

Bedford Borough Local Plan 2035.

Potential implications for Wilstead



Do you want Wilstead to remain a village?

Bedford Borough Council is proposing to allow 500 new houses in Wilstead between now and 2035. This is a 50% increase in houses in the village and, to suit developers, they are likely to be in large estates built in a 5-7 year timespan, somewhat of a contrast from the gradual evolution and the rural, multi-age and mixed style of the current range of dwellings. (Other villages in Bedford Borough have been allocated only 25-50 additional houses.)

The Wilstead Neighbourhood Plan team and Parish Council are coordinating reactions to the proposal. Our first drop-in information session attracted over 200 residents who visited to learn more about the proposal. **We are holding another drop-in session from 9.00am to 9.00pm on Wednesday 17th May** in the Village Hall where you can be given updated and additional information.

Make your views known - this affects everyone in the village and future generations. Please don't leave it to others to respond

Make your views known and respond to the Local Plan 2035 Consultation Paper (There are possible arguments for you to use against such large scale development overleaf)

The best method of making your views known would be to respond using the online response form. Visit: www.bedford.gov.uk/localplan2035 You could also email the Borough Planning Team at planningpolicy@bedford.gov.uk or call 01234 718070.

Alternatively you may write quoting the "Local Plan 2035 (Wilstead)" to:
Local Plan 2035 Consultation, Planning Policy Team, Bedford Borough Council,
Borough Hall, Bedford, MK42 9AP.

The more people who respond individually, the more our collective views will be taken into account.

More information is available on the Village website: www.wilsteadvillage.org.uk

You have until 9th June to respond.

Possible arguments against large scale development in Wilstead

- We chose to live in a village – not in a town. This is much too large an increase in scale over a relatively short period of time. It represents a 50% increase in the number of houses.
- Wixams development is years behind what was intended – why would new houses sell in Wilstead? If they did, wouldn't they just take away sales from Wixams? – so there would be no net gain over existing numbers
- There are other places that development could go in the Bedford Borough that would result in much less effect on local communities. The Local Plan proposes only 2200 houses for four “New Settlements” at Lee Farm near Sharnbrook, Thurleigh Airfield, Twinwoods near Milton Ernest and Wyboston Garden Village near Roxton. These should be able to accommodate a lot more houses than 2200 between now and 2035. After all, 500 are being proposed for Wilstead alone! In addition there are villages in the Borough that are not being proposed for any development. A 10% increase in housing for each village would be much more equitable and will most likely be included in the neighbourhood plan for each of those villages anyway, so that should reduce the burden on Wilstead.
- The proposal to increase to 500 houses (from 75 – 100 previously advised) has been proposed without reference to the Parish Council and cannot be supported. The scoring methodology used puts too much emphasis on village amenities which are not those of a large community. For example the availability of one doctor on a Thursday morning in the village is counted as a “key service” (4 points) when a full time multi-practice surgery gets only 8 points. The Post Office and General Stores is counted as 16 points and the Chemist and Convenience Store 8 points.
- The proposal would have a major effect on the visual aspect of the village – it would remove ready access to open countryside from a large proportion of the village. It would most likely consist of estate type development which would be out of character with the rural, multi-age and mixed style of the current range of dwellings.
- There needs to be a distinct gap between the village and Wixams (to prevent “coalescence”)
- Location in the direct flow of water draining from the escarpment and partly on a flood plain – existing ditches cannot cope already. Because of potential flooding would new houses sell? Would people be able to obtain insurance against flood, given the huge increase in demand that would be placed on existing drainage?
- Current Infrastructure could not support such a huge number of additional houses (e.g. doctor, shops, playground, internal village roads)
- Increased traffic – congestion outside the school and in Whitworth Way is already dangerous at school opening and closing times.

Come along to the drop-in session on 17th May if you would like to discuss or require further information on these issues.