

**Minutes of the meeting of Hungerford 2036 project team** held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 at 7pm in the Fire Station Community Room, Hungerford

Present – Jon Shatford (JS), Denise Gaines (DG) (remotely through Zoom), Cllr John Downe (JD), Chris Scorey (CS), Cllr Richard Hudson (RH), Cllr Helen Simpson (HS), Cllr Keith Carlson (KC), Cllr Jerry Keates (KC), Town Clerk (TC)

1. **Note apologies** – Cllr Claire Winser, Cllr Ellie Yakar-Wells, Cllr Fyfe
2. **Agree minutes** – Minutes were agreed by Cllr Simpson and seconded by Jon Shatford.
3. **Co-opt Cllr Keates** – Cllr Simpson proposed co-opting Cllr Keates on to the team, seconded by Jon Shatford and all in favour.
4. **Update on actions from last meeting -**

TC has issued a press statement and advertised the second call for sites. Responses will be considered after the deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> Dec 2022. Late applicants have been advised. WBC are not considering anymore new sites so these need to be considered through the H2036 NDP. DG will try and attend the WBC meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> Dec when the Local Plan Review will be discussed.

Due to workload WBC will not be doing anymore assessments until April but they could outsource the work at a cost to us. **ACTION:** TC to double check if this is correct.

A reply to the planning consultant has been sent advising the current situation. Chris Bowden has produced a Scope of Works.

RH has put together a draft programme. He advised that it may be a bit ambitious. It was agreed the timetable should be shared with WBC and by the time we reach consultation we should ask WBC to pencil in an examination. The local plan refresh should be complete by Sept 2024. It is hoped the H2036 NDP could be complete by Spring 2024. We will need to add ‘site consultations’ to the programme.

**ACTION:** RH to update the timetable amending the dates as necessary.
5. **Consider publication of previous presentation -** It was agreed this should go on our website as it is evidence for the inspector however there are some formatting issues,  
**ACTION:** JD and CS to reformat and add some text to provide clarity.
6. **Outcome of meeting with WBC - Correspondence from Umrah (refer to email from Umrah below)**
7. **Consider scope of works from Navigus Planning** – This document identifies more work to be carried out by H2036 which is required to inform the plan. We need to specify which work H2036 wish to do and check back with Navigus that it will be acceptable. The layout of the plan will need re-ordering to separate non-planning from planning.  
**ACTION:** Team to email their feedback to RH on the work identified.  
**ACTION:** RH will work on converting the Scope of works into a brief.  
Once a NDP is in place the money received from CIL for infrastructure improvements in the town will increase from 15% to 25%. Advice received from WBC was to keep the plan simple. The majority of the NDP will be planning with some aspirations for CIL  
It was suggested allocated employment and industrial land should be reviewed. This ties in with the Town Centre Strategy, the first meeting of which took place recently.
8. **Any other correspondence - None**
9. **Next Meeting Date** – 7pm Wed 4th Jan 2023 Fire Station Community Room (booking TBC)

Links to adopted NDPs – Compton, Stratfield Mortimer

[Compton Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020-2037 Referendum Version \(westberks.gov.uk\)](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/compton-neighbourhood-development-plan-2020-2037-referendum-version)  
[Stratfield Mortimer NDP June 2017.pdf \(westberks.gov.uk\)](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/stratfield-mortimer-ndp-june-2017.pdf)

Cold Ash, Burghfield and Hermitage are working on producing plans.

### **Hungerford NP Steering Group (H2036) Meeting Wednesday 9 November 2022**

This note been prepared in response to matters raised in a recent meeting with Claire Barnes and Denise Gaines from H2036, and Robert Paddison, Bryan Lyttle, and Umrah Mahadik from West Berkshire District Council (WBDC).

### **Update on the Local Plan Review**

A revised timetable for the Local Plan Review (LPR), also known as the Local Development Scheme (LDS), was published at the end of October: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/lrs>. The proposed submission version of the LPR will be considered at a meeting of Council on 1 December 2022, and Members will be asked to agree that the plan can go out to consultation. If Members do agree, then the consultation will commence before the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2023 for a 6 week period. We hope to submit the plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination in March 2023. Assuming the examination goes okay, we anticipate adoption of the LPR in September 2024.

The Planning Policy team will be prioritising the LPR from January until May 2023. The steering group may want to factor in the LPR timetable for any work that is being done during this period.

### **Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)**

Unfortunately as the LPR is published there isn't time to consider any new sites within the HELAA. In terms of future updates, we don't know when these would take place. As mentioned, the LPR is due to be submitted to the Secretary of State in the Spring and this would then be followed by the examination and hopefully the adoption, so possibly after this. That is unless the Inspector asks us to undertake an update of the HELAA as part of the examination.

However, the lack of a site in the HELAA does not preclude the NDP group from considering additional sites.

### **Allocations**

In the updated version of the HELAA only one new site in Hungerford has been assessed – Land at Strongrove Hill, Hungerford.

We won't be allocating any new sites in Hungerford in the LPR because the NDP will be allocating sites.

It's worth noting that the Core Strategy was adopted in 2012 after the publication of the NPPF and was found by the Inspector to be NPPF compliant. Whilst there have been

revisions to the NPPF, the approach it has taken to AONBs has been slightly strengthened. Please refer to paragraphs 176-177 of the NPPF.

*Please note, the Planning Policy Team has no capacity between now and March to assist with site assessments.*

### **Basic Conditions**

Neighbourhood Plans (NPs) are not required to meet the tests of soundness which local plans and other development plan documents must meet. Instead, in order for them to be able to be put to referendum, they must meet the 'basic conditions' set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Those relevant to neighbourhood plans are as follows:

- (a). having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the order (or neighbourhood plan).
- (d). the making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- (e). the making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
- (f). the making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
- (g). prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Order (or plan) and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order (or neighbourhood plan).

### **Preparing a (community focused) draft Neighbourhood Plan**

It is a statutory requirement that consultation and engagement take place on NDPs at all stages of the plan-making process.

It is important to note that a NDP is a community plan and NOT a Town/Parish Council plan therefore it will need to be led by the community while it is overseen by the Town/Parish Council. This is because engaging the community with understanding and drawing on community knowledge is an important part of developing the evidence base and writing policy. Plans need to be supported by the community from the outset to be successful at referendum therefore community participation coupled with awareness, and clarity of the delivery of the Plan is likely to give the community confidence in the process.

For ideas on how to 'engage the community in a meaningful way' Locality have produced the following guidance which lists the advantages, and potential challenges of different community engagement tools: <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/Engaging-your-community-in-a-meaningful-way-2021.03.24.pdf>.

On page 8 of the document there's a link to the International Association of Public Participation, also known as IAP2: [https://iap2canada.ca/Resources/Documents/0702-Foundations-Spectrum-MW-rev2%20\(1\).pdf](https://iap2canada.ca/Resources/Documents/0702-Foundations-Spectrum-MW-rev2%20(1).pdf).

As mentioned, Locality have also produced a Roadmap with a section focusing on community engagement:

<http://www.communityplanning.net/neighbourhoodplanning/pdfs/Roadmap.pdf>.

For further information and signposting please see our Advice Notes on the Council's Neighbourhood Planning Resources webpage: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/npresources>.

When the Town Council submits the NDP for independent examination it will need to be accompanied by a statement on community consultation and demonstrate that the legal requirements for consultation have been met – the statement needs to be submitted with the Plan at the Reg 16 consultation. Please see the information in the relevant headings below.

### **SEA/HRA Screening**

The provisions of European Directive 2001/42/EC, transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (or SEA Regulations), require the Council to determine if an NDP will require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). A SEA Screening Report is prepared to determine if there will be any significant effects on the environment. The Council will also carry out a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report which is set out in the final section of the SEA/HRA screening report.

To start the screening process you will need to send an email request asking us to prepare a SEA/HRA screening, and with this you will need to submit the latest version of the draft NDP. It will take approximately 2-weeks to prepare the screening report and then it will need to be submitted to the 3 consultation bodies (Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England) for a 5-week period. A final determination about whether or not a SEA/HRA is required cannot be made until the consultation ends. The Council has 28 days to issue a Decision Notice.

Just to reiterate, you will only send to us the draft NDP and request a SEA/HRA screening then we will prepare the screening, and submit the report to the consultation bodies. After the consultation has ended we will inform you of the outcome.

*Please bear in mind that Natural England has also just voted to take strike action over the coming months – the duration of which and the potential impact are unknown at this time.*

*You will need to set aside 8-11 weeks for the SEA/HRA screening.*

### **Regulation 14 Consultation (also known as the pre-submission consultation)**

The Regulations require that the NDP is publicised in a manner which brings it to the attention of people who live, work, or run businesses in the neighbourhood area. This should include details of the proposed plan, details of where and when it may be viewed (a hard will need to be available for reference), details of how to make comments, and the date by which comments must be received. As an example, Compton put up posters around the village, included details on the NDP Facebook page and the NDP website, and also made a hard copy available upon request should anyone not have internet access.

Any publicity material and details of where this was placed, etc. will be need to be referenced in the consultation statement that must accompany the NDP when it is formally submitted to the Council (at Reg 16). For information, Compton's Consultation Statement can be found [here](#), and the section on the Reg. 14 consultation can be found on pp.187-219.

*You will need to set aside time to prepare for the consultation, then 6-weeks for the duration of the consultation, and then to analyse the comments you receive.*

Producing a robust and comprehensive response at Reg 14 will enable **H2036** to make any changes if needed. The Town Council/West Berkshire District Council could propose changes to the examiner (at Reg 16), but it is much easier to get the plan in as final form as possible prior to submission.

### **Consultees**

Please note that on request the Council can provide you with a list of statutory consultees with generic email addresses that are publicly available, that is prior to the Regulation 14 consultation. For example, you may want to consult the following at Reg 14 consultation, as Great Crested Newts are prevalent in Hungerford:

- Matt Bee: [matt.blee@naturespaceuk.com](mailto:matt.blee@naturespaceuk.com)
- Charlotte: [charlotte@riverkennet.org](mailto:charlotte@riverkennet.org)

On commencement of Regulation 14 the Council will notify those consultees that are not publicly available and direct them to the Hungerford NP webpage to comment directly on the Plan.

### **Regulation 16 Consultation**

Once a NP is formally submitted to the Council (WBDC) by the qualifying body (Hungerford Town Council), and it has been checked by the Council that the plan complies with all relevant legislation, the Council must then publicise and run a 6-week consultation on the plan and invite representations, notify the consultation bodies referred to in the consultation statement, and appoint an independent examiner with the agreement of the qualifying body. Any consultation responses received are then sent to the examiner and will be considered as part of the examination on the plan.

*You will need set aside time to prepare for the consultation, and 6-weeks for the duration of the consultation.*

### **Funding**

At this stage, there is no funding available from WBDC however there is grant funding available from Locality of up to 10K: <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/about/grant-funding/>.

Locality may also provide technical support if you meet their qualifying criteria and this includes design codes, and more. You will need to contact them directly via their online query form to take advantage of their technical and financial support:

<https://locality.org.uk/who-we-are/contact-us>.