

## Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (HNP)

### Meeting of the Steering Group

7.00pm Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025 Harberton Parish Hall

Harberton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (HNPSG) Members: Francesca Smith, Guy Soulsby,

Jono Stirrup, Anne Watson

Minute Secretary/Parish Clerk: Cat Radford

Apologies: None

Members of the public: 5

### Public Session

- i) A Member of the Public (MoP) asked the committee to make a strong and robust response to the letter due for discussion under item 8, taking exception to suggestions of impartiality of Steering Group membership and to comment that in their view, it is not appropriate for developers to petition the Steering Group on contents of an independent report. The HNPSG was asked that no developer is permitted to present at the upcoming consultation.
- ii) Other MoPs endorsed what had been said and commented that they also have been uncomfortable about developers being part of the process.
- iii) A Land Promoter representing owners of a site in the HNP queried why the HNPSG do not want landowners to be part of the re-consultation process, commented that in the past they have been invited to be part of the consultation. The HNPSG Chair commented that prior involvement was not driven by policy. The previous steering group decided to make that decision. It was commented that it was intended to make it clear during re-consultation why the Ford Farm site has changed from Green to Amber. The Land Promoter requested that they had sight of the materials to ensure that they are accurate.
- iv) The Land Promoter queries whether responses from statutory consultees be included in the consultation. Comments were made that Neighbourhood Planning supports development of strategic policies and is not focused on specific planning applications.

### Agenda

1. **Apologies** There were none.
2. **Steering Group Membership** There were no resignations from the committee no new members were elected.
3. **Declaration of Interests**
  - 3.1. Register of Interests: Steering group members are reminded of the need to update their register of interests if they have changed.
  - 3.2. To declare any interests (nature and scope) on items on the agenda
4. **Minutes** *Consider approval of the following minutes:*  
Minutes of the meeting of the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**RESOLVED:** To sign the minutes as an accurate record.

5. **Update on actions from meetings** The following progress on actions was noted:

Ref	Action/Task	Owner	Progress
20250617 6	Circulate example Terms of Reference documents to members.  Read and make comments on this before the next meeting of the Parish Council.	<b>The Clerk (Cat)</b>  <b>ALL</b>	COMPLETED
20250617 7	To provide <b>Anne</b> with feedback on the Workstream document ahead of the next meeting.	<b>ALL</b>	No comments were received.
20250617 9	Forward to <b>Anne</b> the following documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All the Draft Chapter Response Templates that were shared with the Parish Council, as these lay out each of the chapter policies against a series of objectives.</li></ul>	<b>The Clerk (Cat)</b>	COMPLETED

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The draft plan dated 2020, which included footnotes that referenced Local Plan and NPPF policies.</li> <li>A 2024 draft of the plan on which South Hams District Council Officers made comments.</li> </ul>		
202506179	To continue working through material to support work on the Basic Conditions Statement.	Anne	<p>IN PROCESS UPDATE The draft table of policies and objectives have been updated to reflect receipt of: email threads between SHDC and Alex re policies; previous drafts with embedded citations; latest draft of NP. Having also clarified with Alex via email the distinction between policies and objectives feels equipped to start tackling each policy now.</p> <p>The HNPSG will need to consider the ownership of the draft report.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Jono</b> to discuss this with Alex.</p>

6. **Steering Group Terms of Reference** A proposed revised Terms of Reference had been produced by the Clerk in liaison with members and Working Group volunteers. The Parish Council had been invited to comment, delegating the matter back to the HNPSG.

**RESOLVED:** To adopt the revised terms of reference.

7. **Update on changes to support for Neighbourhood Planning** *Receive update on change in personnel at South Hams District Council, and the Government's decision to halt funding for Neighbourhood Planning following the recent spending review*

Members were informed that:

- as a result of the Spending Review, the Government has called a halt on grant funding for Neighbourhood Planning groups, and as such there is no further funding for new grants or technical support. The Neighbourhood Planning Officer has commented that apparently the Government still sees value in neighbourhood planning and would encourage it, but the withdrawal of funding will be an impediment to this. SHDC Officers are seeking further information.
- The Neighbourhood Planning Officer that has been the HNPSG's main point of contact has now retired. A colleague within the Development Management team will be responding to queries to the Neighbourhood Planning mailbox.

Members queried whether there was anything pivotal raised by the lack of funding that could make the plan undeliverable. **ACTION: The Clerk** to contact the Neighbourhood Plan Officer at South Hams District Council to ask what potential costs could arise in finalising the plan, and whether it would be cost prohibitive to continue.

8. **Letter: Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan: AECOM Site Assessment – revised report** *For consideration and to agree a response*

Ahead of the meeting, members of the HNPSG had been circulated a letter from Land Promoters working with owners of the site at Ford Farm. The letter raised a number of questions on the revised Site Options Assessment and on the community re-consultation process and how this might be managed.

The Chair had drafted a proposed response to the letter that had also been circulated to all members in advance of the meeting. This proposed draft referred to the process of commissioning an independent professional assessment of sites, the independence of the evidence base, comment on lobbying and fairness and clarification of next steps.

**RESOLVED:** **ACTION: The Clerk** to reply to the letter from Land Promoters with the draft response as prepared, copying in the Neighbourhood Plan Officer at SHDC.

## 9. Housing Consultation Plan and actions

### 9.1. Response to questions from Questionnaire Working Group In response to questions raised.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) Jono and Francesca agreed to join Jo Poulter on the Working Group.
- ii) **ACTION: The Questionnaire Working Group** will meet to prepare an approach and timeline to report back to the Steering Group's September meeting. The Clerk does not need to attend.
- iii) It was considered appropriate for there to engage residents from both Harberton and Harbertonford in consultation.
- iv) It was confirmed that the HNPSG had agreed at a previous meeting to proceed with consultation regardless of the outcome of the Outline Planning Application on the Ford Farm site.

### 9.2. Set date and timeline For working group to propose and bring to the September meeting.

**RESOLVED:** The date of the next HNPSG meeting will be changed to 2<sup>nd</sup> September to enable members to review proposals made by the working group before inviting comment from the Parish Council the following week.

## 10. Summary of actions before next meeting

Ref	Action/Task	Owner
20250715 6	In light of changes to the availability of funding and technical support, contact the Neighbourhood Plan Officer at South Hams District Council to ask what potential costs could arise in finalising the plan, and whether it would be cost prohibitive to continue.	The Clerk (Cat)
20250715	To reply to the letter from Land Promoters with the draft response as prepared, copying in the Neighbourhood Plan Officer at SHDC.	The Clerk (Cat)
20250715 9.1	Meet to prepare an approach and timeline to report back to the Steering Group's September meeting.	The Questionnaire Working Group (Joanna, Jono, Francesca)

## 11. Confirmation of next meeting date and venue 7pm Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 at Harberton Parish Hall following which, meetings should be rearranged to take place on the first Monday of the month.

It was agreed to include the 'Neighbourhood Plan Workstream' as an item on the next agenda.

**Meeting closed 19:50.**