

MINUTES: NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP

Date: Monday, 14 March 2016

Time: 7.30pm

Venue: Kelsey Hall, Chalk Road, Ifold

AGENDA:

1. Apologies
2. Minutes: Appoint a minute taker
3. Review of Actions
 - Review of DRAFT Survey Report
 - Parish Housing Needs
 - Parish Housing Development Site(s):
 - Little Springfield Farm - Brownfield site
 - Foxbridge Golf Course - Potential development site
 - Further response to CDC - Site Allocation Development Plan Document (reference: www.chichester.gov.uk/siteallocation)
 - Allocation of a site
 - Ifold Village Design Statement (VDS)
 - Draft Neighbourhood Plan
 - Current state of the draft Plan
 - Further work / evidence gathering needed
 - Appointing a consultancy to assist with policy writing
 - Locality Funding application
 - Review of budget
4. New Matters
5. Date of Next Meeting

PRESENT:

- Plaistow & Ifold Parish Council: Sara Burrell (SRB) – Chairman; Sallie Baker – Deputy Chairman (SB); Councillors: Phil Colmer (PC); Vivien Forwood (VF) and David Ribbens (DR)
- Plaistow Village Trust: Suzanne Hounslow (SH)
- Chichester District Councillor – Plaistow Ward: Denise Knightley (DK)
- Ifold Estates Limited: Malcolm Frost (MF); Christine Gibson-Pierce (CGP)
- Residents: Bill Townsend (BT)

7.38pm The meeting opened.

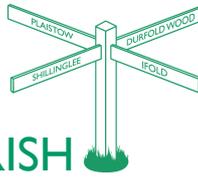
1. **APOLOGIES:** Clarissa Bushell, Sophie Capsey (Parish Cllr), Angela Jeffery and Beverley Weddell (Parish Clerk).
2. **MINUTES:** CGP was appointed minute taker.
3. CGP introduced a new member to the group, Ifold resident Bill Townsend who expressed an interest at the Ifold Public Consultation in January 2016. He has lived in Ifold for 40 years.

4. REVIEW OF ACTIONS

Review of Draft Survey Report:

4.1 There had been a 33% survey return-rate, which was thought reflected the size of the settlements and a good representation from across the Parish. The survey manager had been asked to look at the data from different angles to get further perspective and that analysis had also been forwarded to the group in an email prior to the meeting. The general observation was that it highlighted many things we already known and formally established the parish profile. The report contained a considerable amount of ONS data (2001 and 2011 census comparisons) and the survey manager had also looked at CDC's data and spoken with local Estate Agents. An executive summary was needed for ease of understanding for anyone not willing to read the report in its entirety.

ACTION: CGP to liaise with the survey manager with list of amendments and to complete the survey report, including an executive summary. **[ACTION COMPLETED]**



Housing Needs:

4.2 The statistical analysis of the census material helps us to identify our housing needs and the detailed survey results show that we have an over supply of 4-5 bedroom houses, an under supply of 1-3 bedroom houses, we have a growing elderly population, quite a high number of families with children, we have quite a big proportion of children (greater than national average and which indicates we have a lot of families) and we have a large, existing elderly population.

4.3 The Parish demographic has changed since 10-12 years ago from an analysis for the Parish Council and Action in rural Sussex (AirS) which found that 47% of the people in the Parish at that time were over the age of 55. The 2016 survey report identified that there are 27.5% of households entirely with people over the age of 65.

4.4 In the census material there is a fall-off of the number of people between 30 - 45 that indicates the housing is not fulfilling a need. It was thought the same would be true for the affordable housing. Because there isn't the availability of houses.

4.5 The group was reminded that CDC's Local Plan stipulates 30% of the allocation has to be affordable and that there are four people on the Chichester District Council Housing Waiting List for our Parish. The survey results noted the need for affordable housing wasn't high and there doesn't seem to be much of a requirement for it.

4.6 In selecting the site(s) the group considered the housing need. It was unfortunate that it wasn't possible to do the housing need separately and then look at site selections. But as CDC were pushing the Parish Council very hard to come up with a site it was necessary to amalgamate the two things. A discussion took place regarding housing need versus the 10 unit allocation. It was explained the allocation wasn't based on need and that we can also provide more than 10 units based on our actual need and that colours what sites we look at. So though we've allowed people to state a preference that only carries some weight towards site selection.

4.7 The results show the age group of owners has gone up and that it would appear that either people are starting later with their families or that they just can't afford to move back to the parish until they're in their forties.

4.8 The Youth of the Parish questionnaire had a low response of 16 returns. It was discussed running sessions through the school or Scouts to gather information directly. The general consensus was it was a nice to have, but that we've done what we needed to do in terms of showing our willingness to be inclusive of the Parish Youth but if that hasn't resonated then it was regrettable but it shouldn't alter our course.

4.9 There was surprise at the response to the question regarding the Ifold Settlement Boundary. 21% yes with 29% unsure. It was thought people didn't understand the question that was being asked. However, it was thought the survey response on the VDS is very clear.

4.10 Overall there were no adverse comments regarding the report. A brief discussion took place as to how to handle all the comments from the consultations. The survey manager has been asked to refer to the comments as appendices and keep them as separate files to be accessible on the Parish Council website. The comments have been sorted them in different categories of topic.

8pm MF joined the meeting.



Development Sites:

4.11 The parish housing need indicates a demand for smaller houses suitable for elderly to downsize to or for people in the 30-45 age group to buy. Some survey comments noted that elderly and young people don't go together. It was pointed out that there was a reference in the report to carers and affordable housing and suggested that the link is between the young (the carers) and elderly. Another comment from the consultations was that affordable and market housing don't go together. But it was agreed that it is only how people access the purchase of a property that is different, that they can sit side-by-side.

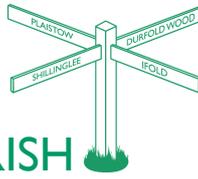
4.12 The group considered the sustainability rationale for each of the sites. The survey indicated that the Durfold Wood site comes in as the highest selected site (by adding 4 agree + 5 strongly agree together). However, the site was remote from services and facilities; and more suited to 4-5 bedroom market houses on big plots similar to those properties in adjacent Durfold Wood. Ancient Woodland was also a constraint as also acknowledged by Chichester District Council in their Site Allocation: Preferred Approach Development Plan Document (currently out for consultation). Based on sustainability criteria, the group concurred the Durfold Wood site would not be suitable to meet the existing housing need and should not to be taken forward in the Neighbourhood Plan process.

4.13 A discussion took place regarding the Foxbridge Golf Course which came forward just prior to the public consultations. It was thought that for the future, development at Foxbridge is achievable but as it still has a D2 leisure class use, the landowner will need to explore all the other leisure uses before they can move to housing or another use class and that they must prove that to Chichester District Council. It was also noted the site is in the countryside, detached from the 4 existing settlements, not contiguous with a settlement boundary and remote from services and facilities. Given those constraints, the general opinion was that development on Foxbridge would not be suitable to take forward at this time. However, we must in our neighbourhood plan acknowledge Foxbridge and make a clear statement as to what we think should happen to this large site, as it was developable.

4.14 The group then turned to the Plaistow sites, which were considered to be more sustainable. It was noted that the site that came out the highest is the Land opposite the Green but that it also had the highest number of least preferred. The group were reminded to look at site selection also as a combination of 2 sites x 6 units which opens up a wider number of options.

4.15 It was pointed out that Plaistow has a village shop, bus stop, school, Church and Pub, leisure facilities and village hall, therefore more sustainable. After a discussion it was thought that it falls back on a combination of the sites: one of the Plaistow sites and another. A majority thought the Todhurst site would be the better choice based on the sustainability criteria, that impact on Plaistow village would be lessened and that there is also space for all 10 units. It was pointed out that there is ancient woodland adjacent to Todhurst but it is a very small triangle of land, on the other side of the public footpath.

4.16 It was thought if the Land opposite the Green were chosen, housing should only be put along the road and not all over the field. Because the land goes up in elevation - therefore housing would be more visible and more impactful. The group were reminded the entire field had been identified because of the rising land and that it would be better to go further into the site, developing it on lower sections with gardens in front to lessen the impact. If this site were brought forward it would have to be very well designed but that in working with the landowner the design could be controlled. This site had the most people choosing it as their least preferred in the survey. The site is also used for village events as parking for fetes / fairs. Concern was expressed that the Land opposite the Green was not selected as the most preferred in the survey because people did not understand how that site could be carefully designed to take development.



Development Sites: /Continued...

4.17 A concern was raised that if we chose two smaller sites for 6 and 6 units would it be economic for a developer and that it may encourage developers to minimize the infrastructure.

4.18 A discussion took place regarding the narrow access to the Todhurst site and the sub-station location. The group were advised that Hyde Housing Association own a ransome strip of land that would be needed for access to the site and Chichester District Council have a covenant over it whereby access can only be taken over the land if it satisfied a housing need. If this site were brought forward we'd have to obtain confirmation that we could include that section of land to be part of the scheme. It was pointed out Todhurst is the 3rd preferred site but that response could be attributed to the issue that access to Nell Ball is narrow with parking problems. The group agreed by using the entire Todhurst site, greater than 0.8 hectare as displayed at the public consultation, the parking issue could be resolved. The site received comments during the consultations with objections mostly to do with conservation, the effect on wildlife and access issues. It was thought that the opportunity to improve parking down Nell Ball will be beneficial to the village as a whole. It was also agreed that if the whole of the site were allocated then the section nearest to Todhurst house could be designated a green area and kept naturalised with no development. The group conceded the Todhurst site would have the least impact on Plaistow village.

4.19 There was concern that developing the land opposite the Green site would change the character of Plaistow village from rural to more urban looking due to the removal of green space. It was because of that, housing all over the land opposite the green site would not be appropriate. Regardless, careful housing design would be needed and that some of the field would need to be retained for the other village need of car parking for events on the green.

4.20 It was agreed that housing design is just as important for the Todhurst site as it would be for the rest of the village. Particularly if market and affordable housing were to be put together at that site. But it was thought that because of the position of Todhurst, it would keep the price down and make it more affordable. That housing on the green would be higher in price due to it being a prime site.

4.21 A discussion took place regarding the Call for other Sites at the Public Consultations Jan-Feb 2016. There weren't many other sites suggested during the public consultations: Fields either side of Rumbolds Lane were mentioned - it was thought it was also a trust owned land. There had been a few suggestions from the consultations of moving the football field to the lower Green and putting housing on the football field. But the football fields were owned by a trust and the lower Green was not large enough. It would also require fencing and is very wet land.

4.22 A question was asked if residents then vote on the site(s) chosen at referendum. The group were reminded residents see the draft plan first at a further public consultation with the proposed sites brought forward and that any comments arising from that would be considered by the group and the plan amended before going forward to examination and then on to referendum. The consensus seemed to be the 2 Plaistow sites were appropriate but considering the impact it was suggested considering selecting a site in Ifold and one in Plaistow. The group discussed again the sustainability criteria in site selection. It was agreed the Plaistow sites seem to stand out as when looked at from a sustainability criteria they come out the highest ranked. The group then looked at selecting 2 development sites for 6 units as opposed to bringing forward one site for all 10 units.



Development Sites: /Continued...

4.23 A discussion took place regarding the aspect of windfall, which an Ifold Village Design Statement may control but Chichester District Council have in their Local Plan an unspecified figure for windfall and that there may be more pressure for further housing development within the parish as a consequence of controlling the issue of windfall within the Ifold settlement boundary.

4.24 The group were advised we can run another consultation if clarity on site selection could not be obtained and if it were thought there is that level of uncertainty. Or that we run site selection again, alongside presenting the draft plan to residents for their feedback.

4.25 A discussion took place regarding the brownfield site at Little Springfield Farm. The 2012 AirS report states that a majority of residents preferred a brownfield site over a greenfield site for housing development, which is supporting evidence. The site was not brought forward to the first sieve because the site was too small for 10 units and there had been a planning application for 3 houses, which was refused by Chichester District Council, appealed and then dismissed by the planning inspectorate due to the impact of the 3 large dwellings proposed in the scheme (3x7000 sqft houses). It was conceded that the site was better to be residential than industrial because it is opposite existing housing. The site is not too small for 6 units and if brought forward as a small development sites for 6 units then the brownfield site should be considered.

4.26 Little Springfield Farm brownfield site is 0.5 hectare and Chichester District Council identified 0.4 hectare for 10 units on the Land North of Little Springfield site (a density of 22 houses per hectare). When compared with the existing Ifold housing density (6-8 houses per hectare) this made the latter incredibly discordant. It was suggested the Ifold density is low because of the size of the houses and we could designate smaller houses (which housing need identified) of 6 units on the brownfield site. The group revisited sustainability because of the type of housing needed. The site is near to the provision for a shop in Ifold, near to the main road and a bus stop. The planning inspectorate didn't like development crammed on the site but the dismissed appeal was for a planning application of 3 units x 7000 sq.ft. homes and what the group were considering for the site were much smaller homes according to the housing need identified.

4.27 Many residents had written letters of support (with no objections) to Chichester District Council in response to the Little Springfield Farm site planning application, which can also be considered as evidence. It was pointed out that Chichester District Council themselves identified a site Land North of Little Springfield also outside the settlement boundary in their allocations document. All the sites identified are in the countryside. The survey results showed Ifold residents had chosen the site Land North of Little Springfield as their least preferred. It was necessary to review again the brownfield site as the landowner had brought it to the neighbourhood plan group for consideration and there had been a call for sites. The appeal decision notice stated the site had not been mentioned in the neighbourhood plan and that it was now considered redundant industrial land therefore brownfield. That apart from its size (too small for 10 units) the group could still have looked at it as a 6 unit site and that it doesn't stop it being now being reintroduced. It was thought the site had to be selected for 6 units with Todhurst and the Land opposite the village green; and that we have 3 sites to bring forward with a combination of the allocation across them. But that the brownfield site landowners would have to accept 6 smaller units (than in the refused planning application) if the site is brought forward. It was agreed to reintroduce the brownfield site.

ACTION: SRB to contact the landowners of Little Springfields Farm brownfield site to ask if they would be in agreement in principal for the proposal to bring forward the brownfield site for 6 units of smaller houses. **[ACTION COMPLETED]**



Development Sites: /Continued...

4.28 A discussion took place of what type of units should be suggested for the sites. It was thought based on our housing need a combination of 6 x 2-3 bedroom market priced units on the brownfield site with 6 affordable housing on the Todhurst site and with a final site of the land opposite the green for future development (the Land opposite the green site being specified as the reserve site). All residents still review and consider the site(s) brought forward during the public consultations for the draft plan. It was agreed that by selecting 2 smaller development sites for 6 units each it lessened the impact across the parish and would be far more acceptable to the community as a whole.

4.29 Based on the survey report and other evidence to-date, the group decided on the following proposed site scenarios:

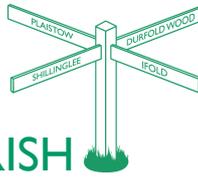
- SCENARIO A: Todhurst site: affordable 6 units + Little Springfield Farm brownfield site: small market-price housing (2-3 bed) 6 units.
- SCENARIO B: Todhurst site: affordable 3 units + market-price housing (2-3 bed) 7 units.
- SCENARIO C: Todhurst site: 6 units + Land opposite the Green market housing 6 units (combination of affordable with small 2-3 bed market-price housing).
- SCENARIO D: Land opposite the Green site [Plaistow] 6 units + Little Springfield Farm brownfield site market-price housing (2-3 bed) 6 units.
- SCENARIO E: Reserve - future site: Land opposite the Green.

4.30 It was agreed we must look at specific conditions for each of the sites in the plan. Any scheme will have to be bespoke design for the site to take into consideration any conservation area, the village vernacular, etc... Therefore controls are needed in the plan for example, specifying the green space within Plaistow village on the Land next to the green because of the footpath, retaining views and regard to the conservation area.

4.31 The group will need to work carefully on the DRAFT Plan going forward with each of the scenarios. The Todhurst site will require considerable environmental assessment and quite a lot of investigation and that it may still fail on that basis. But 6 units on that site would have less of an impact. It was agreed if we obtained the entire site it would aid flexibility in planning the development best suited for that site and area.

4.32 It was agreed that we must be very clear and give the rationale for why certain sites have not moved forward and why other sites have gone forward for the public consultation.

4.33 Many in the group expressed disappointment with CDC not consulting with the Parish Council prior to going forward with a site selection in their site allocations document even after members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group had attended a meeting with Valerie Dobson, Neighbourhood Plan Officer and Mike Allgrove (CDC Policy Manager) in early October 2015. The group were advised that people may still comment on that document independently of the Parish Council as it is out for consultation.



Appointing a Consultancy:

4.34 It was recommended the group engage a consultancy to help with writing the Draft Plan and policy writing, making sure the Plan is structured right and to move it forward at a quicker rate. The draft created by the group was being amended to follow a similar style to the CDC Local Plan with structure and phraseology. An email exchange with Action in rural Sussex (AirS) has taken place but AirS want to do a 2-3 day scoping exercise at cost in order to quote. In addition they need to see the finalized Survey Report, our evidence base inventory and draft plan to provide a quote. There was concern at the huge disparity between the grant provided by Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the amounts consultancies such as AirS charge for work. CGP mentioned SRB and she had met the Horsham District Council Neighbourhood Planning Officer who said her group may be able to assist and would follow up.

Locality Funding:

4.35 CGP advised the Locality Funding application had to be restarted because it had timed out. But the grant available had changed from £8000 to £9000, which worked in the Parish's favour. She will begin that process on behalf of the Clerk and liaise with PC. At the recent AirS workshop she and SRB had attended, representatives from DCLG had made an statement that further funding will be available for Neighbourhood Planning but didn't know if the Parish would be eligible as all details had not yet been announced.

Action: CGP to start Locality Funding application liaising with PC and informing the Parish Clerk.

Action: The Parish Clerk to monitor if DCLG announce further funding and determine our eligibility.

Review of Budget:

4.36 It was reported that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) could be a cost to the Parish. Valerie Dobson (CDC Neighbourhood Planning officer) has been contacted to clarify. The budget has been amended to include it as a potential cost - Nuthurst Parish Council (a similar parish to Plaistow & Ifold) had paid £4000. As the Parish allocation is only 10 units an SEA may not be necessary but because Todhurst has naturalized over the years and has environmental /conservation aspects we can't say definitively that we won't need one.

4.37 The original budget was just under £10,000 and a contingency of 15% had been planned but PC is concerned we will have a shortfall. Nuthurst Parish had spent £29,000 with AirS fully on-board.

Action: CGP to contact the landowners of Little Springfields Farm brownfield site to arrange a site visit by the Neighbourhood Plan Group. **[ACTION COMPLETED]**

Action: SRB to contact CDC about the scenario on our site allocation and the survey results and the site scenarios for our site allocation response. **[ACTION COMPLETED – awaiting a meeting with CDC schedule April to discuss this further]**

Next Meeting: Tuesday, 5th April at 7pm.

Action: CGP to book venue and advise. **[ACTION COMPLETED]**
The next meeting will be at Kelsey Hall, Chalk Road, Ifold

10pm The meeting closed.