

The first Neighbourhood Plan Focus Group meeting was held in the Methodist Hall on 3rd May 2016. It was attended by 15 Independent Assessors and 4 Steering Group Members. Tony Bones was in the Chair.

The attendees were made up of individual village residents and others representing village groups such as

Methodist Church
Local Schools
Rotary
Friends of Hartley Wintney
Preservation Society
Baptist Church
Guides/Scouts
Twinning Association

Members of the Steering Group present were Tony Bones, Steve Frazer, Chris Farrance, Mike Sisson

Tony Bones started the session by giving the background from the point when the Government introduced the Neighbourhood Plan idea to the need for local independent determination followed by a local referendum. The Plan when made will have statutory power and must be taken into account by developers.

We are following a defined process which involved a call for possible development sites followed by a rigorous assessment. The methodology for the assessment is based on the Adams Hendry matrix model adapted for our village. The actual sites under discussion have been referred to us by Hart District Council and property developers.

The NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROCESS document was distributed to the meeting and was briefly described by Tony Bones. The plan will be evidence based, that is, what the community of Hartley Wintney wants. We have built up this base from a series of presentations in the community. Currently we are in the Themes, Aims, Vision and Options part of the process prior to writing the Plan itself. Questions (Q) were from the floor, answers (A) from the SG team.

Q: Why are there so many sites?

A: Tony Bones explained that these are the sites offered by developers and Hart District in response to the call.

Q: What clout will the Plan have?

A: Has statutory power. Inspectors and developers must take note of the Plan. Some concern that Government ministers can overturn all advice (as happened at St Mary's Park) but that was prior to the Neighbourhood Plan introduction.

Q: Are other local villages producing plans?

A: Yes, and they are all at different stages of the process. independent Assessment has emerged as an important part of the process.

All local villages will have to coordinate with Hart District.

Q: Are sites for private housing?

A: Yes, mainly, but landowners are asked about alternative uses.

The SITE MAP was distributed showing the sites being assessed and the estimated capacity of houses. Tony ran through the sites with larger capacities but pointed out that the community wants sites to be less than 50 in number. The minimum number being considered is 5. Smaller sites are classed as windfall. The Plan process will assess all sites offered even if Hart District have said they will do no further assessment themselves. The number of dwellings which will have to be built has not yet been finalised and is dependent on Hart decisions. The figure given to the meeting was about 100 units.

Q: How are capacities determined?

A: Some based on Hart District density figures, some by landowners. The Steering Group team was unable to give a definitive answer and some feedback was promised to the questioner from the Preservation Society. (Post meeting Adam supplied figures which I'll send to the person)

Q: Site 52 (Pale Lane) appears to have a large capacity - has it been assessed?

A: This is part of the possible Winchfield strategic development and we are awaiting information.

Q: Will Pyestock affect our requirements?

A: Nothing has been received yet from Hart but potentially it could help our situation. However we must produce our Plan to protect the village from unwanted development.

The ASSESSMENT MATRIX was distributed. Tony pointed out that we had assessed the sites on a consistent and impartial basis and this was required also by Hart. The criteria for assessment had been determined by the village from earlier consultations and were not imposed by Hart, the Steering Group or anyone else. The grading from +3 to -3 was described. Six of the most important criteria had been weighted by doubling their assessment scores.

Q: What do we do about individuals who complain that their property could be adversely affected?

A: It was stressed that the assessment was based on criteria determined by the village and that the process had been impartial throughout.

It was pointed out to the meeting that the Neighbourhood Plan website can be found on the Parish Council website and that documents were accessible under the 'Library' heading.

The TOTALS SHEET was distributed and accepted by the meeting. There were no comments on specific sites. For information the Plan was not concerned with fine detail such as housing layout on sites.

Q: Had the assessments been changed during the Process?

A: The site assessments had been carried out by 3 subgroups. There had been moderation of some scores to ensure consistency across the sites but there were no major changes.

Q: Will the Plan determine how infrastructure will be developed?

A: Access to local services such as schools and the village centre had been assessed. This led to comments from several people who said that infrastructure is a major and important potential problem. The surgery, schools and roads will not be able to cope with large scale developments. This was noted by the Steering Group but developers would have to take care of such matters in their plans.

Q: Have we considered the availability of public transport? Buses don't always go to desired destinations.

A: We have considered accessibility to public transport (bus stops). The actual destinations is beyond the scope of the Plan.

Q: What about cycle ways? You can't cycle everywhere in the village.

A: We have looked at footpaths and cycle ways but only in relation to the assessed sites.

FEEDBACK

Tony Bones requested that those attending should provide feedback from them as individuals or from the Groups which they represent. Comments on our approach and on our assessment totals would be welcome whether favourable or not. If possible comments should be received by the end of May. We are hoping to complete the Plan towards the end of the year.

The preferred route is to use the feedback link on the Neighbourhood Plan website. Also some were unfamiliar with technology and would be writing their replies by hand. It was suggested that these replies could be taken or sent to the Parish Office.

Q: The Steering Group were complimented on the way that we had gone about the task!

A: Thank you!

The meeting closed at 8.55pm