

## Notes from the Neighbourhood planning meeting

Bettiscombe Hall 19/June 2014

### Present

Rowland Hibbard (Broadwindsor PC) and Chairman of meeting Jan Farnan - WDDC Planning, Rob England (Marshwood CLT), Ivan Gollop (CVPC), Chris Everidge (CVPC), Jacqui Sewell (District Councillor), Ali Edwards (UMV PC), , Mr D N Smith, Joy McClelland, Richard King (Netherbury PC), Alan Harvey (Netherbury PC), Michael Robinson (District Councillor), Ali Cameron (UMV PC), Cassian Gray (UMV PC) and Roland Bugler (UMV PC)

### Ali Cameron

Ali C explained why the meeting had been arranged and the reason for inviting representatives from Thorncombe, Broadwindsor, Netherbury, Upper Marshwood Vale and Char Valley.

The background to the concept of Neighbourhood plans has been obtained from the Gov'ts planning portal —

*The Localism Act, which received Royal Assent on November 15 2011, introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development by coming together to prepare neighbourhood plans.*

*Neighbourhood planning can be taken forward by two types of body - town and parish councils or 'neighbourhood forums'. Neighbourhood forums are community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in areas without parishes. It is the role of the local planning authority to agree who should be the neighbourhood forum for the neighbourhood area.*

*The criteria for establishing neighbourhood forums are being kept as simple as possible to encourage new and existing residents' organisations, voluntary and community groups to put themselves forward. You can only establish a neighbourhood forum in areas where there is no parish or town council.*

*Neighbourhood forums and parish councils can use new neighbourhood planning powers to establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood. These are described legally as '**neighbourhood development plans.**'*

*In an important change to the planning system communities can use neighbourhood planning to **permit** the development they want to see - in full or in outline - without the need for planning applications. These are called '**neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders.**'*

*Local councils will continue to produce development plans that will set the strategic context within which neighbourhood development plans will sit.*

*Neighbourhood development plans or orders do not take effect unless there is a majority of support in a referendum of the neighbourhood.*

*They also have to meet a number of conditions before they can be put to a community referendum and legally come into force. These conditions are to ensure plans are legally compliant and take account of wider policy considerations (e.g. national policy).*

Conditions are:

1. *they must have regard to national planning policy*
2. *they must be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area (i.e. such as in a core strategy)*
3. *they must be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements.*

*An independent qualified person then checks that a neighbourhood development plan or order appropriately meets the conditions before it can be voted on in a local referendum. This is to make sure that referendums only take place when proposals are workable and of a decent quality.*

*Proposed neighbourhood development plans or orders need to gain the approval of a majority of voters of the neighbourhood to come into force. If proposals pass the referendum, the local planning authority is under a legal duty to bring them into force.*

With this in mind and given that the availability of funding to assist with the process, is both time and amount limited; it was necessary to brief council representatives so that they can go back to their respective councils and get directions as to the way ahead.

### **Jan Farnan WDDC**

JF gave a presentation which covered most of the issues raised in the background above. She listed the parishes and towns which are producing NPs and commented on Cerne Abbas which was the lead council. Their NP was with the inspector for approval prior to a referendum being held.

The key points that she raised were -

- NP is a planning policy document and works alongside the Local Plan it has statutory weight. It defines what is permitted development.
- Can be site or topic specific and can allocate land for development or extend a development boundary. Can identify local Green Space
- The PC (or community group) initiates the process and agrees the area with the District Council. This initiates the process and can release funding. The deadline for this is the end of 2014.



- The project group develops the plan in conjunction with the local community and then carries out a formal 6 week consultation period with Statutory consultees (AONB, CPRE, NE etc) and people who live and work in the area
- The draft NP is then submitted to WDDC together with a consultation summary, a basic conditions statement and any other evidence the plan relies on. WDDC carry out an 8 week public consultation and the responses are sent along with the above information to an independent examiner.
- Subject to independent examination and a referendum (51% of those who vote).
- On being passed the Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the statutory development plan.
- Support comes from Gov't funding.
- Advice and support (through Locality/Planning Aid) - £9.5k tailored to community requirements.
- Grant payments up to £7k per neighbourhood plan area for this year. The details of next years funding are not yet available.
- Availability of a Planning link officer from WDDC in addition to Locality support
- Examination and referendum

### Questions from attendees

Would it be possible to have separate NP for each parish with the £7k , but work together as a group of Parishes on a composite plan?

*JF - As long as you had separate NP areas you could each apply for £7k. You would need to produce separate neighbourhood plans although there is nothing stopping you working together informally and the content being the same for each area where it would be appropriate.*

*JF - WDDC have to agree the neighbourhood area and provided it doesn't trigger issues in relation to the following considerations it is likely to be agreed.*

- *Does the boundary follow existing Parish/Town boundary lines?*
- *Is there a significant level of business operating within the area (such as major industrial estate or town centre) where a Business District might be more appropriate.*
- *Does the area overlap with an existing Neighbourhood Area*

- *Does the proposed area function as a relatively self contained neighbourhood unit without relying on a much wider population or facilities in a neighbouring area?*
- *Are there local plan allocations (including defined development boundaries) that extend beyond the proposed area.*
- *Any other issues considered relevant to the designation of the area.*

Would it be possible to use a consultant to work across the chosen number of parishes to prepare the plan.

*JF - yes but there would only be one £7k amount available.*

What impact would the NP have on conservation area issues?

*JF - the NP would not be able to extend the Conservation Area but could give guidance as to design issues and environmental concerns.*

### **Discussion points**

Ali C agreed to be the liaison person for the interested parties and coordinate any activities .

Ivan Gollop did not see any point in Char Valley being involved, as they had satisfied their housing needs for the foreseeable future.

**Note** Charmouth has chosen not to involve Char Valley in their NP

A number of attendees commented on the need for assistance, if they decided to prepare a NP. Sharing a consultant was seen to be a good idea (funds permitting).

MR agreed to make representations to Thorncombe PC who were unable to send a councillor.

All councillors agreed to raise the issue of the NP at the next meeting of their Parish Council. In the meantime, if they had any queries they should raise them with JF or Ali C.

30/6/2014 - MDR

Reviewed by JF



## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING by John Vanderwolfe ( Parish Council Clerk )

Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council, consisting of Marshwood, Bettiscombe, Stoke Abbott and Pilsdon as a grouped parish, has discussed undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan. Netherbury and Thorncombe Parish Councils have now also agreed to work together with us on this and Hawkchurch are under discussion to do the same, as they are a neighbouring parish.

West Dorset and East Devon District Councils are encouraging this cross-boundary collaboration.

Involvement in this opportunity would allow us to shape our community for the next twenty years. Parish Plans, that have been produced within the past 5 years, such as those made by Thorncombe and UMV can be included. Grants are available to employ the services of a consultant for professional guidance and preparation of the document together with the assistance of WDDC.

- The Neighbourhood Plan involves consultation with local people and is not just about elected members deciding the future of your community
- A referendum will eventually be held in which over 50% of those people voting will need to vote in favour in order for the plan to be accepted
- The plan will be scrutinised by an independent inspector appointed for this purpose prior to acceptance
- Once accepted the Neighbourhood Plan becomes a statutory document and must be taken into consideration on any planning applications for the defined area by the planning authorities.
- The Neighbourhood Plan cannot, of course, go against national planning policy or the Local Plan
- The District Councils are under a legal obligation to assist any parishes who wish to undertake such a plan. The Government provides funds for the principle authority to deal with the referendum and the Inspector.
- Under new rules the present Section 106 payments made by developers is being replaced by a new system that will provide 15% to the parish or town council. However, if a parish or town council has a Neighbourhood Plan, that percentage will be increased to 25%.

Following a number of meetings, it has been agreed to proceed to the next stage, to apply to WDDC and East Devon for approval of our defined district.

We welcome all members of the community to get involved and make their contribution – this is not merely up to the Parish Councillors – but an opportunity for everyone.

The following subject areas have been proposed for consideration to form the basic structure of the Plan

They are:-

**Farming & diversification, small business and communications (inc. broadband)**

**Schools and Learning**

**The elderly; special needs and medical/social provision**

**Tourism, pubs/clubs, hotels and bed and breakfast**

**Community Land Trust (CLT), housing and renewables**

**The environment**

**Infrastructure including transport**

Clearly a number of these areas are interconnected and we are lucky to have a Community Land Trust based in Marshwood, who have been asked to help identify **available** land and also to address the housing need and requirements of the area. If anyone in the community is interested in getting involved in this exciting project and has a particular interest in any of the subject areas above, we would be very keen to talk to you and see how you could help.

✓ Please telephone Mike Robinson on 01308 868979 or email [cllr.md Robinson@btinternet.com](mailto:cllr.md Robinson@btinternet.com)