

Ardington and Lockinge Parish Council

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Ardington and Lockinge Parish Council

Neighbourhood Planning

Held 30th October 2023, 7:00pm at the Loyd-Lindsay Rooms

Attendees	
Hugh Roberts (HR)	Chairman
Derek Morrow (DM)	Councillor
Jo Noble (JN)	Councillor
Nicky Hancock (NH)	Councillor
Jane Humphreys (JAH)	Parish Clerk
Cheryl Soppet	VOWHDC Planning Policy Officer
Ardington & Lockinge Residents	Gary Proudfoot, Vivien Haigh, Elizabeth Drew, Bruce Winney, Jane & Nigel Baring, Rosie & John Chadwick, Mark Parry, Rory Mitchell, Carol & Paul Gibbs.

1..	Apologies John Hedgecock	Actions
2.	Requests for Dispensations, Declarations of Interest, gifts and hospitality None	
3.	<p>Presentation from Cheryl Soppet on Neighbourhood Planning followed by Q&A session</p> <p>Cheryl talked through a presentation which is available on the Parish Council's website: NH Planning Presentation</p> <p>Cheryl outlined the financial support available which for a basic plan is up to £10,000. If the council opt for the design codes route, then there is an additional £8,000 available. Design codes provide simple, physical specifications for any future development within the Neighbourhood (NH) Plan area.</p> <p>There was a discussion on the realistic timescales for the production of a NH Plan and at what point during the development of a NH Plan would it carry sufficient weight to stop any proposed development. Cheryl estimated that the drafting of a plan could take realistically 6 months, with a further 6 months to enable consultations, plus an additional 2 months after the referendum for the plan to be made. The plan would have limited weight from steps 3 (pre-submission consultation) to step 6 (examination) but within 9-10 months the plan could reach step 7 (decision to proceed to referendum) when the plan would achieve significant weight. Once the plan is made at step 8 (post referendum) it would achieve full weight. A planning officer should review the draft of a NH Plan in considering any planning applications.</p> <p>In the following discussion, attendees asked a number of questions. Would a NH Plan enable the PC to grant permission for development within specified areas? Was the PC right to be thinking of going ahead with the production of a NH Plan in the first place? Were there any alternatives, such as a community plan or action plan? Cheryl commented that planning officers are very pro the production of Design Codes, which highlight good development. Any plans produced must include the full engagement of everyone in the community, with good consultation. It is possible to apply for funding for the development of Design Codes, which would enable a consultant to be</p>	

	<p>employed. This would then become part of the evidence base. It could be the case that the only policy within the NH Plan might be Design Codes. Design Codes are similar to a character assessment which would determine what development should look like and where it can take place. The community would have more of a say on the visual appearance of any development.</p> <p>The designation of the NH Plan area was discussed, and it was suggested that it would be simplest to adhere to the existing parish boundaries as it would require additional work to deviate from these boundaries.</p> <p>The formation of a NH Plan Steering Group was discussed which would have to include at least one parish councillor plus volunteers from the community. The ideal size for a steering group was recommended to be between 6 and 12 people.</p> <p>There was a discussion about other NH plans within the local/Vale area that could be used as a template. Cheryl recommended looking at the VOWHDC website as all made NH Plans are published on the website. Cheryl also recommended looking at the Neighbourhood Plan Toolkit on the website which works through the different stages in the development of a NH Plan. This Toolkit also includes a PDF of Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy Examples which might help in the selection of appropriate policies for the A&L NH Plan.</p> <p>Cheryl confirmed that she will be the Lead Officer for the Ardington & Lockinge NH Plan. Cheryl also asked that just one person be appointed as liaison from the steering group.</p> <p>The pre-submission consultation stage was discussed which would be the point at which the plan is drafted. This would be a 6 week period which would include statutory consultees as well as local residents who would need to be kept up to date by regular communications including website updates, posters, mailings, etc. There would need to be a mechanism for accepting feedback via a questionnaire or other means. This period is referred to as Regulation 16 Consultation.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the inclusion of housing allocation in the NH Plan and a comment was made that there is no housing allocation within the parish boundaries within the Vale Local Plan 2031. There is no requirement for a NH Plan to include a housing allocation and consultees may not agree with the proposed allocation. There is a policy which could be used to suggest infill development.</p> <p>Cheryl outlined the basic steps in the development of a simple NH Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Designate area 2. Apply for funding 3. Appoint and brief a consultant to write the Design Codes <p>The basic NH Plan funding of £10,000 would probably pay for a consultant to produce the evidence base which could include a number of policies, e.g., the site assessment for a housing allocation policy.</p> <p>Cheryl cannot recommend any consultants, but she is familiar with the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bluestone Planning 2. Community First Oxfordshire 3. Oneil Homer <p>There was a comment on development within an AONB which only allows development under exceptional circumstances. There was also a comment that the development of</p>	
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	<p>30 houses would not be allowed within the current Vale Local Plan 2031. There was also a question whether the NH Plan could be amended, which is possible. The level of change would determine if the plan had to be submitted again to a referendum.</p> <p>The next step will be the formation of a NH Plan Steering Group which must include one parish councillor and should have good representation across the spectrum of residents and businesses in the parishes, including the Lockinge Estate. The steering group must be inclusive and must include a broad representation of local opinions.</p> <p>Gary Proudfoot volunteered to be involved in the NH Plan steering group. Jo Noble and Derek Morrow also volunteered to represent the parish council on the steering group.</p> <p>The PC chairman asked for other volunteers to email either himself or the Parish Clerk expressing their interest following the meeting.</p>	
4.	<p>AOB</p> <p>Jo Noble recommended Sylva Wood Centre at Long Wittenham for the production of a new noticeboard for Ardington. She is waiting for a quotation.</p> <p>Approaches to 2 potential parish councillors were proposed.</p>	