

Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (HNP)

Meeting of the Steering Group

7.00pm Tuesday 21st January 2025 Harbertonford Village Hall

Steering Group Members: Alex Crowe, Francesca Smith, Guy Soulsby, Jono Stirrup, Anne Watson.

Minute Secretary/Parish Clerk: Cat Radford

Apologies: Douglas Hambly, Sally Lougher

Not in attendance: Chris Bowley

Public: 10

Public Session

It was agreed to elect the Chair before the Public Session commenced.

- A member of the public (MoP) commented that he had emailed a proposal to Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (HNPSG) members to consider and asked if they had any questions. It was noted that as the matter was not on the agenda, no decisions could be made but there was some discussion of the contents. It was summarised that 'Project Black Swan' proposed that, in light of uncertainty surrounding local government arrangements following the publication of the Government's English Devolution White Paper, the Steering Group produce a short version of the Neighbourhood Plan that could be held in reserve ready for rapid submission at any time, for example, if South Hams District Council were to cease to exist.
- The District Councillor (D.Cllr) was invited to speak and commented that there are lot of opinions about the impact of the White Paper, but no-one knows with certainty what will happen, nor how long it will take for any potential changes to the structure of Local Government to come in effect, some suggest it could take two or three years. Having consulted South Hams District Council (SHDC) Planning Officers, the view is that Devolution will not have significant impact on the Neighbourhood Planning process. The recent changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will likely have greater effect. When asked about the impact of these changes of circumstances had on the Joint Local Plan (JLP) the D.Cllr commented that the JLP is technically out of date under new NPPF requirements because it does not demonstrate a five-year housing supply, but the vast majority of the JLP will remain relevant. Noting reference made to allocation of land at Winsland House for development, the D.Cllr commented that the JLP is clear that indicative housing targets are specific to the sustainable villages. Pushing development to the peripheries of the parish is why allocation of this site is not in accord with the JLP, a matter which the HNPSG has been advised on by the Local Authority before. When asked if the indicative targets of 20 homes for Harberton and 30 for Harbertonford are out of date or if they would change, the D.Cllr commented that he has been told that they are not out of date. The word 'indicative' was emphasised. An HNPSG member raised a concern that some of the emailed proposal reiterated a number of factual inaccuracies and misunderstandings about planning policies that have been addressed and put right through HNP meetings and public consultations, yet they keep coming back. The key example is that there is a housing target of 50 for the parish, and therefore there might be a shortfall if there isn't 30 for Harbertonford. This isn't correct. The indicative targets are 20 homes for Harberton, 30 for Harbertonford and if this is not met, no further sites need to be found. It was commented that the HNPSG perhaps needs to reflect on how to make some of these matters clearer. In reply the MoP referred to South Hams District Council calling a housing crisis and there being an opportunity to make references within the Neighbourhood Plan to bring sites forward that could address this. During discussion an HNPSG member commented that they were not sure of the value of producing a shorter version of the plan as proposed, as in their view that the plan is close to complete, subject to a few outstanding matters, including flooding and site selection.
- A MoP addressed the meeting to ask the HNPSG why it wishes to pursue the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. They disagreed that the plan was close to completion, commenting that it is difficult to read and should be made more accessible to residents ahead of a referendum vote. The MoP commented that the Site Options Assessment was flawed and should be reviewed. They were of the opinion that no sites in Harberton and Harbertonford should be allocated but allocate the site at Winsland House as an alternative. The MoP commented that the Plan should go back to consultation. The Chair responded that the HNPSG was due to give an update on the discussions with AECOM on the planned review of the Site Options Assessment within the meeting [item 8]. It was also commented that in December a meeting was held with new committee members to review the draft plan, at which point accessibility was discussed and it has been proposed that each chapter should have a short precis at the beginning. To be discussed under item 9.
- The Chair closed the public meeting summarising that we find the constraints frustrating as well as the public but that there are restrictions in the JLP and, whilst the site at Winsland House is next to a settlement, that settlement is Totnes. The HNPSG may wish to point out the lack of logic in not enabling a site that would bring forward housing to address the housing crisis.

Agenda

1. **Apologies** were received as above.

RESOLVED: to accept reasons for apologies as given.

2. **Steering Group Membership** No resignations and no new members.

3. **Election of Steering Group Chair**

RESOLVED: Jono Stirrup was elected as Chair of Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

4. **Declaration of Interests**

4.1. Register of Interests: Steering group members were reminded of the need to update their register of interests if they have changed.

4.2. To declare any interests no interests were declared on items on the agenda.

5. **Minutes** Consider approval of the following minutes:

Minutes of the meeting of the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 17th December 2024 It was noted that the minutes recorded one member as being both present and having given apologies, when only the latter was correct.

RESOLVED: Accept the minutes as an accurate record, on making one minor amendment.

6. **Update on actions from the meeting of 17th December 2024**

Ref	Action/Task	Owner	Progress
20241014 6.2	Bring a revised draft of the Parish Profile Annex to a meeting of the HNPSG for consideration.	Francesca	Work on the Parish Profile Annex is ongoing. AGREED: Rather than bringing the draft back to the full committee separately, the new Annex should be forwarded to Alex for inclusion within the Reg 14 draft that will be presented to the committee in full, once complete.
20241014 6.2 20241021 5	Identify an approach and make a recommendation to the committee on the creation of a list of non-designated heritage assets for inclusion in the Heritage Chapter.	Jono	In process, there has been engagement with the History Society.
20241014 6.2	Create desired footpaths map (transport chapter) <i>Creation of this illustration/figure is connected to the task below.</i>	Guy	Complete AGREED: This should be forwarded to Alex for inclusion in the Reg 14 Draft. It was noted for interest that the Parish Council has agreed to discuss a proposal to create a new footway at Brockhills Cross at its February 2025 meeting. The Clerk will forward the proposal to Guy. It was commented that the Transport chapter makes a reference to this matter with evidence as to initiatives that public want.
20241014 6.2	Pursue Harberton footpath and bus stop with DCC See above.	Guy	Reported as complete. To forward to Alex.

20241014 6.2	Create map of bus stops and safe crossing for use in the Transport chapter, possibly also places for pavement improvement in Harbertonford.	Guy	It was reported that the action was completed. AGREED: This should be forwarded to Alex for inclusion in the Reg 14 Draft.
20241021 6.1 20241217	HNPSG members to re-read the 2023 Site Options Assessment and compile any questions, comments or notes on factual accuracy and send to Cat for them to be compiled. Cat to chase this giving a deadline of 11am on 7 th January 2025 for any further comments to be forwarded.	ALL	COMPLETED. Email to Steering Group sent. Additional comments received from Anne Watson. Cat compiled all materials and sent to AECOM.
20241021 6.2 20241119 8	Circulate notice of publication of the Summary of Housing Consultation Responses and Summary of Housing Consultation Events to HNP mailing list (including those people that had completed the survey and provided their email address to be kept in touch) via MailChimp and Harberton Village Newsletter.	Alex	COMPLETED Email circulated by Mailchimp before Christmas. It was reported that a couple of emails had been received in reply, mostly thanking the Steering Group, one email was received from a previous Steering Group member with some advice, which will be forwarded to all members for interest.
20241217 9	Write to AECOM to provide a response to options given on progression of the SEA.	Cat/Clerk	COMPLETED An update from AECOM has been received suggesting an approach that a 'Technical Note' delivered by end Feb 2025 to outline the next steps for the SEA, and a request made to Locality to deliver the rest of the SEA beyond February 2025.

7. **2025/26 Budget** It was reported that the Parish Council's 2025/26 budget has replenished the Neighbourhood Plan reserve so that £1500 is available to spend to meet running costs and support consultation. A new 'Neighbourhood Plan Salary overtime' line has been created, budgeting £1000 to support the Clerk's overtime. The HNPSG can apply for funding from Locality to support any further costs.

RESOLVED: To note for information.

8. **Site Options Assessment Review** *Update on meeting with AECOM consultants.*

It was reported that Alex, Francesca, Jono, Anne and Cat had attended a meeting with AECOM's Technical Director for Planning. Comments received from the Steering Group about the 2023 Site Options Assessment (SOA) document had been compiled and sent to AECOM in advance of the meeting.

The Chair commented that it had been a positive meeting and AECOM was taking comments made by HNPSG about discrepancies in the report on board.

It was agreed that the main output of the technical support would be a reviewed and updated Site Options Assessment report, as evidence to support site selections in the Neighbourhood Plan.

HNPSG members asked AECOM to be clear about why decisions had been made, and to ensure that criteria used to reach these decisions were applied consistently.

Flooding was noted as a key issue, and during the meeting there was some discussion about development in flood zones 1-3 and flood mitigation. Members raised queries on whether site topography was taken into account when considering flooding risks, and when taking a 'sequential approach' to development applies. Members reiterated written comments that the SOA report should reflect updates to policy on flooding, and to ensure the way that flooding is referred to within reports is consistent.

AECOM will investigate how the previous site visit was conducted.

In light of recent comments on the potential impact of the Government's English Devolution White Paper, AECOM were asked for the Site Options Assessment to be 'future proof'.

The HNPSG requested to have the opportunity to meet again once the updated report has been concluded, to it had the opportunity to ask questions, or challenge on any un-concluded. AECOM agreed that this was a reasonable request.

It is expected that AECOM will now undertake a more detailed review of the questions raised by the HNPSG and having done so, summarise what had been discussed at the meeting and next steps by email. AECOM did not commit to complete the work ahead of the next HNPSG meeting but hoped to complete by end of February 2025.

RESOLVED: To note for information.

9. Outcomes of Neighbourhood Plan review meeting held on 9th December 2024

Consideration of following key topics:*

- a) General Approach to flooding in the Neighbourhood Plan
- b) Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan policy on flooding
- c) Other (non flood related) points

There was not sufficient time available to discuss this matter fully.

RESOLVED: Postpone discussion of this matter to the next meeting.

10. Housing Needs Assessment *To propose dates for an inception call with AECOM team*

RESOLVED: Alex and Cat to meet with AECOM at 2pm on 31st January to initiate the technical support package.

[-] AOB

Site Visit at Ford Farm

Arrangements were agreed for HNPSG members to attend a site meeting at Ford Farm on 2nd February 2025. It was commented by the representative of the landowner that the previous minutes had noted that individuals were willing to waive personal liability for any accident or injury on scaling the gate if that was of concern to the landowner. It was made clear that the landowner cannot accept any liability on the land, and that this was not limited to scaling the gate.

11. Summary of actions before next meeting *This summary includes all outstanding actions.*

Ref	Action/Task	Owner
240715 8	Send the email as drafted by Alex to the green space landowners. (Using a list of the sites in the draft chapter to identify the landowners).	Clerk/Cat
20241014 6.2	Prepare note to PC (and for AECOM for SEA): proposing housing allocation policy & draft housing chapter. NB this can only be actioned once housing allocations have been made.	Alex
20241014 6.2 Updated 20250121 6	Update draft Neighbourhood Plan <i>to include Parish Council comments on energy chapter, consultation responses re Local Green Spaces and Views, also add references to consultation throughout document as necessary (re roads parking flooding nature etc). Also work in other stakeholder comments outstanding (including District Council officers and comments from the District Councillor, John McKay), comments from the meeting with new committee members, held on 9th December 2024 and newly drafted sections including: Parish Profile Annex, desired footpaths map, maps of bus stop and safe crossing.</i>	Alex
20241014 6.2 Updated 20250121	Bring a revised draft of the Parish Profile Annex to a meeting of the HNPSG for consideration. Produce a revised draft of the Parish Profile Annex and forward to Alex for inclusion within the Reg 14 draft that will be presented to the committee in full,	Francesca/ Alex

6	once complete.	
20241014 6.2 20241021 5	Identify an approach and make a recommendation to the committee on the creation of a list of non-designated heritage assets for inclusion in the Heritage Chapter.	Jono
20241014 6.2	Pursue Harberton footpath and bus stop with DCC.	Guy
20241014 6.2	Get Foreword from the D.Cllr John McKay <i>ask the D.Cllr. asking to attend a meeting to discuss approach and asking him to follow through and produce a foreword. Agreed to defer chasing this until after the work with AECOM has been concluded.</i>	Alex, Jono
20241014 6.2	Get selection of images to insert into the plan. <i>This would include identifying 3-4 good, positive, relevant images for each chapter to break up and/or illustrate the narrative text. This would include chasing the request to AECOM to use images as included in the Design Code, and reviewing the images provided by Peter Cogley.</i>	Guy
20241014 6.2	Write Consultation Statement <i>This is an annex on "how this NP was created"</i> and Basic Conditions Statement <i>A requirement of all NPs. It was noted that there will be examples of approaches to these statements available from adopted NPs.</i> To be completed once the Regulation 14 consultation is completed	Anne
20241014 6.2	Tidy up evidence base folder and create index <i>It was noted that material exists on the website and Alex has been keeping a folder, but this needs to be organised and properly indexed.</i>	Sally, following briefing from Alex
20241014 6.2	Identify and commission copyeditor and designer for final form of doc <i>It was noted that there is the possibility of using the in-house team at South Hams District Council, but this will require a budget.</i>	[Unallocated until relevant]
20241014 6.2	Checklist of final editing tasks incl <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add hyperlinks to references in text • Check permissions of people in photos (eg SHV photo currently used in Env chapter) Check all refs to NPPF - NPPF para numbers have changed in 2024 update.	[Unallocated until relevant]

12. **Date and venue of next meeting** 7pm Tuesday 18th February 2025, Harberton Parish Hall

Meeting closed at 20:30