

WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

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19th November 2012

Mr Nigel Gibbons
Forward Plan Manager
Forest of Dean District Council
High Street
Coleford, Gloucestershire
GL16 8HG

Dear Mr Gibbons,

West Dean Parish Council Neighbourhood Development Plan

Thank you for your letter of 2nd November 2012 acknowledging receipt of my email to you in respect of our application.

Thank you also for your offer of assistance in developing our plans and in providing advice on funding sources available. We understand, of course, that you will not be able to provide an officer to attend all of our NDP meetings, but we hope that you can provide as much support as possible.

Following your letter, I submit this application to the Forest of Dean District Council on behalf of West Dean Parish Council.

The Parish Council intends to carry out neighbourhood development plans for the whole of the West Dean Parish area. However, because of the large and diverse area of the Parish, it is not realistic to consider it one area, and therefore a series of plans will be developed.

The first plan will be for the Berry Hill/Christchurch village area. In submitting this application, I am providing herewith 1) a map identifying the area to which the application relates, 2) a statement explaining why the area is appropriate for designation as a Neighbourhood area and 3) a statement that the Parish Council is a relevant body within Section 61G (2) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

1) I enclose a map of the area to which the application relates. Please note that the area in green is the area to which the application relates. The red line represents the boundary between the Berry Hill and Christchurch wards of the West Dean Parish, and blue lines delineate parish boundaries.

The area includes the whole of the ward of Berry Hill, and the contiguous inhabited areas of the Christchurch ward extended to include the settlement of Edge End.

The boundary of the area follows the parish boundary with Coleford from Woodgate Road, Berry Hill, in a clockwise direction to the boundary with English Bicknor parish at Bracelands.

From that point it follows the English Bicknor boundary north and east for about 1.8 kilometres as far as Bicknor Street, Joyford.

From there the boundary line enters the West Dean Parish area to Ninewells Bottom, then follows the statutory Forest boundary, veering northwards slightly to include Hoarthorns Farm to the B4432 about 400 metres east of the junction of the B4432 and the B4028.

This boundary enables the adjoining community of Edge End to be included in the plan. The boundary then follows the B4432 westwards to the Five Acres Leisure Centre, and then southwards to the boundary with Coleford at the Woodgate Saw Mills.

2) This area has been carefully selected at a working party of West Dean Councillors and representatives of Gloucestershire Rural Community Council.

Berry Hill and Christchurch are contiguous traditional Forest villages, with a diversity of housing styles and a strong community spirit. The area hosts a distinguished rugby club, a leisure and sports complex, a college which may move out of the area in the foreseeable future, and a progressive secondary school which shares accommodation, grounds and resources with a primary school and a pre school.

The area has the advantage of an active local action group (FANS: Five Acres Not for Sale), which has recently carried out extensive consultation with the local community as well as with public organisations. The Parish Council has recently undertaken a village plan for Berry Hill and Christchurch, and it is believed that the extensive community consultation already undertaken will be of great use in developing the Neighbourhood plan.

The community action group, working with the support of West Dean Parish Council, already has plans for the development of the sports and leisure centre to create a recreational sporting hub for the benefit of residents and tourists. Their vision for the future includes developmental plans as well as other matters beyond the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan, which will be incorporated into a comprehensive Parish Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan, with the other objectives which are emerging and will continue to emerge through further public consultation, will enable a strong local community to develop its aspirations in the spirit of localism.

3) West Dean Parish Council declares that, as a Parish Council, it is a relevant body under Section 61G (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990.

With thanks

Sincerely

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