
HORSTED KEYNES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Minutes

Date: Thursday 06th August 2015

Time: 8.00 p.m.

Venue: The Martindale Centre

Present: Cllr. David Colville, Cllr. Celia Vince, Cllr. Mike Kirk and Cllr. Sarah Webster

In Attendance: Beverley O'Garra (Note taker)

9 members of the public

The Meeting was opened by Cllr. Colville as follows:

- Councillors are required to make declarations of interest relating to any matter being discussed at NPSG meetings and these declarations are recorded in the minutes for the meeting.
In accordance with the HKPC Code of Conduct, 3 Members of the NPSG have applied to the Clerk for dispensation to allow them to discuss and / or vote on matters relating to potential development sites within the Parish regardless of site location.
Councillors consider that without dispensation, the work of the NPSG is unable to progress as there are only 4 members of the group.
Any dispensation granted will only apply at NPSG meetings – not at Parish Council meetings where final decisions will be made.
The PC's agreement that NPSG Councillors can apply for dispensation is recorded in the PC minutes 14/07/15 to ensure transparency and to put the matter into the public domain.
- Correspondence
At a previous NPSG meeting it was agreed that future correspondence to the NPSG would be acknowledged by the Clerk advising that comments will be noted and that any questions would be answered verbally and minuted at the next NPSG meeting.
In view of this, there are questions in two letters which need to be addressed.
 - Question relating to methodology applied when constructing 2012 / 2013 questionnaires.
Cllr. Colville responded that at the time, a steep learning curve was being followed as no NP's had been completed and little was known about process.
Therefore, no specific methodology was applied at that time. NPSG members worked out what they needed to know to progress the project and designed questions aimed at obtaining that information.
 - Question relating to the comments made by NPSG members relating to the status of the School.
Cllr. Colville has met with Headmistress, Mrs Francis and the Chair of the School Governors.
Figures and status has been agreed with them and section has been created in the draft NP as a result of this.
 - Why so many potential development sites?
NPSG members do not consider the number of sites to be an issue.
All site information will be available for review at the planned September engagement events and comments will be sought. Feedback on sites from the community will be assessed and the results presented.

The fact that the Parish is in the AONB provides a level of protection from development together with potential road concerns and drainage / sewer issues - the current systems for the Village being very close to capacity.

Q Peter Whatling asked whether all sites from both Land Calls will be presented to the Community at the September events.

A Yes. (*See note subsequent to meeting – page 4 of these minutes*)

- Question relating to calculation of population increase in the NP Objectives.
Cllr. Colville responded that population size is not the driver in deciding development needs. Initially, the official stats were used to identify potential population increase but the results did not make sense. NPSG contacted the National Statistics office and were advised that census data could not be relied upon. Alternative approach looked at all development within the community over the last 30 years.
However, review of the NP Vision, Objectives and methodology will form part of the September Workshops. People will be able to view the progress of these documents, see changes and asked to provide feedback.
Driver for the NP is Community agreement so that the NP passes referendum.
- Questions regarding IT infrastructure for the Village.
NPSG can support improvements but cannot deliver as part of the NP.
Potential Phone Mast sites have been identified but it is for Phone Companies to decide to build masts in this location.
Broadband infrastructure is ongoing (WSSC project).
- Question regarding benefits linked to increasing the population and housing.
Confirmed these are not driving the NP. (No social engineering)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is considered a bonus of development – not a driver.
- Questions relating to protection of Parish Leisure facilities including the Village Green.
Parish council will be asked to consider registering Assets of Community Value to offer a degree of protection if no other protection available.
- Question regarding reinstatement of the Post Office.
Not NPSG.
HKPOSAL are still working towards implementation of an Outreach Service hopefully in the Village Hall. Update announcement from HKPOSAL is awaited.
- Question regarding 2nd Call for Land
Discussed and minuted at last NPSG meeting – 02/07/15.
Four sites submitted under 2nd Call for Land to be assessed using existing criteria (as applied to land submitted under 1st Call for Land) and results to be published on PC website and included in September events.
- Question regarding challenge of the MSDC OAN (Objectively Assessed Need – Housing).
NPSG cannot challenge the OAN numbers but it is accepted by MSDC that the OAN for Horsted Keynes will not be achieved.
Parish is fully within the AONB and the Ashdown forest Buffer Zone – both will impact upon development.
Full justification for reduced development is being prepared by NPSG.

The meeting was then opened to members of the public to ask questions about the project / process.

In response to a number of questions raised, the NPSG advised as follows:

September Engagement Events - Village Hall booking is ongoing.
Variety of dates to be offered mid-September and more added if needed.
Varied times – mid-afternoon, late afternoon, evening and Saturdays over several dates.

Approximately 200 people will be able to attend and if events are booked up early, more dates can be added. Questionnaires will also be available at each session, in the shop and online.

Nick Schymyck:

Considers 200 contributing to the process to be a good response.

Peter Whatling

More than 300 attended January event

NPSG response:

January event was overcrowded – September events will be small groups with facilitators / note takers to ensure all have an opportunity to contribute and all views are recorded.

Peter Whatling:

Has the NPSG approached landowners of sites identified to provide detail of proposed development and address issues?

Discussion followed with a number of individual views being expressed.

NPSG response:

Until feedback is gained from the community leading to the allocation of sites, no further information is being requested from landowners.

It is important to have the “conversation” with the community first, gain a consensus / mandate on development and sites and then design policies covering housing numbers / style which will be applied by MSDC when considering planning applications over the next 16 years for the sites selected.

Any Developer wishing to build on any site agreed under the NP will be required to comply with the policies in place for that site.

General discussion about the implication of not having a Neighbourhood Plan.

If no sites are selected by the community and therefore no NP results, then MSDC can try to reject a planning application from a developer by applying national and district policies. National Planning Policy has been relaxed in favour of development as the Government wants increased house building which means that MSDC can be forced to grant planning permission if an application is taken to Appeal.

Important that the District Plan passes inspection and referendum promptly to allow MSDC to show that they hold a 5 year supply of land available for development.

Q Timeline for referendum?

A Probably early summer 2016.

Q Has process been delayed by 2nd Call for Land?

A No

Brian Oliver:

Will sites which failed assessment in January 2015 be presented at the September events / reconsidered?

NPSG response:

Where sites failed due to lack of access, the landowner may submit a planning application direct to MSDC if access has been subsequently obtained. In view of this, they may be presented / reconsidered under the NP process to ensure that NP policies agreed by the community can be applied to any development.

NPSG is also aware that the land behind St. Stephens Church has been assessed by MSDC for SHLAA purposes at the request of the landowner and believes that discussions have been held with developers. SHLAA assessment considers the site suitable for 20 dwellings and in WSCC Highways opinion, development of this site could also create adequate vehicular access to Constance Wood Field.

Mr Whatling:

NPSG meeting with Richard Speller (WSCC Highways) – comments available?

NPSG response:

Notes from the meeting are held on file and are available in the Parish Council office. Contact the Clerk.

Brian Oliver:

If sites previously rejected as having “no access”, have now gained access, will they be included in the NP?

NPSG response:

It could depend upon timing – all sites submitted under the Call for Land (x 2) will be presented at the engagement events together with the results of their assessment. If the community selects the sites during this process then they may be included and appropriate NP policies written and applied to them.

(See note subsequent to meeting – page 4 of these minutes)

Peter Whatling:

Has 2nd Call for land set a precedent for further sites to be added?

NPSG response:

No – it is not the intention to keep adding more sites.

The September events will consider sites which have been submitted under the two Calls for Land.

Ravenswood (change of use to 12 dwellings) planning application is likely to be agreed by MSDC before the NP is completed and will not be included. However it may be counted in the NP “Committed No.” i.e. count towards the overall Objectively Assessed Need for the parish.

Q When does the NP start to have an impact upon MSDC decisions?

A Weighting in favour of the NP builds from the start of the first formal consultation.

Q Do houses built in the interim (i.e. before the Plan is adopted) count towards OAN?

A Yes.

Brian Oliver:

With no further call for land it is previous sites coming forward again that is causing concern. In view of this, it is important that the Neighbourhood Plan is completed as soon as possible.

Note subsequent to this meeting:

Subsequent to the meeting, concern was expressed that the response to Peter Whatling and Brian Oliver was not necessarily clear to members of the public, In view of this, it is confirmed by the Steering Group that all sites that have been assessed as sustainable against the criteria, which were set out prior to the 1st Call For Land, will be presented at the September engagement events. This will include any site where the situation has changed since the original assessment was completed.

There being no questions on any specific item on the agenda, Cllr. Colville thanked members of the public and 6 people left the meeting.

Formal meeting continued at 8.55 p.m.

1. Apologies for absence
None
2. Declarations of interest
None
3. Minutes of previous meeting 02nd July 2015
Agreed and signed.
4. Matters arising from previous minutes not covered in agenda items
Cllr. Colville has spoken with Tom Clarke (MSDC Solicitor) re Constance Wood Field / land behind St. Stephens and has been redirected to Lynne Standing (MSDC Housing). Further discussion to take place. Noted that within the MSDC District Plan it states that Horsted Keynes is not expected to meet the needs of the wider District but to meet the local needs only (re OAN).
Correspondence – acknowledgements are being sent by the Clerk and answers to questions will be given at NPSG meetings.
NPSG meetings with local businesses – ongoing and to include the Dairy.
5. Outcome of 2nd call for land
 - a. Land behind St. Stephens.

- b. Westall House expansion.
 - c. 2 sites – Cinder Hill Lane.
- 6. Communications work group. (NP CWG)
Group re-established and consists of Cllrs. Kirk and Vince plus Nikki King.
Preparing NP P&P article for next issue.
- 7. Booklet to be circulated to all houses in the parish
NP CWG is working on production of booklet to be issued prior to engagement events.
To be delivered to all houses in the Parish at the end of August.
Cllr. Vince to provide A4 documents to Cllr. Colville and Sally Lamb (P&P Editor) has offered assistance formatting booklet from A4 documents to A5 booklet.
Distribution options – existing P&P distributors and / or NP Area Co-ordinators.
- 8. Material to support the booklet at September's engagement sessions
Documents required for public to view:
 - a. Maps - MSDC to be asked for assistance / January event maps to be reused where appropriate.
 - b. NP Vision
 - c. NP Objectives – A4 format including progression (i.e. 3 versions)
 - d. NP Policies - A4 format including progression.
 - e. Questionnaires – questions may need to be extended when booklet is finalised
 Documents required for reference (i.e. available if needed)
 - f. Sustainability Assessment – all sites
 - g. SHLAA data
 - h. District Plan
 Peter Whatling and Marjorie Fritz handed all January event display materials to NPSG.
- 9. Dates for September's engagement sessions
Selection of September dates requested from Caroline Burton (Village Hall Bookings). Response awaited
Recommend a trial run of engagement event with Councillors in early September – date to be agreed.
- 10. Business engagement
Industrial Park – 94% occupancy and any expansion will be of small units.
Generally buoyant and keen to "make a go of it".
Others remaining to be addressed:
 - a. Brickworks
 - b. Bluebell Railway
 - c. Tremains Dairy.
- 11. Agree any items which need to go on Parish Council agenda.
In response to concerns expressed by members of the public relating to loss of facilities Council to be asked to consider registration of Community Assets of Value.
Clerk explained process which allows the Community to register appropriate assets and if they come onto the open market, gives the community time to raise funds to purchase at market rate.
Understanding is that Church owned land may not be registered.
- 12. To receive and to consider reports from Steering Group members
Clerk advised that Sasha Le Marquer (previous Assistant Clerk) has been appointed to carry out NP Secretarial / admin duties. Sasha will commence work on 17th August, averaging 10 hours per month for 6 month contract.
- 13. Date of next meeting
Agreed unanimously – no public NPSG meeting in September due to public engagement events.
Next public NPSG meeting – 01/10/15, 8.00 p.m. in the Martindale Centre.