

**Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG)  
Minutes of the 14th meeting held on 16 March 2015**

**Attendance:** Mervyn Pannett (MP) (Chair), Chris Campbell-Jones (CCJ), Richard Folkes (RF), Maureen Atkinson (MA), Barry Lake (BL), Graham Lloyd (GL) and Peter Ostli-East (POE)

**Apologies:** Peter Biggins (PB) and Steve Bucknell (SB)

(NB: Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting, there was a short discussion about the two additional SHLAA sites in the Winterbournes, namely East Farm, Winterbourne Gunner and one on the west side of the River Bourne running from Gater's Lane to Tanner's Lane. MP reminded those present that SHLAAs have no status and are tracts of land that people, not identified to us, have advised to the council that they may like to build on. In any event, it was thought that problems with flooding and access would probably make these sites unsuitable for development.

**1. Minutes of the last meeting.** The minutes of the last meeting (13th) held on 16 February, 2015 were accepted and approved with one material change; the term "County Council" was altered to "Unitary Council". (NB: "the Council" for the purposes of the minutes.)

**2. Matters Arising.**

a. NP Boundary. It was agreed that the NP would be based on the 'Parish Boundary' and that this would be briefed to the villagers at the 21 March 15 event. There is evidence that many NPSGs have recommended this boundary rather than the Settlement Boundary because of potential arguments amongst parishioners over what should constitute the latter.

b. MA had attended the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocation Development Plan meeting on 26 Feb 15 and forwarded a link to the SHLAA map for the Winterbournes to SG members. The planning department would like comments about the NP process by 31st March and there is also an opportunity to comment on the viability of the identified SHLAAs (eg flooding issues) and propose other sites parishioners (through the Parish Council) might recommend for consideration, although this could prove controversial and such sites were not for the NPSG to endorse. Parishioners could provide their comments 'on line' and they would become a 'public record' as would the answers to the questions posed by the Council.

c. The Communication Plan (CP), as far as the notice of a Village Meeting on the 21 March 2015 was concerned, had been completed by producing a poster advertising the event which was distributed throughout the villages (including High Post Golf Club) by members of the NPSG and by MA's volunteers. The Chair and members of the SG gave special thanks to MA who administrated and managed the distribution activity. POE mentioned that there may be an opportunity to relay further information to the villagers when they come to the Glebe Hall to vote in the General Election on 7 May. However, it was not clear whether this would be allowable from a legal standpoint, although Mike Hewitt (Unitary Councillor) did not see this as an issue when previously asked. MA suggested that, at the least, a board could be put up with any relevant new information for people to read in passing.

RF made the point that as we have been asked to provide views on the current SHLAAs, perhaps we should make them known to the Council. A process would be needed to garner the view of the villagers, not merely the SG. The village meeting on the 21st was an opportunity to obtain such views. MA suggested that the invitation to submit comments was made to the Parish Council (PC) and not the SG and so it was for the PC to formally respond. The NPSG has no status, as such, but acts as the facilitator for the generation of the NP which will be endorsed in a vote by the villagers and at that time the NP will enjoy legal status.

RF had in 2008/9 approached the Council about SHLAAs 90, 91 and 92, specifically questioning the number of houses, youth crime, height of any proposed estate, drainage, wild life, amenities, etc. The result was that the planning department had kept RF on their "post" list for core strategy planning updates. The point is that there already exists a list of questions that could be put to the council in response to its request for comments on the SHLAAs. MA said that it would be appreciated by the Parish Council if the SG could provide it with relevant information so that it could respond. It was agreed that comments would be sent to MA (as a Parish Council member) on 17th March. Also comments should be sought urgently from those villagers who attend the meeting on the 21st March 15, but these comments perhaps should be structured around some of the issues raised in 2008/9 by RF.

**Action: MP and MA**

The Council had produced a list of 5 questions, based on its view that they were not looking for development sites for less than 50 dwellings over the new build period to 2026. They were particularly interested in whether parishioners' agreed with this view. If parishioners agreed, then the question arose as to whether we needed a NP at all, as the Winterbournes only have to accommodate 20-40 houses in the period. The view was that a NP provided a layer of protection should the Council's view change over the next 10 years or so. There was also the matter of the Community Infrastructure levy and the advantage of a 25% levy when a NP is in place against 15% levy without one.

GL pointed out that the NP would have a three stage process; to agree a suitable number of new houses, to then state where they should be built and finally what they should look like. The NP should address these issues so that the planning department could formally take the parishioners' views into account. In answering the questions posed by the Council by 31 March 15, which was a short timescale for gathering village opinion, the NPSG would recommend to the Parish Council that the Winterbournes would not be prepared to take more than 50 (or less) new houses.

The Chair asked whether we were in a position to state which SHLAAs were not acceptable. The view was that we should state only the pros and cons for each site and invite parishioners to give their comments on the identified SHLAAs to the SG, bearing in mind the small number of new build required by the Core Strategy.

There was also the issue over the density of housing on the SHLAAs. As an example, the NP may only recommend acceptance of 20 new houses on a particular SHLAA when it could easily accommodate more with the result that the owner of the land and the developer would want to build to the maximum allowed. The fact is that the village will have to accommodate more than 20 (ie 45-50) and it is for the parishioners to decide where they are to be built (and in what style, etc). It was not the SG's place to endorse any particular SHLAA for new development, although we could comment on the suitability. In any event, at some later stage the developers would be making their own case to the planners.

RF suggested that we need parishioners' views so that the NP can provide evidence that all the issues have been aired in the Winterbournes. It is the case that the SG has provided various opportunities over the last year for parishioners' to have their say, although the response has been poor.

The situation is that by the end of the parish meeting on the 21st of March, the SG must be in a position to confirm the Parish Boundary as the basis of the NP and make the necessary application to the Council.

### **3. Presentation to Village**

The Chair confirmed that he had produced a draft of what he was planning to present at the meeting in the Glebe Hall on 21 March 15 and that SG members had been invited to comment. At the meeting parishioners would be asked for their views on the suitability, or not, of the identified SHLAAs. Obviously, the SG would have to be alert to views expressed but those who lived immediately in the vicinity of any of the SHLAAs (ie NIMBYism). The SG discussed access issues at some length.

Afternote: About 100 parishioners attended the village meeting on 21 March. They were asked to comment on the Winterbournes SHLAAs and many took the opportunity to do so. These comments, both pros and cons, were collated for each SHLAA and along with comments provided by the NPSG were sent to the Parish Council on 26 March for their appraisal and forwarding to Wiltshire Council.

MA confirmed that the Parish Council was happy to take into account those comments made by the parishioners' in their response to the questions raised by the Council.

The Chair's view was that it would be difficult to answer the five questions knowledgeably unless one were a planning practitioner. The questions are:

1. Do you agree with the methodology for identifying housing sites?  
A. Probably.
2. Are there any factors that should be considered in the methodology that have not been taken into account? A. Not sure, as one needs to be an expert in the planning space.
3. Do you agree with the options for development? If, so please state which options and why? A. Yes
4. Is there any option you don't support? If so, please state each option and why. Probably not.
5. Are there any other specific sites that we should be considering and if so what are they? A. Although the guidance advises that the NP should identify such sites, the point was made by POE that the SG is not qualified to make such recommendations nor would it want to be endorsing such sites and thereby raising potential values. The SG could possibly open itself up to a charge of misconduct by doing so, unless it was accompanied by a disclaimer of some kind. There remains some confusion as our planning officer had advised the Chair that identifying sites, including numbers of houses to be built on the sites, was to be included in the NP by the SG. The best the SG could do would be to advise the pros and cons of each potential site as identified by the parishioners. Of course, parishioners might include sites outside the Parish Boundary so we need to ensure that the Parish Boundary is the one selected for the NP.

Afternote: Responses to the specific questions on the draft methodology to be used by Wiltshire Council to develop their Development Plan Document (DPD) were sent to the Parish Council along with the SHLAA comments on 26 March.

POE offered his laptop computer for the purpose of delivering a Powerpoint presentation by the Chair at the Glebe Hall event on 21st March. MA had a projector that could be used . The Chair was content that he had written the most challenging

parts of his presentation. GL had produced comments on the draft presentation which were endorsed by the rest of the SG. It was considered paramount that parishioners be asked at the meeting to volunteer in support of the NPSG. It would help particularly if the SG could find someone to set up a Winterbournes NP website (similar to Winterslow). It would need to be someone who is prepared and committed to keep it up to date (real time) and accurate. MA had someone in mind.

The Chair did not expect the meeting at the Glebe Hall to last more than 30 minutes and as there was little time for rehearsal, the Chair said he was prepared to deliver all the presentation. Parishioners would be asked to leave questions to the end at which time they could also complete sticknotes on the SHLAAs, if they preferred.

The Chair would have a list of the help required by the NPSG, including "general admin", web design and management, architect or planning practitioners for the design statement, someone to collate the comments and names, email addresses and tel nos from those who want to stay in touch. CJ volunteered to collate the sticknotes from the meeting. It would be worth obtaining post codes as well to ensure that comments are from those who live in the parish.

Afternote: A very positive response was received to the request for help with the NP at the village meeting. 22 people volunteered their services, ranging from one offering to join the NPSG, two web designers and builders and many offering to help with research and general tasks.

When the NP is applied for and funded, it was agreed it would be useful to have the services of a NP consultant, even if it were only to point us in the right direction for the next phases of the project. In any event, MA confirmed that it was the intention of the Council to produce more detailed guidance and provide more help on the production of a NP.

The Chair would circulate to SG members the next draft of his presentation within the next couple of days for comment.

#### **4. Future Roles**

CJ - Environmental Issues

Parish Councillors on SG (suggested by the Chair) - Vision and objectives, traffic management, non-development sites, etc

POE & RF - Communications

Leaders on the topics would develop and write their own sections. The writing structure and format (eg font, paragraph numbering, etc) should be the same throughout so the compilation into one document will be seamless. MA suggested reviewing other NP plans to provide examples of good practice.

#### **5. AOB**

MA mentioned the Council event that she, GL and the Chair were attending on the 25th March at the Bourne Hill offices for a discussion session. MA hoped that the parish meeting on the 21st would assist in forming questions for the Council representatives to answer on NP issues during the 20 minutes allowed.

#### **6. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the SG will discuss the outcome of the 21st March 15 parish event and will be held at St Michael's House at 19:30 on 23 March 15.

The next regular meeting of the SG will take place at 19:30hrs on Monday, 13 April at 'Twingley', The Portway.