



Minutes of a meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, held remotely via Zoom on Tuesday 6 October 2020 at 6.05pm

Steering Group Members Present:

Cllr Clare Cape (CC)	Ross Henning (RH)
Cllr Ruth Lloyd (RL)	Jack Konynenburg (JK)
Cllr Nick Murry (NM - Chairman)	Steve Perry (SP)
Cllr Mary Norton (MN)	Dunstan Westbury (DW)
Cllr John Scragg (JS)	Fiona Williams (FW)

Officers Present:

Andrea Pellegram, Neighbourhood Planning Consultant (AP)
Andy Conroy, Planning Officer (AC)
Mark Smith, Chief Executive (MS)
Ann Chard, Administrative Officer - Planning (Notes)

Prior to the meeting, NM checked that everyone was able to participate.

30.	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sandie Webb and David Mott.
31.	<u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u> No declaration of interest was received.
32.	<u>PROTOCOL FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS OF THE NPSG</u> NM ran through the Protocol for this virtual meeting.
33.	<u>MINUTES</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2020 were approved as a correct record subject to being renumbered.
34.	<u>CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NM welcomed new Steering Group Member Fiona Williams (Community Infrastructure Topic Group) and also David Mott (Transport Topic Group), who had given apologies.• A photo of the NPSG zoom meeting was taken for social media communications use.

35.	<p><u>MEETING WITH WILTSHIRE PLANNERS</u></p> <p>NM, AC and AP had met with members of Wiltshire Council’s Strategic Planning Team on 17 September 2020. In terms of the Local Plan Review there will be an informal consultation in November/December which will include details on the scale of growth of Chippenham, strategic priorities and site allocations. They requested that WC share site allocation information with the SG now as this would be helpful, but unfortunately WC were not able to share this information before it had been approved by Cabinet. In terms of amending the NP boundary to include the new Parish boundary in May there are three options: 1) Regulation 14 consultation in Spring 2021 then modify the boundary afterwards: 2) modify the boundary now then go to Regulation 14 consultation in Spring: or 3) modify the boundary post-election in May and then go to Regulation 14 consultation in Summer 2021. There are risks with all options and purdah may affect whether we can go to Regulation 14 consultation in Spring. WC has been asked to advise us on the different options and their response is awaited. WC suggested that we hold one to one meetings with surrounding parishes such as Langley Burrell and Lacock as we need their agreement to amend the NP boundary.</p> <p>With regards to our NP renewable energy policy, WC are encouraging us to gather more evidence on where we consider renewable energy sites would be best located, which can then fed into their site allocation process.</p>
36.	<p><u>WALPA MEETING</u></p> <p>AC and NM attended a Wiltshire Area Localism and Planning Alliance (WALPA) meeting held on 23 September 2020. Letters had been sent out in August to MPs and WC Leader. Disappointing replies received from MPs and no response yet from WC Leader. WALPA have a meeting arranged with WC on 7 October to talk about the situation. A drop box has been set up to share documents and other parishes have shared their views on the White Paper, so we could share our views too.</p>
37.	<p><u>POLICY PLANNER</u></p> <p>AC shared the updated Policy Planner with Steering Group.</p>
38.	<p><u>POLICY TOPICS NOT TO PURSUE</u></p> <p>SG members were asked to agree which policy topics not to pursue to a policy, as set out in the Policy Topics Not to Pursue report by AP. AP explained that it was wise to formally agree which policy topics not to pursue to a policy and have that written justification as to why not. It was agreed not to pursue the following topics to a policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Urban Drainage • Commercial food waste in the town centre • Protection of existing employment sites • New employment sites • Co-working facilities • Sustainable transport to/from employment sites • Reduce through-traffic in town

The SG agreed to put a decision on hold for the following policy topics, for the following reasons:

- Green Space Standards in new housing development - AP confirmed that all work done on this topic will be utilised. WC are preparing new open space standards and the evidence collected will be checked to make sure it supports the new standards. CC suggested waiting to see what these new standards are, and if they aren't what suits us then we look to produce our own.
- Green buffers with surrounding settlements - CC was concerned that we do not leave surrounding parishes to pick up the pieces if we do not have a green buffer policy, having consulted with them at an early stage and understanding this as a major issue for them. AC and AP explained it was difficult in most instances to have a buffer policy because in a lot of cases Chippenham development extends up to its existing/new boundaries and landscape assessments are required in order to evidence the buffer as being of visual importance. AP confirmed that NP wildlife corridors policy could afford just as much protection as any green buffers in the long term. Buffer policies are hard to sustain in areas of housing growth. AP suggested that the wildlife corridors policy has the additional benefit of being a buffer. It was agreed that NM/AP/AC/CC (and whoever else wants to join) to have separate discussion on this issue off line and consider again at a future meeting if necessary.

ACTION: AC to organise separate virtual meeting on green buffers

39. **DRAFT POLICIES REVIEW**

SG members agreed in principle the following draft policies, subject to any adjustments listed:

10.1 - River Green Corridor Masterplan

AC confirmed following Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) public consultations regarding Monkton Park, the Masterplan may need to be adapted to address feedback from these sessions. With regard to making the best use of the river frontage, JK said it is unrealistic at this time and in the immediate future to expect to have cafes, restaurants, etc. and that the emphasis will be on maintaining the core of the High Street and perhaps the Bath Road site with an element of residential. The masterplan had to be flexible with regard to Emery Gate, but encouraging permeability through to Monkton Park and active frontages in any future re-development. Other comments related to making the river more accessible, e.g. a jetty.

AP suggested the need for a separate policy on infrastructure priorities and also a need to have basic design principles for the masterplan. She suggested a brainstorming meeting on Zoom on design principles with JK to lead. NM queried how we can use this to attract employment to the town centre. AC suggested adding wording to the masterplan to explain the types of uses we would like to see, such as supporting employment. AC to arrange meeting with NM/Town Centre Group and bring this policy back to SG.

10.2 - Shopfront Design

NM said this would be helpful to the PET Committee members as they are often called upon to comment on shopfront design. He asked whether this could be extended to

incorporate structures such as part of old Town bridge which is next to the Rivo Lounge. AC explained that the shopfront policy could not do this, but that the Conservation Area policy would ensure that appropriate boundary treatment was put back in place.

10.3 - Housing Design

AC suggested editing the Design Code to include thresholds for minor developments of 1-9 dwelling, major developments of 10-49 dwellings, one for anything which requires a masterplan (50+) and a separate one for above 200 dwellings. SP said that he had liaised with RH and AC and that there was a way forward, acknowledging that some of the definitions in this policy would have to be re-written in planning terms to be more specific as to what we require of developers. He also explained that the Topic Group wanted the Design Code to apply to all developments for new dwellings. The amount of parking given to individual development needs to be considered, to get away from car commuter development sites. AC asked SG members to provide some photos to illustrate good and bad housing/estate design. SP and RH to get together to look at this.

RH queried when the SG would see this policy again. AC confirmed that once he and AP had written up policies/chapters, this would come back to the SG for final sign off. AC queried what the design guide should be called as it did not apply to house extensions for example. AP suggested that some form of wording such as 'this does not apply to extensions, etc.' could be used, or that a separate design guide policy could be produced for commercial developments. AC to consider further.

ACTIONS:

- **AC/JK to come up with some design guidelines for River Green Corridor Masterplan to bring back to SG and/or have separate virtual meeting with interested SG Members on this issue**
- **AC to refine Design Code and consider further what the Design Code should apply to. Forward to RH/SP for comment**

40. **STRUCTURE OF CHIPPENHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

SG members agreed the overall structure of the Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan as recommended in the Structure of Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan report by the Planning Officer.

AP and AC to discuss further whether to include the River Masterplan and Bridge Centre site to the list of Appendices. DW suggested that the local context section should also cover the future direction/aspirations of the Town. JK suggested the use of illustrations in this section to make it more engaging to read. AC said Ice House Design could be engaged to format the document. NM suggested TG Chairs think about what photos were needed to illustrate each policy.

ACTION: TG Chairs to consider photos to illustrate each of their policies

41. **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE WHITE PAPER**

SG Members were asked to comment on the draft public consultation response to the Government's Planning For the Future White Paper, as drafted by the Planning Consultant and Planning Officer.

	<p>NM confirmed that the draft response would be presented to PET on 8 October. He said he thought the overall proposal was a retrograde step and misguided in trying to address the perceived notion that the local planning system is holding up development when really the issues are elsewhere.</p> <p>He said it would adversely impact the ability of people to influence what gets built in their neighbourhood, providing automatic outline permission for applications in designated growth zones, thereby removing people's opportunity to comment at the stage at which most people first notice something is being proposed. He disagreed with the suggestion that the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) should be removed, as this was the key opportunity for environmental protection to be built in at the plan making stage.</p> <p>AP responded that there was a need to be cautious and that the SEA often isn't used as part of the planning process but is a way of ticking boxes and is used in a way which is complex. The paper suggests doing a sustainability test but doesn't go into detail. In her opinion there are a lot of duplication of processes and so streamlining would be a good thing.</p> <p>NM asked SG members to send AC any other comments they had, in time for the PET meeting on 8 October. AP added that the NP comes out well in this document as the emphasis is on master planning of large sites, design codes, etc. and NPs are endorsed as something the government wishes to retain.</p> <p>ACTION: SG Members to send AC any comments on White Paper response before 8 October</p>
42.	<p><u>ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review outstanding Topic Group proformas/draft policies. <p>NM asked whether we could get some advice on viability testing, particularly in relation to the net zero development policy, ahead of the next meeting. AC said it would be better to wait until we have all policies together before considering viability testing, but that in the interim he would contact Locality for advice on viability testing. AP added that WC would do the work on new development sites. NM agreed that it was sensible to have the viability work commissioned in one go.</p> <p>AC confirmed the policies coming up for review at the next meeting are the War Memorial site policy, Conservation Area Character Appraisal, Incubator Units (pending more information) and Walking Routes (if possible). NM confirmed he was pursuing information on renewable energy installations. JS is writing an article for the Civic Society referring to the NP and its progress and asking them to identify buildings in the Town which could be designated as non-designated heritage assets.</p>
43.	<p><u>DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>3 November 2020, 6pm, remote meeting.</p>
	<p>The meeting finished at 7.55 pm</p>