

Neighbourhood Planning Meeting Monday 22nd January 2018 at 7.00pm Town Hall

Present: About 60 members of public including press (John Garvey and Brian Quinn), Councillors and District Councillors: Paul Hewer (Hungerford), James Cole (Kintbury)

1. **Mayor's Welcome** - The Mayor welcomed everyone and introduced Pat Wingfield from Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council.
2. **Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan (NP)** – Pat Wingfield presented a Power Point (see attached). He led the NP steering group for Stratfield Mortimer PC (SM). He advised there have been about 15 changes to the government legislation affecting NPs and there are now new regulations in place to make appeals to the High Court more difficult. NPs can't stop development, but they can influence the location and design etc. The local authority will eventually take responsibility for the NP once it is adopted. Having a Town Plan in place already will help the process.

The pros for SM were: Great community involvement. CIL increased to 25%. A can-do attitude. More sports facilities, new station car park, 32 extra projects, 3 hectares earmarked for school and doctors, dark village, height restrictions on buildings, garages large enough to park in, a site design brief is required from developers, high quality building, building for life (so elderly /disabled people can remain in their homes), 4 development areas changed to one (this involved changes to locations not the number of houses). The NP has already had an impact on the design in SM.

The cons for SM: It took 4 years due to technical reasons and changes to regulations and it was the first plan to be done in West Berks, so the local authorities were learning too. There was a lot of dead time during the consultation period which are 6-8 weeks a time and then WBC need to consult also which is a further 6-8 weeks. Examination in Public is rare but happened in their case. They also had conflict with a group, particularly through social media that didn't want a NP and they instead wished to fight any development. The cost was £15k and they obtained a £3k grant.

Legislation encourages non-councillors to be involved. SM had a key team of 3 and they reported their progress monthly. Planning consultants weren't needed much but helped e.g. with development density. WBC was helpful. They had drop-in sessions for people's opinions, a physical and on-line survey for every household (with 36% return). There was a 50% turnout for the referendum and an 88.88% yes vote. The SM NP consists of 75 pages which need to include, Policy, Context and Justification with Objectives and Projects optional.

3. **Response from Hungerford Town Council** – Cllr Knight presented a power point (attached). He echoed that legislation has moved on since the Town Plan was produced. The NP holds more weight. Approx. 500 have been adopted. Marlborough TC is a year into theirs. SM is the only PC in West Berks to have an adopted NP but other districts such as Mid-Sussex have many NPs in place. There are 2000 to 2500 NPs in progress or adopted. We should allow 2-4 years for completion of a NP and we would need a dedicated team.

Pros – Direct power and choice to the community, giving local people a say. Grants are now available up to 2022. Hungerford has to grow, and a plan can be put in place to coincide with

WBC plans to 2036. It can include affordable housing, use of derelict buildings, business provision, development of schools, churches, protection of heritage and trees, restrictions where required and solar energy. NPs now have Royal Assent.

4. Questions from the floor –

DC Paul Hewer asked were the District Councillors proactive in helping SM produce the plan?

Pat Wingfield (PW) – No. it is produced by the locals. DCs are not needed providing the plan conforms to the local strategy.

Cllr Crane pointed out the WBC local plan completes in 2026 and then they start a new one. Will the new strategy influence and overtake the NP?

PW advised now is the ideal time to start an NP because WBC is formulating their plan now and if we get in on the ground floor we will be able to influence it. Hungerford should run theirs to 2036.

Mr Welfare – At the last NP meeting WBC were asked how bound are they to the requirements of a NP and Brian Lyttle's words were very dismissive and said they were not bound at all and gave impression that plan could be ignored. Can WBC give comment on this? Have SM seen their policy incorporated?

PW – Their referendum was held on June 2017 and the next day the NP was incorporated into WBC's Planning framework. The NP needs to conform to strategy but adds an extra layer. An example recently was a property development was refused permission by WBC and SM's policy was quoted. A NP takes whatever strategy is going at the time and makes it more local.

Cllr Hudson introduced himself. He is transport planner. HTC's relationship with WBC is very poor but we would have to work with them. The pros are: this is our policy for protecting our AONB. WBC's disregard for the AONB is a main reason to do this. WBC will only think about settlement outside the town boundary. It would be nice if the DCs were involved. Community involvement is a pro and if we produce robust policies we should be able to defend our position. We need to try and avoid tension amongst ourselves. On balance we should take this forward.

PW advised you have to work with WBC to produce the plan otherwise it can be dismissed. SM had to make some compromises, but they produced a plan which is better than doing nothing.

Chris Scorey introduced himself. He chaired the production of the Town Plan. A lot of the work has been done and a refresh would provide a solid foundation for a NP. They carried out a survey of 3000 houses and had a 46% response. New blood and effort will be needed to carry it forward. It is interesting that even emerging work in an NP can be used. A huge effort went into the Town Plan and WBC adopted the Town Plan but then the goal posts were moved, and land-use planning was excluded. B Lyttle confirmed at the last meeting that this was a government change. On balance he is talking himself round to yes, we should do it.

Cllr Simpson – Can you have a NP on just one specific area?

PW – Yes this can be as small or large as you want. The smaller it is the quicker and cheaper it is. You can only make minor amendments once adopted.

Cllr Finlay – Will there be any additional access to funding with a NP in place?

PW – For a grant application you need proof and the NP questionnaire provides it. Evidence will be in yours and WBC's policy.

Cllr Simpson – At SM did you already have an existing Town Plan in place?

PW – No we had a village design statement, but this was never used by WBC planners to do anything with.

Cllr Farrell introduced herself as Chair of Planning. How much compromise did you make?

PW – Affordable housing was a battle and we had to accept 40% or the NP would not go forward. There is no point putting something to WBC if it has not been pre-agreed. Where there was no push back from WBC is where the local plan does not cover it i.e. green spaces and encouragement was received from WBC. SM had no problem at all with adjusting the settlement boundary and there is no limit on the amount of settlement boundaries you can have. SM has policies on development of land outside the settlement boundary.

Cllr Crane – The current conflict is over Salisbury Road. Hungerford is the heart of the AONB. Wherever we build outside the boundary is within the AONB. We are looking for a plan to 2036, 20 years ahead. Hungerford is going to have to extend its settlement boundary and if the community can have an influence this is a very good reason to pursue with a NP.

Mr Welfare – Could we have a statement from WBC on how much notice/weight will WBC give to a NP?

Cllr Knight – There is legislation in force that says WBC must assist once we decide to go ahead. They must help us.

DC Hewer - He supports this proposal and he and DC Podger will be proactive should this go forward, and we have his word of support. WBC takes it seriously. The Town Plan is referred to, not always adhered to but is a relevant plan. Hilary Cole is adamant on Town and NPs and champions them. DC Hewer will speak with her and in his opinion, it is something we should adopt.

DC James Cole introduced himself from Kintbury Ward which from 2019 will be merged with Hungerford Ward. He would strongly urge us to go ahead with a NP. he would support what we do.

Cllr Simpson - With Stratfield Mortimer's NP having happened will this ease Hungerford's process?

PW – Yes definitely. It should cut the time considerably and WBC will know what they are doing. 5 other parishes in West Berks are somewhere on the NP process.

Cllr Knight – Although HTC fought with WBC over Salisbury Road, we meet every 2 weeks for a library meeting and are planning on taking on the lease of the library building for 99 years. He is meeting regularly with the WBC chairman and the relationship with WBC is better.

5. Closing and next steps

A decision will be made at the HTC Full Council meeting on 5th Feb. Cllr Knight asked for a show of hands of those in favour with proceeding with a NP. Approx. 80% of those present were in favour.

Cllr Simpson invited the public to come along to the Full Council meeting and encouraged those interested in being involved to contact the office on 01488 686195 or email townclerk@hungerford-tc.gov.uk.

Anthony Buckwell asked if DC Hewer will attend the Feb FC meeting.

DC Hewer said he would attend.

Cllr Hudson would be interested to know the view of other organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Town & Manor.

Cllr Small mentioned that it will be on the Chamber of Commerce's agenda at their next meeting which will take place on 6th Feb the Legion.

Greg Furr from Town & Manor thinks his trustees will be interested but commented that we would be bound by WBCs rules.

PW reiterated that those areas that do not conflict with the strategy are not a problem and with SM NP this was about 75%.

Cllr Farrell said she hadn't made up her mind and HTC has not yet voted.

Chris Scorey commented that prioritising the use of brownfield land will make it more difficult for WBC to ignore.

Meeting closed.

MORTIMER NDP

Pat Wingfield

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

The Background

WHAT IS IT?

- Introduced by the Localism Act
- A chance for local communities to make local planning policies that have the force of statute

WHAT CAN IT DO?

- More say on detailed matters than the Local Plan
- Opportunity to specify sites for development
- Allows local communities to have a greater say in where to spend money from developers
- Can encourage community projects and self build initiatives

WHAT IT CANNOT DO?

- It can not stop development
- It must conform to the West Berkshire Core Strategy
- It can not deal with matters that are not 'planning matters'

THE PROCESS (1)

- Determine desirability of a plan
- Determine the area to be covered
- Engage with the local community
- Determine draft key issues, themes and options
- Consult
- Write draft policies
- Consult

THE PROCESS (2)

- Write substantive policies
- Submit Plan to West Berkshire Council
- Independent Examination
- Referendum
- West Berkshire Council Make the plan

MORTIMERS EXPECTATIONS

What did we think would happen?

EXPECTATIONS

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| ▪ Influence the number and location of developments in the parish | ▪ Achieved |
| ▪ Produce more detailed policies than WBC | ▪ Achieved |
| ▪ Expensive | ▪ Not particularly |
| ▪ Take a long time | ▪ Yes |
| ▪ Would require commitment | ▪ Yes |
| ▪ Extra CIL | ▪ More than thought |

OTHER POSITIVE OUTCOMES

What did the NDP achieve in addition to the initial expectations?

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

- Great community involvement
- A 'can do' attitude
- Non planning projects
- Parish Council in 'turn key' role
- A site design brief for development(s)

UNFORESEEN PROBLEMS

What unforeseen problems did producing an NDP bring?

UNFORESEEN PROBLEMS

- Took a lot longer – 4 years rather than 2
- There was a lot of dead time – related to formal consultation periods and examination in public
- Far more work than envisaged
- Huge disappointment when Examiner recommended not to go to referendum
- WBC learning as well
- Some local vitriol

HOW

How did we go about producing the NDP?

HOW

- Steering Group – 4 councillors, 2 non councillors, 1 admin assistant
- Steering Group met every fortnight for 2 hours
- Most of the work undertaken by core of 3 people
- Reported monthly to full parish council
- Volunteers helped with exhibitions etc
- Some help from consultants
- Spent about £15,000
- Worked closely with WBC

HOW

Event	Date
Launch of the NDP at a public event in St Johns Hall	20 th March 2014
Fairground Exhibition and Report	7 th July 2014
Budgens Exhibition with public discussion sessions and Report	February 2015
Parish wide survey by questionnaire	April/ May 2015
Housing Needs Survey	April/ May 2015
Site Design Public Event	21 st September 2015
Parish Council approval of NDP and resolved for it to go forward for consideration	9 th October 2015
Pre-submission consultation	November/December 2015
Parish Council accepted the Plan and agreed for it to be submitted to WBC	11 th February 2016
WBC conduct their own consultation	March/April 2016
Independent Examiner conducts public examination of the NDP	August 2016
Examiner recommends that NDP does not proceed to referendum	October 2016
Parish Council asks WBC to wait before making a decision on the Examiners recommendation	November 2016
A more detailed landscape assessment is conducted by independent consultant	January 2017
Parish Council ask WBC to submit the NDP to referendum	February 2017
WBC agree to a referendum	9 th May 2017
Referendum held	22 nd June 2017
NDP 'made'	23 rd June 2017

THE RESULT

The document

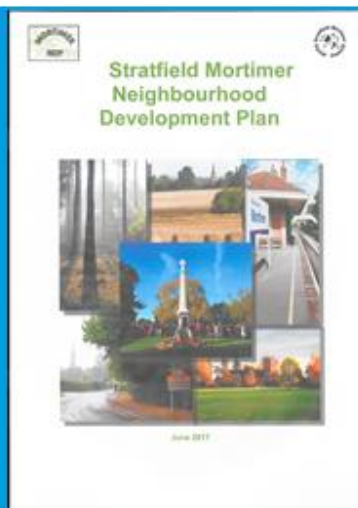
THE RESULT

At referendum 50.1% turnout and 88.88% yes vote

THE RESULT

- 75 pages
- 16 Chapters
- 9 Policy areas
 - Residential Site Allocation
 - Housing Mix and density
 - General Design
 - The Site Design Brief for 'The Site'
 - Commercial
 - Infrastructure development
 - Biodiversity and Environmental Gain
 - Green Spaces
 - Heritage

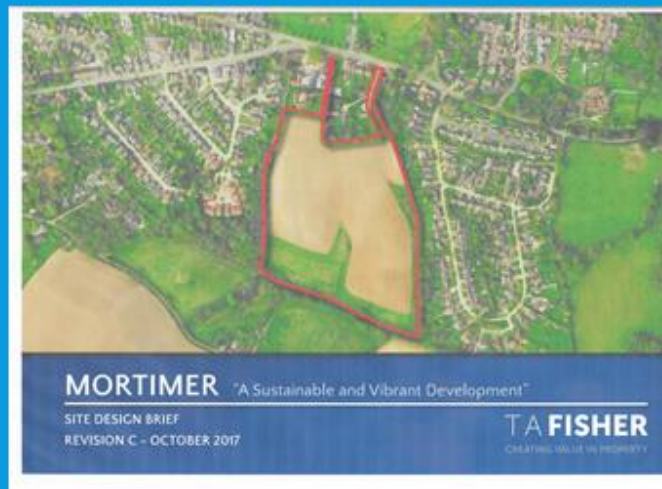
THE RESULT



THE RESULT

- GD1 In order to provide high quality developments in the Parish, all developments of any sort shall comply with the following parameters
- New developments on allocated and windfall sites will be designed to deliver the Building for Life 12 principles
- New development will consider the amenity of existing residents adjacent to the new development
- Any new development **within** the settlement boundary will be encouraged to prepare a Site Design Brief, including community involvement, which reflects the policies set out in this Plan. This brief would then be included in any planning submission after consultation via the parish council. For any housing development proposals **outside** the settlement boundary, in addition to satisfying the requirements of WBC policy C1, the applicant shall prepare a Site Design Brief, including community involvement, which reflects the policies in this Plan and will include it in any planning submission after consultation via the Parish Council.

THE RESULT





Neighbourhood Plan Meeting (A Local Plan for Local People) 22nd January 2018

Tonight's Agenda

- Mayor's Welcome
- **Stratfield Mortimer Town Council's** Neighbourhood Plan – Pat Wingfield
- **Response from Hungerford Town Council**
 - Existing Town Plan
 - Why do we need a Plan ?
 - Consultation , Cost & Funding
- **Questions from the Floor**
- **Closing & Next Steps**



Stratfield Mortimer Council

- Introducing :
Pat Wingfield

Why Neighbourhood Planning?

- Direct Power
- Choose
- Powerful set of tools
- Enables
- Positive Vision
- Development they want to see
- Legal Status



Hungerford Town Council

- Existing Town Plan
- Produced in 2010 (updated in 2013)
- No force in law...
- BUT can be used (in part) for producing a NP.



Hungerford Town Council

- Why do we need a Neighbourhood plan?
- **8 Steps** -How do we achieve this plan?
- Timescales to deliver 2-3 years
- Grant available up to £9K
- Projected Cost £12 to £15K



Why Do We Need a Neighbourhood Plan ?

Localism Act 2011 & Royal Assent 2017

To set out a Long Term Strategy (20 years) for the District of Hungerford

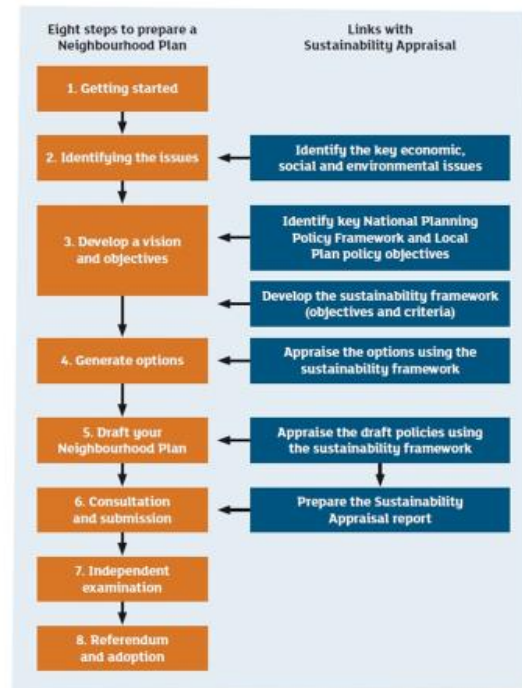
To Influence the town's future development

To Influence our way of life

To give the residents of Hungerford a say in the future development of our town



8 Steps to Producing the Plan



Hungerford Town Council

- Consultation with Public (*including this meeting*)
- Time scales: 2-3 years (a long Journey)
- Referendum to Adopt



Any Questions From The Floor?

Over to YOU.....

Closing & Next Steps

- Listen to feedback from the community of Hungerford
- Aim to decide by February 2018 Full Council

