



MINUTES: NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - STEERING GROUP

Date: Thursday, 09 June 2016 at 6.35pm

AGENDA:

1. Review of evidence base audit
2. Additional evidence (green infrastructure)
3. Clarification of approach
4. "Special Character" policy
5. SA/scoping
6. Drafting of submission version of Neighbourhood Plan
7. Any Other Business
8. Dates for future meetings

Present: Steering Group: Sara Burrell (SRB), Phil Colmer (PC), Denise Knightley (DK), Suzanne Hounslow (SH), Bill Townsend (BT) and Christine Gibson-Pierce (CGP). Colin Smith Planning Ltd. (CSP): Colin Smith (CS) and Maggie Williams (MW)

6.30PM The meeting opened.

Apologies: Steering Group: Sophie Capsey; Beverley Weddell (Parish Clerk); Richard Wyatt (RW); Suzanne Hounslow advised she will be late due to London train cancellations.

Minutes: CGP took minutes.

1. Review of evidence base audit

1.1 CSP have reviewed the evidence base on the Neighbourhood Plan website (linked from the Parish Council website) and information emailed separately to them. They thought the website was very good and they found it helpful. It seemed logical and they found their way around it quite easily. As a place online to store the evidence CSP thought it effective. They read through the documents and created a table (a copy has been emailed to each member of the Steering Group) where they have assessed each one against NPPF tests to determine whether the evidence is proportionate, robust and whether it supports the approach taken and made a comment. The Steering Group were advised that a lot of the information isn't what would be considered evidence as such but more background papers (consultation, correspondence,...) which is suitable for context setting but doesn't inform what the Parish is trying to do in terms of developing policies. CSP advised to leave the existing documents because the Examiner will still look at how the Parish developed the plan policies and the link between those and the evidence. The existing data aids the over-arching narrative and context setting, which will be helpful for the Examiner.

1.2 Some general points were made in terms of housekeeping: CSP advised using hyperlinks in the documents. CGP said she was working on re-inserting the hyperlinks to the documents because when they were saved in PDF format the hyperlinks were lost.

1.3 In the evidence review table there is a comment against many of the documents 'To be incorporated within the Consultation Statement'. CSP think the consultations the Steering Group have done are fundamental, very important and we've done a lot of it. This will have to go into the Consultation Statement, part of the regulations, and will form part of the submission to Chichester District Council. It's evidence in a different form. It forms part of the evidence base and part of the Consultation Statement, which we are legally required to submit. We don't need to assess whether it's proportionate, robust or if it supports the approach taken, because it's the background work the Steering Group have done to get the views of parishioners. Whereas the Basic Condition Statement, another statutory requirement, is where compliance with the NPPF and the Local Plan apply. CSP recommends the Parish starts to draft a Consultation Statement and they will review it. It was suggested looking at those of different Parishes but ones that have gone through examination eg. Southbourne - nominated for an award as a model of good practice. The My Community website was also recommended.

1.4 It was thought one area the Steering Group needs to do more work, is with the Stakeholders. CSP advised this will be covered in Regulation 14 stage where the draft Plan is reviewed by stakeholders (eg. Highways, the school, the church,...).



1.5 CSP asked for clarification on if there had been a consultation on the sites alone. All sites had been presented to residents at the Public Consultation Jan-Feb 2016 and the Steering Group had also presented what they had determined were first and second sieve sites. CSP were advised the Parish Council have agreed to the Steering Group site's recommendation. CSP thought that process was fine and would be picked up as part of our Regulation 14 consultations. The audit trail was clear and if Site Assessments together with the Draft Plan are presented at the next public consultation this will cover the Regulation 14 requirement. Overall CSP thought the evidence base very good, in particular the site assessments seemed very robust and meet the NPPF tests.

1.6 Little Springfield Farm (Brownfield): CSP had read the Planning Inspectorate appeal decision notice where the main issues recorded were the loss of employment land and sustainability. It was thought the latter could be a potential risk in terms of vulnerability. The issue goes back to an aggrieved person not having their site in the Plan. The Inspector addressed the issue of sustainability for the Brownfield, in that anyone who lives there will need a car and therefore it's not a sustainable site and outside the Settlement Boundary. It was thought anyone who wants to challenge the Plan would probably pick up on that. However, CSP did not think the Parish are particularly vulnerable because in the preceding paragraph of the decision notice, the Inspector mentions the emerging allocations plan (Chichester District Council's Site Allocation *Development Plan Document - DPD*) also recognises the constraints of the Ifold settlement in being able to provide additional housing requirement and identified a site outside the settlement boundary. The Inspector noted it's a decision for the plan making process. Therefore the Steering Group can come to a different conclusion through the plan making process, which is a more rigorous assessment. If the Neighbourhood Plan is made (adopted) with this site as one of the housing development sites, the likelihood is that another person who wanted their site allocated will probably take Paragraph 22 of the Inspector's decision but the Parish's rebuttal to that is Paragraph 21. The Parish are also making an exception to develop any of the sites, as all are outside a settlement boundary and in the countryside.

1.7 Ifold Settlement Boundary: CSP pointed out that it does come through in the evidence that there is strong resistance to alteration to the settlement boundary. This question was specifically asked in the Ifold 2013 Public Consultation with a strong response from residents who didn't want it increased. Based on this evidence the Steering Group will not be proposing to alter the existing Ifold settlement boundary in the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

1.8 As all sites are outside a Settlement Boundary, they're not sustainable by definition. However the Brownfield can be argued as sustainable because it's brownfield. Whilst some people may want to challenge it formally, CSP commented the Steering Group has justified our position in a robust way because of the way we've gone through the process. We can demonstrate why we've come to the conclusion that the site should go forward.

1.9 Mention was made that the Brownfield landowner will change the current B2/B8 use class when a planning application is submitted for residential development and permission granted for change of use. The evidence base also points to the former planning application, eg. WSCC Highways had no issues with access (the landowner owns the verges either side of the existing access road so expanding it to two-lane would be possible); mitigation studies were done regarding habitat/environment;... All of which further supports the site going forward.

1.10 Land Adjacent to Todhurst: CSP noted it was not in a settlement boundary but closer to a local centre with some services and therefore justifiable in that sense. The Steering Group has set out why it has been brought forward so CSP were comfortable with that being a proposed site.

1.11 New Site: a discussion took place about a site not brought forward by the landowner but that a resident mentioned at a *Call for Sites* during the Public Consultations (Jan-Feb 2016). This site is believed by some in the Steering Group to be closer to the core of Plaistow services. CSP advised to continue to be clear in the evidence and the justification as to why a site was brought forward over another. It's not clear if there's a willing landowner. CSP advised one of the tests is deliverability and if the landowner has not brought the site forward it wasn't deliverable. If a willing landowner the Steering Group needs to deliberate if that site would better meet selection criteria, to any other site being brought forward. There is a concern the site landowners, a Trust - whose members aren't local, may not be aware of the call for sites. Follow up will be done.



1.12 The identified parking issues around residential housing near to the Land Adjacent to Todhurst site was raised. The Steering Group want to meet with Hyde Housing Association regarding this site and there is still some concern over the site viability. It's believed the parking issue could be resolved by providing additional parking bays within the housing development. CIL payments the Parish receive from the development could be used toward providing additional parking by using some of the land from the very wide verges that exist in the area (whilst still retaining a section as grass verges). A traffic/parking survey needs to be done.

1.13 CSP recommend the Steering Group assess the Trust site (using SHLAA) and determine if there is a willing landowner. Then deliberate and take a decision to go forward with the Site adjacent to Todhurst or the Trust site. When the draft Neighbourhood Plan goes to Examination if for some reason the Examiner does not think the presented site suitable, rather than the plan failing at examination, if the Parish has robustly assessed other sites we could have the option to go for another site. The Examiner can do that within their remit. But it is down to making sure the evidence base is robust, with site assessments available with links to all the documents.

1.14 A discussion took place regarding why Chichester District Council had assessed and discounted the Todhurst site in their DPD. The group were reminded that as the entire site was being proposed in the Steering Group's recommendation, this would mitigate the impact on the conservation area and Listed buildings (which were the reasons why the site was discounted by Chichester District Council). Steering Group informed CSP that we wish to formalise the green space in the Neighbourhood Plan on that site to protect it from further development and to keep it naturalized to help mitigate the habitat issues.

1.15 CSP were asked if they had come across a site where a sub-station/pumping station had to be moved. They have but said it was down to cost. SRB, with her MRICS hat on, said she did not think access into the site was an issue and that there was a sufficient width of land to not have to move the pumping station. MW suggested speaking with a Highways engineer if any reside in the community. CS agreed that given the size of the portion of the site being proposed it would be possible to avoid the pumping station and have a practical scheme in keeping with the historic aspects of the village.

1.16 CSP were advised Chichester District Council have a covenant on the land (in favour of the District and that access may only be taken over the land to meet housing need. Which is the case in the Steering Group's recommendation.). The deeds are not necessary to form part of the evidence base as they're not a consideration for planning.

1.17 Mention was made of the Parish Council not accepting the Steering Group recommendation of 60% affordable housing be allocated on the Todhurst site (based on the housing waiting list of 4 people). CSP were asked if the Steering Group could recommend the affordable requirement (30% according to Chichester District Council Local Plan) only on this site as it's considered the most sustainable due to its proximity to services and facilities. It was thought Chichester District Council may accept a commuted sum payment, which could go towards the Todhurst site or that the Steering Group may need to demonstrate through a viability assessment that affordable housing is not feasible on a particular site. There is also a possible scenario in that if the Brownfield is heavily contaminated the costs of cleaning up the contamination may preclude putting affordable housing at that site.

1.18 MW advised of a recent High Court decision, which upheld the government's stance regarding thresholds for affordable housing. This means that in rural areas affordable housing cannot be sought on developments of less than 5 units in rural areas. The recent judgement is a material planning consideration. It is unknown what stance Chichester District Council are taking regarding the judgement in relation to the Local Plan policies. It was thought deciding on the split of 30% affordable housing provision across the two sites was premature at this stage.

ACTION: SRB/CGP to draft a Consultation Statement for the Steering Group to review.

ACTION: SRB/CGP to draft a Basic Conditions Statement for the Steering Group to review.

ACTION: CGP to edit documents on the NP website and reinsert the hyperlinks that have been lost when saved from word to PDF format. MW will point out hyperlinks in pertinent documents.



ACTION: SRB on behalf of the Parish Council to write to the Gibbs Trust over the land identified off Rickmans Lane, Plaistow to determine if we have a willing landowner then the Steering Group can take a further decision over the Plaistow site.

ACTION: Steering Group to conduct a site visit with SHLAA criteria on the land identified off Rickmans Lane, Plaistow.

ACTION: The Steering Group to conduct a mini traffic/parking survey. Residents in Nell Ball and Ashfield must be canvassed to state how many cars each household has and the Steering Group to count how many parking spaces are available to identify the planning deficit.

ACTION: SRB to request a meeting between members of the Steering Group and Holly Nichols, Chichester District Council and Hyde Housing Association.

2. Additional Evidence (Green Infrastructure)

2.1 CSP flagged that any sites the Steering Group proposed to be protected as Local Green Space must be measured against the NPPF paragraph 77. The Steering Group cannot identify excessive tracts of land (which would not be reasonable) and needs to do a Local Green Space Assessment Report. CSP will point us towards an example. In the January – February 2016 Public Consultations residents were asked to identify any areas of local significance they would like to protect. The village Green won't need to be included as it already has a different designation. CSP were asked where land has been identified as green space and is privately owned how should the steering group manage the inclusion. In theory the Parish can allocate private land as local green space without any reference to a landowner. It is down to the NPPF criteria. But it is recommended the Steering Group as a matter of courtesy contact any landowner in a formal capacity, which in turn will show further how we have engaged with the community. A suggestion was made by a Steering Group member to advise landowners that every 5 years they may have the opportunity to review the inclusion of their land in the Neighbourhood Plan.

ACTION: The Steering Group to identify any landowners for any of the identified land that is proposed to be green space and formally write to them. Include a map of the area, note the size and specifics of the area such as TPOs.

ACTION: MW to inform CGP of a Green Space Assessment example.

3. Clarification of Approach

3.1 CSP advised not to duplicate strategic policies that are already in Chichester District Council's Local Plan or the Plaistow Village conservation area document, the Steering Group should concentrate on adding on local value.

4. “Special Character” Policy for Ifold

4.1 It was thought the draft produced by CSP (distributed to all Steering Group members) was a start but does need to be fine-tuned. CSP said there is an evidence base for it. This policy will form part of the Ifold Village Design Statement. A discussion took place on some of the aspects needed to be addressed in the policy.

ACTION: The Steering Group to review and send their comments to CGP who in turn will the comments summarise for CSP.

5. Sites Assessment / Scoping

5.1 CSP advised the Sustainability Assessment is critical to progress. It's an EU and statutory requirement that must be done properly. It needs to be formally set out in a recognisable form. CGP has already advised the AECOM Lead Consultant the link to the Neighbourhood Plan website to review the site assessment information.

ACTION: CGP to follow up with AECOM as to the status of the Site Assessments / Sustainability and ask that they include CSP in correspondence.



6. Drafting of Submission Version of Draft Neighbourhood Plan

6.1 CSP will begin drafting policies based on the list proposed by the Steering Group - some of which may not be considered a land use policy but rather an aim. CSP reminded the group to think about local focus and not duplicate Chichester District Council policies. A draft structure will be sent to the Steering Group to agree.

6.2 Mention needs to go in the draft Plan in the preamble to the policy on the housing need identified for 1-3 bedroom houses for elderly to downsize or affordable - first time homebuyers.

ACTION: CSP to draft a framework for the draft plan for the Steering Group to consider.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 CSP has had a conversation with Valerie Dobson, Chichester District Council - Neighbourhood Planning Officer to keep her informed of the work CSP are doing on behalf the Parish. She commented on the meetings Chichester District Council has had with the Steering Group. She noted the momentum that has happened and was keen to see the Parish push the Plan through.

7.2 Comments made against some of the evidence base documents were reviewed, in particular the *Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey and Housing Needs Assessment (Chris Broughton Associates)* – the evidence base assessment comment for this report notes: *discrepancies in the report for example where it states that the demand is for is for smaller accommodation for older people to downsize, whereas Estate Agents advise that older people move away in order to live closer to facilities, which frees up houses for family housing. Overall conclusion however is that smaller accommodation is required.* Three Estate Agents at most were visited and this was considered a generalised statement. There is a differentiation in the elderly – some move away to be closer to medical facilities or into hospice care and the Parish also has an ageing population wanting to downsize but stay in the area. There are also pre-family couples or smaller family units needing smaller houses.

7.3 CSP were asked if further evidence was need on this point. MW stated the housing need should influence what the Steering Group are trying to deliver through the Neighbourhood Plan and she was concerned at the dichotomy in the report. It was pointed out that in the proposal to Parish Council the Steering Group had specified for each of the two potential housing development sites the Parish housing need identified smaller units 1-3 bedroom were required. MW said this then would have to be part of the preamble to the policy in the draft Plan.

7.4 It was acknowledged that several of the Plaistow Village Trust documents preceding the plan designation would not be considered as evidence but this is not an issue as other evidence, since gathered, has superseded those documents.

7.5 It was hoped to get a draft Plan agreed by end of July to send to Chichester District Council for an informal review, which would give them a month to review it. The Steering Group can then assess any changes from that informal review, amend the Draft Plan and proceed to Regulation 14 consultation in September.

ACTION: MW to edit the Site Assessment Method Statement document.

8. Dates for future meetings: Thursday, 28th July 2016 at 6.30pm. Same location in Ifold. To review with CSP the Draft Plan to agree and take forward to informal consultation with Chichester District Council and Public Consultation with parishioners and stakeholders.

8.20PM The meeting closed.