North Dorset District Council on 5 April 2018. It was agreed at this meeting that the new Neighbourhood Plan will be used as the vehicle for continuing the work carried out by NDDC in its 'Issues & Options' Review, for allocating sites for development, and for reviewing the settlement boundary for Blandford Forum.

In light of the above, and with agreement from NDDC to a joint working approach through the new Blandford Plus Neighbourhood Plan (2018 – 2033), Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St. Mary Parish Council and Bryanston Parish Council have voted to withdraw the current version of Blandford Plus Neighbourhood Plan (2015 – 2031). A formal notice from Blandford Forum Town Council (as the Qualifying Body) to North Dorset District Council is appended to this notice.

Sally Gardner  
Facilitator to Blandford Plus





# BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

Mr Edward Gerry  
Planning Policy Team Leader  
North Dorset District Council

[EGerry@dorset.gov.uk](mailto:EGerry@dorset.gov.uk)

Your Ref:

Our Ref: B+ NP

Date: May 2018

## BY EMAIL

Dear Ed,

### **Withdrawal of Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan 2015 - 2031**

I wish to notify you that resolutions were passed at the Blandford Forum Town Council meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> May, at the Bryanston Parish Meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> May and via an email vote from Blandford St. Mary Councillors to withdraw the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan 2015 – 2031.

Blandford Plus looks forward to working with NDDC and with Locality to develop the new version of the plan (Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2033).

Yours sincerely

Sally Gardner  
Project Co-ordinator  
Facilitator to Blandford Plus

Twinned with Preetz, Germany



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