

# Application for Designation of a Neighbourhood Area and Qualifying Body for Malden Rushett

## 1. Name and Purpose

1.1 The name of the prospective Neighbourhood Forum is Malden Rushett Community.

1.2 The purpose of Malden Rushett Community shall be to improve the social, economic and environmental well being of Malden Rushett by engaging in the planning of the neighbourhood throughout the proposed Malden Rushett Neighbourhood Area as provided for in the Localism Act 2011.

## 2. Proposed Neighbourhood Area

2.1 A map of the proposed Neighbourhood Area can be found in **Annex 1**.

2.2 The boundary for Malden Rushett as defined in section 22 of the Borough Character Study dated January 2011 was used as a starting point for identifying the proposed Neighbourhood Area.

2.3 National planning practice guidance states that;

- village or settlement boundaries and the physical appearance or characteristics of the neighbourhood should be considerations when deciding the boundaries of a Neighbourhood Area.
- natural boundaries of physical features and infrastructure, such as a major road, railway or waterway be used as considerations.

2.4 Whilst the south-western and south-eastern boundaries of the Character Study map follow the administrative boundaries of RBK, it was considered that the boundaries to the north were inappropriate. The western part of the northern boundary passes through Chessington World of Adventures, separating the south car park from the main site, and the eastern part of the northern boundary excludes the small community located in Chalky Lane.

2.5 The residents of Chalky Lane were consulted in April 2017 to establish whether they wished to be included (**Annex 2**), as it was considered the characteristics of their surroundings were more in keeping with the semi-rural nature of the proposed Neighbourhood Area than the more urban neighbouring Chessington South.

2.6 Eight properties were consulted of which five returned a positive response and two provided no response (the eighth was vacant undergoing renovation).

2.7 It was therefore decided to redraw the northern boundary of the proposed Neighbourhood Area to **exclude** the Chessington World of Adventures south car park, Sixty Acre Wood and the land associated with Barwell Court Farm and to **include** the properties in Chalky Lane, including Park Farm. Chessington World of Adventures' south car park, Leatherhead Road, Chalky Lane and the Bonesgate Stream have been identified as a natural northern boundary. The eastern boundary follows the boundary line of Field 002 of Park Farm to the administrative boundary with Epsom and Ewell District Council.

2.8 A 1.4 hectare pocket of land on the southern border comprising of two properties on the eastern side of Kingston Road located in Mole Valley District Council was also identified – this pocket was excluded from the Ashted Neighbourhood Area designated in 2013. Both residents were consulted in April 2017 and expressed their wish to be included in the proposed Neighbourhood Area for Malden Rushett.

2.9 The submitted Malden Rushett Neighbourhood Area covers approximately 336 hectares of Green Belt land in the southern part of the South of the Borough Neighbourhood and includes the rural communities that identify themselves as being part of Malden Rushett.

2.10 The area represents a strong and coherent spatial entity within which there are development opportunities that a Neighbourhood Plan can help guide.

2.11 The proposed Neighbourhood Area map has been available to view on the Malden Rushett Community website for more than 12 months.

### **3. Aims, Objective and Reasons**

3.1 Residents of the proposed Neighbourhood Area wish to form a Neighbourhood Forum for the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.

3.2 For the last one hundred years Malden Rushett's growth has been unmanaged with little consideration for the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area.

3.3 A Neighbourhood Plan for the proposed area could ensure that the semi-rural character of Malden Rushett is preserved and that future growth is sustainable through policies that offer guidance to developers to assist in delivering the community's vision of its future.

3.4 A Neighbourhood Plan could seek to increase public access to the Green Belt and strengthen the Green Belt 'buffer' that separates Malden Rushett from neighbouring developments to the north, east and west of the Neighbourhood Area. It could also seek to restore the community's percentage of affordable housing through policies that encourage appropriate development to meet the area's future agreed housing need.

3.5 Community facilities and the local economy play an important part in maintaining the well-being of the community; a Neighbourhood Plan could contain policies that not only protect valuable community assets but also plan for their continued existence beyond the lifespan of the plan.

3.6 The emerging RBK Local Plan provides an opportunity for the community to determine how future local strategic policies are interpreted in the Neighbourhood Area and to help shape its future development. Creating policies that promote and enhance the identity of Malden Rushett and that plan for its future growth could encourage social cohesion and help create a strong sense of place.

## 4. Scoping

4.1 A survey was held in November 2016 to establish the views of Malden Rushett's residents on a range of local issues raised by the RBK Direction of Travel (2016). (**Annex 3**)

4.2 In January 2017 a decision was taken by the Malden Rushett Residents Association committee to establish a separate appropriate body to apply to use Neighbourhood Planning powers in Malden Rushett. An initial approach was made to RBK's Planning Office to discuss the option of establishing a Community Land Trust in order to submit a Community Right to Build Order.

4.3 Following an open meeting in May 2017 it was decided to put the Community Land Trust and CrtBO on hold until such a time that it was needed and to use a Neighbourhood Forum model instead so that the community could take advantage of new measures that were proposed in the DCLG White Paper "Fixing Our Broken Housing Market" (2017).

## 5. Qualifying body

5.1 Malden Rushett Community (MRC) is the relevant body capable of being designated a Neighbourhood Forum for the purposes of section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

5.2 A draft written constitution (**Annex 4**), that has been modelled on the constitutions of the North Kingston Forum (2016) and Ashted Community Vision (2013), has been available to view on the Malden Rushett Community website for over 12 months. It is believed that the constitution meets the conditions outlined in section 61F(5) of the 1990 Act and a motion to adopt the draft will be voted on by members in September 2019.

5.3 The Forum has been established as a non-political body whose membership is open to all those who live, work or are elected members in the proposed Neighbourhood Area and that respects all differences including gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability and income.

5.4 The community comprises an estimated population of 380 residents living in 167 households which is consistent with other small villages that have adopted Neighbourhood Plans (**Annex 5**). An estimated 350 individuals additionally work in the Neighbourhood Area.

5.5 A Community Engagement Strategy (**Annex 6**) has been developed to ensure the Forum reaches and engages with all individuals living or working in the proposed Neighbourhood Area.

5.6 Invitations to join the Neighbourhood Forum are being made regularly on our website and Facebook Group and 21 individuals had registered to support our application by March 2019. MRC will continue seeking to grow its membership to ensure that the Forum is demographically representative of the area as required by the RBK Neighbourhood Planning Protocol;

- quarterly News Sheets are being distributed to each household (**Annex 7**)
- an invitation to participate and synopsis have been sent to local organisations in August 2019 (**Annex 8**)
- an information pack for employees will be sent to all local businesses in September 2019.

5.7 An up-to-date analysis of the membership demographic will be provided in October following the adoption of the constitution and election of the Management Committee.

5.8 MRC contacted the three Chessington South Ward Councillors following their election in May 2018 and Cllr Andreas Kirsch has agreed to act to represent RBK.

5.9 Informal discussions with stakeholders and local businesses commenced in July 2019 and will resume in September 2019 following the summer break.

5.10 MRC will be using the best current business practices to ensure that the operation of the Forum is both open and transparent. Expertise is being drawn from local residents and businesses to assist with the plan's preparation.

5.11 Our objective is to achieve consensual agreement by operating in a similar manner as a Citizens' Assembly. In making decisions MRC will be utilising processes that allow for an informed and logical examination of all relevant evidence in order to write compliant policies that are supported by the community.

## 6. Funding Sources

6.1 An RBK grant was obtained by the Malden Rushett Residents Association in March 2017 to assist with the establishment of an appropriate qualified body.

6.2 Following designation Locality will be contacted for funding in the first instance, and an expression of interest application will be submitted.

6.3 Funding will also be sought by local business sponsorship and donation where possible. Further funding requirements and opportunities will be reassessed as the plan progresses.

## 7. Contact Details

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Submitted by email on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

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Annex 1: Map of Neighbourhood Area

Annex 2: Chalky Lane consultation

Annex 3: Malden Rushett Survey

Annex 4: Constitution

Annex 5: Small Villages

Annex 6: Community Engagement Strategy

Annex 7: News Sheets

Annex 8: Synopsis

**Final Version:** 17<sup>th</sup> August 2019