

Neighbourhood Plan Working Groups Terms of Reference

- 1. Introduction.** Amport Parish Council (APC, or Council) is the qualifying body for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan (NP). The NP will articulate a shared vision for the neighbourhood and will be submitted for a vote at a local referendum of the Parish's community. A Steering Group (NPSG) has been established to develop and deliver the NP. Terms of Reference (ToR) have been approved by APC¹. An NP Survey in mid-2022 established initial perspectives on the development of the NP from a significant proportion of the Parish's community. Our planning consultant has already begun work on a Character Appraisal that provides a clear understanding of the area covered by the NP and what makes it unique; this work is regularly updated by the planning consultant and a current version can be provided by Sec NPSG on request. Close coordination is required with the Spec Gps², who provide specialist advice to the NPSG and WGs, including a baseline of information and guidance on Parish-wide perspective.
- 2. Working Groups.** The NPSG ToR provide for Working Groups (WG) for each of the three main 'settlements' in the Parish: Amport village; Weyhill (parts that are in the Parish); and East Cholderton village and the 'pan handle' towards Cholderton. WGs establish the community's perspective for their area. These WGs inform the work of the NPSG and are supported by the NPSG, Spec Gps and the planning consultant.
- 3. Purpose of this document.** This document provides detail on arrangements for the WGs – purpose, ways of working, composition, reporting.
- 4. Purpose of WGs.** WGs support the development of the NP by the NPSG, by providing evidence and draft policies and options to develop the settlement.
- 5. Ways of Working.** WG scope should be guided by the feedback from the APC NP Survey³ and consider developing local perspectives for the potential scope detailed at Annex A. Early decisions on the most relevant issues and close coordination with the NPSG and Spec Gps will save nugatory effort. *Parish Online*⁴ provides important information. Our planning consultant⁵ can help with specific advice. WGs support engagement with as many in the community as possible. Community groups (e.g. church, school, scouts) could be consulted in preparing draft policies and options. The WGs will help ensure maximum local awareness and positive support for draft policies and options and the NP as it is drafted by the NPSG. Issues raised by WGs may be Parish Council-led and would be referred to Council for action by Chair NPSG.

¹ APC has a website with a Neighbourhood Plan section that contains essential details, including the NPSG ToR and the NP Survey Feedback. Link: <https://www.amportparishcouncil.org.uk/community/amport-19994/neighbourhood-plan/>

² It is anticipated that there may be supporting Spec Gps for: community/housing/heritage; education; environment/green spaces; economy/business/retail; highways/transport; and photography. WG and Spec Gp scope necessarily will overlap; chairs of the respective groups should consult where appropriate and conflicts will be resolved by NPSG or referred to APC.

³ See APC website.

⁴ Link to Parish Online: <https://parishonline.xmap.cloud/maps#map=13.657377760422976/427234/143825.5/0>
User login details are available from the Sec NPSG.

⁵ Our planning consultant at the time of writing this document is *Bluestone Planning*.

6. **Composition.** The WGs comprise: a *Chair* (a member of the NPSG and resident of that area); *community representatives* with direct interest in the development of the area concerned; and a *Secretary* to coordinate and record the actions of the WG. A quorum will comprise three voting members.

7. **Meetings.** WGs meet as frequently as the Chair feels is necessary to support the NPSG's development of the NP, ensuring that their area is fully and properly represented in the drafting of the NP.

8. **Reporting.** The WGs report directly to NPSG, through the Chair. A record of each formal meeting is to be circulated by the Secretary within 7 days of the meeting and approved at the next WG meeting. The approved record is to be provided to Sec NPSG for circulation to NPSG.

9. **Code of Conduct.** WG members are volunteers from the community and must follow a code of conduct to ensure the proper operation and appropriate execution of their purpose and objectives. These groups are ultimately responsible for the Parish community as a whole and the NP is to represent their collective expectations. The WGs operate to the Chair under the principles established in the NPSG ToR.

Signed:

Date: November 2023

Annex:

A. WG Potential Scope.

Working Group Potential Scope

1. This annex describes the potential scope of the WGs.
2. **Important views.** Identify the important view, visual receptors, characteristics of the view that make it important, the potential impact of development on the view and determine whether the impact of development on the view is significant.
3. **Potential local green spaces (LGS).** Establish whether a potential LGS meets the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) criteria, and if so, how it is valued by the local community.
4. **Locally Important Buildings or Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs).** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape can be identified in the NP because of its historical, archaeological or local significance, condition, setting and scarcity.
5. **Public rights of way (PRoW).** Identify current PRoW (footpaths, bridleways, and byways) and consider their role. In consultation with the relevant councillor on APC, assess their condition, usage and access, and threats to them. Establish whether and how: they can be protected (from development or overridden by farmers); enhanced (widen or surface footpaths, or remove obstructions from bridleways); their use increased (promote PRoW to residents and visitors, or develop new PRoW networks); or their biodiversity and environmental value enhanced.
6. **Trees and hedgerows.** Policies to prevent the removal of trees and hedgerows, plant new trees and hedgerows, improve the management of trees and hedgerows and promote awareness of the value of trees and hedgerows. This could include policies to plant trees and hedges along PRoW, or to create new wildlife habitats.
7. **Settlement Character.** Identify the most important features of the settlement's built and natural environment, assess its quality and condition and social and cultural characteristics and identifying the settlement's unique and distinctive features. This can help to protect the settlement's historic buildings and streetscapes, promote the development of new buildings that are compatible with the settlement's character, support the use of traditional building materials and construction techniques and encourage the retention of community facilities and services.
8. **Parking and traffic.** Identify where there are parking problems and whether change to parking standards for new development is required. With the Highways/Transport Spec Gp, review highways issues in your area and approaches for longer-term improvement.

9. **Habitats and Biodiversity.** Identify in your area the key habitats and biodiversity assets. Consider designated nature conservation sites, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), as well as woodlands, hedgerows, and wetlands. Establish the WG's perspective on the condition of the habitats and biodiversity assets and with the Environment Spec Gp, consider draft policies and options for improvement.

10. **Businesses.** In concert with the Business, Economy and Retail Spec Gp, consider including policies on business and retail to enhance business prospects and provide retail opportunities the community need.

11. **Services and facilities.** Consider whether there is a need for more public services (e.g. bus, library) or facilities (e.g. post office).