

Cricklade Neighbourhood Plan Working Party Meeting

NOTES FROM THE MEETING

Wednesday 4th March 2015 at 7pm in the Town Council Chamber

NPWP Members Present:

Councillors: Mark Clarke (MC), Bob Jones (BJ) - part, John Coole (JC)

Community Members: Tim Russell (TR), David Tetlow (DT)

1. Apologies for absence:

Received from Phil Bowley, Lesley Cowley, Ruth Szybiak, Tina Jones.

2. To approve the notes from the meeting held on 18th February 2015

Approved without amendment. A query from LC was covered in the notes.

3. To consider the Action points from the 18th February meeting

Circulation of the letter from a resident had been done.

The draft preamble to the Plan remained outstanding.

MC

A draft letter to Ray Thomas Chair of the NEW-V NP (to request an update on progress and specifically numbers of new houses being planned) had been circulated. TR had requested the letter was more specific on the question of ensuring number of new houses planned by the Cricklade and NEW-V NPS across the RMBCCA (excluding RWB town) was at least the number required by the WCS. DT said this needed to be a firm number and should not rely on ~~woolly words~~. MC agreed to put in direct question on the target number of homes being planned by NEW-V Plan and then it would be sent by CTC.

MC

BJ mentioned an application for ten homes at Latton had been withdrawn, however it was possible proposals for new homes could come forward at Latton and Marston Meysey.

A check on the percentage of affordable housing required remained outstanding.

MC

Confirmation of any standard definition of ~~strong local connection~~ remained outstanding.

MC

The following actions were carried forward to 4th March meeting:

Draft H15 required an understanding of what standards were applied to rural areas by the Institute of Lighting Engineers. BJ undertook to investigate what this meant

BJ

Draft H16 required an understanding of what ~~Secured by Design~~ meant. RS undertook to investigate.

RS

Draft H17 referenced whether the need for chimneys should be made a policy. It was noted that eco houses did not have chimneys but mock ones could be added for aesthetic reasons. MC undertook to investigate what other plans contained.

MC

Draft H20 specified a minimum garage size. MC undertook to investigate what this should be. It was noted that many existing garages do not meet the size standard quoted.

MC

NPWP members agreed to defer the deadline of 4 March to bring updates on the above issues to the meeting for review of housing policies which would be 15 April. The detail of TR's proposed policies would be discussed at the same time, so that a consolidated set of policies could be sent to Henning for review by him once.

The NP email address had been set up and was now working effectively.

There were no section drafts completed since the last meeting to be sent for review.

The action on RS to provide a skeleton document was deferred pending appointment of an administrator who could better pick up the task. MC/
Admin

LC and DT had developed a bullet point job specification which had been agreed by NPWP members and approved by TJ and so could now be publicised as a vacancy. A rate for the role remained to be agreed. It was noted that employing someone carried with it on-costs and liabilities. It was noted that the responsibilities of CTC staff were being re-allocated and it was intended the new post of Deputy Town Clerk would be filled by someone with some planning related background. It was a possibility the new appointee could take on the role. It was expected the work would continue well into 2016

JC commented it would be hard to find someone who met what appeared a demanding job specification, however it was agreed it was pointless taking on someone who could not fulfil the role and left NPWP members and/or CTC staff doing the work themselves. The work needed to be done and no NPWP members felt able to take it on. It was left with MC to discuss again with CTC employees whether any felt able to take on the defined role and if not to agree rates for publicising the role externally. MC had confirmed the NPWP had permission to request CTC appoint contractors without referring back to CTC. MC

The action to check the completeness of the Communication File remained outstanding. MC

JC had provided RS a HealthWatch Wiltshire contact.

JC was still to prepare a draft policy for equestrian land use for consideration, possibly referencing a similar policy in the existing Cotswold District Council Plan. JC

JC was still to ask Flood Wardens if any would be interested in joining the NPWP. JC

The Second Public Consultation (Housing) Report (SPCR) had been completed and published in hard copy and on the NP and CTC websites. MC would ask for it to be publicised on the CTC Facebook page. It had been mentioned in the Chronicle. MC

MC had sent Alison Eardley (AEC) the SPCR and noted all Focus Group notes were available on the NP website. DT mentioned a summarising paper from the Open Space Focus Group work that had not yet been published. It was agreed this would now be published on the website for completeness. It was thought that no similar paper had emerged from Housing (hence the SPCR) or Business/Transport Group. MC would email Christ Ball to confirm there was no Business/Transport paper. DT
MC

The meeting date of 1 April had been agreed with AEC but the time had yet to be confirmed. LC

The action on AEC to prepare a paper on vision, objectives and policy opportunities for circulation prior to a meeting with her remained outstanding and LC would ask AEC to send so that NPWP members had time to consider it before the 1 April meeting with her. LC

TR had attended the workshop concerned with the ongoing activity of the settlement boundaries review and had circulated comprehensive notes. Hardcopy slides were passed to MC for the NP file. TR was thanked for his work.

The Extra Care group had been asked to ensure clarity in questions e.g. to separate where bungalows were allied with extra care (Q10c).

[BJ left the meeting]

The action on PB to find out how Thames Water calculated its fee for studies on water and waste system capacities remained outstanding.

PB

4. To consider the second draft of the HGV Report by TR as circulated

There were no further comments on the circulated report. TR was congratulated on an excellent contribution.

MC would meet Alison Fisher at 10am on Friday 6th March to agree the map(s) that should be included. This would show where the referenced roads were in relation to Cricklade. The meeting was open to all who wished to attend.

It was noted that the map style and colour scheme was important as this could set a precedent for all similar maps included in the final Plan that went out to referendum. A draft would be provided to the NPWP for approval prior to it being finalised.

It was agreed that WC would be sent (via the Link Officer) a copy of the report, minus maps, for approval on content. WC should be told the document would be part of the NP for Cricklade and therefore a formal planning document. Approval would be deemed to have been given if no reply were received before the end of March.

Some concern was expressed that the document included reference to the potential of including High Street North to HGV traffic. It was noted this had not been formally considered or minuted at CTC for many years; however it remained a topic of conversation amongst some residents and had been raised during consultation. It was noted that the document concluded this could not be considered under the remit of a NP and therefore no amendment was necessary.

5. Working with Alison Eardley Consulting (AEC)

Nothing to report.

6. To consider a response to the Wiltshire Council Settlement Boundary DPD Consultation

TRs report on the meeting and five associated documents had been circulated to NPWP members.

The item was on CTC PCT agenda for 9th March with a recommendation to delegate the production of a response to the NPWP, for consideration by PCT on 30th March, the day before the consultation closed (31st March). It was noted that %a formal+ meant there was less than six weeks allowed for a response, however there were nine specific questions to which answers were requested.

As the NPWP would not have any meetings at which the questions could be considered it was decided to attempt to agree responses to questions immediately and refine them through email correspondence.

- 1) Do you agree with the approach to identifying the potential 'Areas of Search' where new housing sites could be identified?

The %Area of Search+in respect of Cricklade was defined by WC as the RWBCCA excluding RWB town (%A Remainder+). It was noted that Cricklade was one of only two Local Service Centres (Market Lavington being the other) that did not have its own housing number allocation. After discussion NPWP members decided they agreed with the definition of the search area as this matched the WCS level of disaggregation for housing numbers and therefore the question did not require any further comment.

- 2) In particular, we would be interested in whether you agree that we do not look for sites in areas of search that require less than approximately 50 dwellings to be provided over the remainder of the Plan period to 2026?

It was suggested that as the CA Remainder required 113 dwellings there was a need to identify sites and the only alternative response was to suggest the hurdle should be raised from 50 to above 113. This did not seem credible therefore no comment was appropriate.

It was noted that Chippenham did not appear because it was a separate process, and e.g. Calne and RWB did not appear because it had already met its target.

- 3) Whether the Plan should identify sites for growth within all, some or none of the Large Villages identified in Table 1 or if not, what mechanism should be used to identify sites in these settlements?

It was noted that maps of SHLAA sites and constraints were provided for Large Villages (such as Purton and Lyneham) but no further site selection had to date been performed. This appeared inconsistent as Purton was a similar size to Cricklade and Lyneham not much smaller, notwithstanding the settlement hierarchy. Therefore the exercise should be done for all three of these settlements, or none, otherwise this was inconsistent with the Area of Search approach proposed and answered in Q1.

There was discussion around whether the exercise would be performed for e.g. Amesbury CA Remainder, where 184 homes were required across 5 villages. As this meant less than 50 homes per village, would this fail the benchmark hurdle of 50 in Q2? It was felt this was not the case, as the hurdle of 50 applied to the total Area of Search.

There was debate over whether site selection in Purton or Lyneham would affect Cricklade: if sites were identified in Large Villages, would this change the number of sites identified in Cricklade? It was concluded that this should be true, unless there was an explicit split of the target of 113 between Cricklade and the rest of the CA Remainder. Without the exercise being performed across the whole CA Remainder there would be no means of comparing the suitability of a SHLAA site in Purton or Lyneham with one in Cricklade.

It was noted that if no sites at Large Villages were identified via this DPD process then WC were seeking responses on what an alternative mechanism should be (which could be relying on windfall sites). It was noted that WC would need to undertake a significant amount of additional work if Large Villages were included in the existing process. It was questioned whether this was reasonable for what was incrementally a small number above the hurdle of 50 where no work was being performed.

There was a question whether the lack of site identification would disadvantage a settlement in terms of the type of housing that came forward. It was concluded that a NP could define the type of housing on any site and so this was not necessarily true. It was noted that the NEW-V NP could be site specific and/or could respond requesting WC did site selection in Large Villages.

NPWP members concluded that it was necessary to perform the same process on Large Villages and Local Service Centres in Areas of Search where there was one target spread across the different types of settlement. It was noted this need apply in only two Areas of Search (Devizes CA remainder including Market Lavington and Cricklade; CA Remainder) so not be too onerous a request on WC. This equality of treatment was implied by not splitting the housing target between the Local Service Centre and the remainder of its CA; if a different treatment was intended then the target should have been split.

- 4) Are there any other factors that should be used to inform the identification of Areas of Search or the level of growth to be provided?

NPWP members had no comments to make to this question.

- 5) Do you agree with the methodology for identifying housing sites?

A view was expressed that the proposed methodology was incomplete as it did not take into account where a NP was in the process of being prepared and had identified additional site selection criteria through a public consultation process. It was noted that Freshford and Limpley Stoke had prepared a NP which had passed inspection was not site specific albeit the size of population in the NP Area was relatively small, and therefore these communities would not be captured within the existing DPD site selection process.

It was felt it was a very important principle to establish that any WC site selection process for a settlement should take into account the expressed wishes of its community established as part of an NP process.

Concerns were expressed about the application of the methodology but it was felt these should be included in answer to Q7.

[See also discussion in Q9 which should more appropriately be included here.]

- 6) Are there any other factors that should be considered in the methodology that have not been taken into account?

MC

NPWP members felt strongly that the criteria Cricklade put forward for its NP Area resulting from public consultation should be taken into account and WC should be asked to demonstrate how it had taken these on board in its process. There was a need for the NPWP to know now if its criteria were in any way not appropriate or unsatisfactory as there was then opportunity to do the work to amend them. It was felt it was completely unacceptable to ignore such criteria as this totally undermined the NP process.

There was a specific request that Stage 3 of the methodology needed to define what mode of transport and (if appropriate) time of day was used to determine the travel time in minutes (p8). Should this be assumed to be walking? This may be clearer if the request to see the workings for sites in Cricklade were obtained.

It was noted that WC said it was meeting with developers to discuss the criteria and that may be expected to result in requested changes to WC criteria. However NPWP members felt it was not relevant to be commenting in detail on WC criteria when it had developed its own.

7) Do you agree with the options for development? If so, please state which options and why? It was felt that the methodology consisted of broad statements and there was insufficient explanation of how this had actually been applied to obtain specific sites. NP members felt it would be fruitless and a waste of time trying to replicate the calculations that derived the site selection in isolation of knowing what had been done by WC. The NPWP needed to see the detailed workings to understand how decisions had been reached, as this would help the NPWP learn if nothing else. It appeared the selection process had not taken account of the criteria sent to WC by the NPWP as it had promised (noting though that the methodology did not say WC would include these).

The only answer the NPWP could give was therefore no as it had no basis to say anything else. There was particular concern that one SHLAA site had been excluded despite having a good degree of local support. There was further concern that if the detailed calculations were not obtained in advance of the consultation closing then the NPWP would not be able to properly frame its response. The lack of WC support during meetings was critical.

It was suggested the NPWP should try to put forward its own specific sites and seek WC to challenge this site selection and to do this it needed the calculations of WC urgently. This could involve someone going to the WC office and seeking a photocopy of the calculations! MC was therefore asked to email Henning to ask for the calculations the next day. If this were not forthcoming then the only option would be for NPWP members to either attempt their own calculation using WC criteria or to further refine its own criteria to enable them to be applied. It was identified there may be two issues: the first was that the Cricklade NPWP criteria appeared to have been completely ignored and the second was that the NPWP may disagree with the application by WC of its own criteria. It was noted that sites which had been refused for development and then opposed at appeal by WC were now coming forward as sites suitable for development!

The question of the difference between Refined Option 1 and Refined Option 2 was that they were seen by WC as alternatives. This had been stated at the workshop attended by TR but was not stated anywhere in the written documentation. It was felt this made no sense.

MC

It was commented that already developed sites were still being shown as SHLAA sites and this had not been updated despite previous comment.

The conclusion was that the NPWP could not answer the question without further information.

- 8) Is there any option you don't support? If so, please state which option and why?

It followed from the conclusion to Q7 that the answer was the same: not possible to answer.

9) Are there any other specific sites that we should be considering and if so what are they? It was felt that the existing SHLAA sites provided sufficient options for selection. The comment was made that considering whole SHLAA sites in their entirety may not be appropriate. It was noted that an outline application for the part of site 696 (Stones Farm) inside the existing settlement boundary was coming in front of the CTC PCT committee on Monday 9th March. It was possible that the PCT may support this application even though it may not support an application covering the whole site. It was felt as a consequence there was a failure in the methodology in not splitting SHLAA sites into two where they crossed a settlement boundary, and this should be a rider as a principle to be applied in answer to Q5. NPWP members recollected the developer of site 696 had been to the NPWP and stated it was not all of nothing+and development of only part of the site would be considered. As this had been expressed at a public meeting it was public domain information that could be used in evidence.

It was noted specifically that the proximity of Cricklade to an expanding Swindon was not a criteria apparently considered by WC but was a critical component of the NPWP criteria.

MC noted that two representations in response to consultation had already been made by private individuals (in relation to Trowbridge) and therefore this option was open to others.

It was agreed that time was of the essence in progressing a response to WC and it was necessary to receive the calculations as soon as possible. MC would circulate on receipt.

7. Updates

a. Campus Activity

There was no update in the absence of RS. It was noted that the planning application for the Stones Lane Leisure Centre site was coming to PCT on Monday 9th March.

b. Extra Care Facility/Nursing Home

Nothing to report.

c. Culverhay Steering Group

MC had seen now the plans but they were not yet placed in the public domain. He noted there was a public consultation planned on 15th April at the Town Hall from 2pm-7pm to which all were invited. The number of additional dwellings was still not explicit but appeared to remain at 40-50. WC planners had given a more positive response to Greensquare on the new plans but there was still no response from Thames Water and this was critical to ensure the economics of the scheme remained viable. It was clear that Greensquare were taking into account comments from residents in adjusting the plans and this was welcomed.

d. Developer Activity

There was nothing relevant to report.

8. Items for Recommendation to Planning Committee

The SPCR was being sent to PCT to note. It was expected PCT would delegate the task of framing a response to the Housing Site Allocations DPD consultation to the NPWP.

9. Any Other Business

a. Link Officer

MC had received a telephone call from Georgina Clampitt-Dix of WC who was the manager of Henning Totz regarding the location of the Link Officer being so remote from Cricklade. There are now about 50 NPs active across Wiltshire, and cannot support any now in the way they would like, therefore there was no possibility of a replacement.

MC

It was suggested that the group should reinvestigate the option of a telephone connection for Henning to participate in the meetings. There was concern expressed that other groups were continuing to get more personal commitment than Cricklade, and it was noted that WC were getting funding because Cricklade was in an NP process. It was concluded that it would only be reasonable asking Henning specific questions such as whether a particular policy would meet legislation etc. but it would be inefficient for him to sit through all NPWP meetings. It could not be assumed that all WC officers were on top of the detail of all of the WCS to answer all questions confidently in real time.

MC was told of surgeries which were suggested to be sessions where general NP help could be sought. TR said he understood these sessions were specifically to answer questions on the Site Allocations DPD. It was noted that the dates of 25th and 26th March in Salisbury and Trowbridge were unacceptably close to the end date of the consultation period and yet again in locations that were inconvenient to attend. The calculations requested needed to be provided on paper so they could be circulated and properly analysed. MC agreed to attend one in the absence of any other available volunteer and if this was the only way that the NPWP could get the information it needed.

10. Dates of Working Party Meetings

Monday 16 th March	7pm (Workshop on Traffic Policies)
Wednesday 1 st April	11am-3pm (Workshop with Alison Eardley)
Wednesday 15 th April	7pm (Finalisation of draft Housing policies)
Wednesday 6 th May	7pm
Wednesday 27 th May	7pm

it was agreed in general the NPWP should try to meet every 2 weeks.

The meeting closed at 9pm.