

Shilton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement

Introduction

This Consultation Statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 in respect of the Shilton Parish Neighbourhood Plan. Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the Regulations sets out what a Consultation Statement should contain:

- a. Details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood plan;
- b. Explanation of how they were consulted;
- c. Summary of the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted;
- d. Description of how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where appropriate, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood plan.

This Consultation Statement describes not only the formal consultations carried out as required by the regulations, but also demonstrates how the Steering Group have engaged with the public throughout the process.

The consultation process was designed to

- a) obtain the views of local people and other stakeholders as early in the process as possible.
- b) ensure that consultation events took place at critical points in the process where decisions needed to be taken
- c) engage with as wide a range of people as possible, using a variety of events and communication channels

Decision to create neighbourhood plan

At the annual parish meeting in May 2016, The Parish Council and the Shilton Welfare Trust made a joint presentation to the residents proposing to commence the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan which could investigate the possibility of the Plan providing some affordable housing on land owned by the Welfare Trust. The presentation was well received by most people attending and it was agreed to progress the idea further.

In October 2016 the Parish became a designated area and RCOH Ltd was appointed as professional planning consultants to the Parish Council. A Steering Committee of five councillors and five residents was formed.

Initial Survey

The first formal consultation with residents took place in February 2017 when a Parish Survey Questionnaire was sent to all residents. The results were formulated into a presentation to residents at the Annual Village meeting on 25th May 2017. A large number of views were recorded and some opposition was expressed particularly to the idea of introducing some affordable housing. The majority were in favour of the proposals and the Parish Council made the decision to continue with the project of producing a NP.

Steering Group and Task Group Work

The Steering group divided into three work groups having identified the following core areas to consider for the NP.

- a) The environment and green infrastructure
- b) Design and the protection of the Conservation Area
- c) Affordable housing potential development sites

The Environment group produced a 35 page detailed report identifying the many open green spaces in the parish and considering the merits of each. It looked in detail at the network of footpaths and bridleways and how these could be enhanced. Its conclusion included a recommendation to establish buffer zones around Shilton village that would protect the environment from further urban development.

The Design group concentrated their time in the conservation area of Shilton and its surrounding environs. Their report highlighted the need to ensure that any proposed development or alteration to buildings should be in keeping with the many heritage assets and listed buildings in the village. It also made clear the necessity to ensure that significant views were not spoiled by inconsiderate development.

The Development sites group was tasked with identifying sites of sufficient size to accommodate up to 10 affordable homes together with a new open community space. Sites in excess of 1.5 Acres were considered and five sites were identified and assessments of each undertaken. The Allotment Field owned by the Welfare Trust was offered on a 999 year lease at a minimal rent. Initial discussions were held with other landowners and a letter (appendix 1) was sent outlining the proposal from the Welfare Trust and asking if they would be prepared to offer land on a similar basis. Not surprisingly no offers were made.

The individual task groups worked with the consultants and fully detailed reports were produced to the Steering Group on 17th July 2017.

Community Land Trust

The Parish Council began the process of identifying potential ways of meeting the aspirations of the community. In particular how to set about the task of building some affordable housing on the Allotment Field. The first action was to become a member of the National CLT Network. A grant was received for a consultation day with a CLT expert and a further grant has been arranged for a two day workshop.

Work on the setting up of a CLT is progressing well and the Parish Council intends to complete the formation of the CLT as quickly after the Plan and the Community Right to Build Order (see below) are made, in order to maintain the project momentum.

Community Right to Build Order.

It was made clear by the residents at the initial presentation and survey and at all Parish Council meetings during the last two years, that it was fundamental to their support for the affordable housing project, that the houses would remain affordable and in the control of the community. There was no support for handing control of the houses to a housing association. Following discussions with West Oxfordshire District Council, our consultants and other interested parties, it was decided by the Parish Council that using a Community Land Trust and a Community Right to Build Order and not a Rural Exception Site application was the best solution. Our consultants were commissioned to produce a Feasibility Study (in May 2017) which concluded that a small scheme on the Allotment Field would be viable.

To keep things simple, the early consultations on this proposal were dovetailed with the Neighbourhood Plan, as the Plan proposed a policy allocating the land for this purpose. However, other technical consultations have taken place since and these are described in the Consultation Statement of the Order itself.

Consultation event 14th October 2017.

Invitations were delivered to all residents and stakeholders to attend a full day drop in consultation in the Old School Village Hall. The event was also advertised in the village newsletter. A total of 61 people attended. Display boards (see samples appendix 2) outlining the findings of each of the Task Groups were prepared and copies of each of the group reports were made available. Members of the Steering Group were available all day to discuss the proposals. Each person attending was asked to complete a questionnaire indicating their support or rejection of the group's proposals. The results were 98.3% in support of Environment, 98.3% in support of Design proposals and 76.5% in favour of the Affordable Housing proposals. Additional comments were also recorded and carried forward for the further considerations of the Steering Group.



The Shilton Rose and Crown

In the initial survey in February 2017 the residents indicated that the pub was seen as an essential community asset. The Parish Council in consultation with the owner investigated the possibility of designating it as an Asset of Community Value with the District Council. Many pubs in small rural villages such as Shilton have closed in recent years. Discussions with the owner made it clear that if ours was to prosper financially in the long term it would need to have additional income streams.

A policy was therefore formulated to introduce some rental accommodation and to increase the dining area of the pub, using the information exchanged with the District Council during a pre-application consultation with the owner earlier in 2017. The owner explained that this consultation was helpful, but he needed the confidence of a positive Neighbourhood Plan policy to invest in making a full planning application. A draft policy was consulted on with the owner and this was then incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan. A letter from Martin Coldicott the owner of the pub is included in appendix 3.

Pre submission Neighbourhood Plan and CRTBO

In conjunction with our consultants the Steering Group produced a Pre-submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan and a Draft CRTBO. Copies were forwarded to WODC, their nominated consultees and local businesses and Parish Councils on 2nd February. Full copies were emailed to all residents on our email lists. Summary leaflets (see appendix 3) were hand delivered to all other residents. The event was also publicised in the village newsletter. Comments were requested by 19th March 2018, i.e. within six weeks of the commencement of the period, as required by the

Regulations. Letters were sent to owners of the four designated open green spaces explaining our intentions and requesting their comments.

Consultation event 24th February 2018

A full day drop in consultation event was held in the Old School Village Hall in Shilton. Display boards were prepared and full copies of both the Plan and CRTBO and summaries were available to everyone attending. Our consultants and some Steering Committee members were on hand to answer questions and to give detail explanations of the policies. Thirty two people attended during the day. A questionnaire asking for comments was provided. Some completed this at the event, other took it away for consideration and later comment. The result were as follows:

Policy	In favour
SH 1 Village Boundary	95%
SH 2 Allotment Field	79%
SH 3 Rose & Crown	100%
SH 4 Design Shilton Village	85%
SH 5 Design Bradwell Village	95%
SH 6 Shilton-Carterton Local Gap	95%
SH 7 Local green spaces	100%
SH 8 Green infrastructure	100%

A list of comments was compiled for further reference when producing the final versions.

Consultee Comments.

Comments were received from the following:

- West Oxfordshire District Council
- Oxford County Council
- The Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Carterton Town Council
- Barton Wilmore on behalf of David Wilson Homes
- Cllr Peter Handley

A summary report of these comments (see appendix 5) was prepared by our consultants and recommendations made as to how the final version of the Plan should be modified. The report concluded:

28. It is noted that there is considerable local community support for the Plan. In which case, where policies have sought to strike a balance between competing objectives, they have done so successfully in securing that support. In some cases, the balance is difficult to strike, for

example in delivering affordable housing and securing the long-term future of a precious heritage and social asset.

29. Aside from Sheep Field, no representation has claimed that the Plan does not meet the basic conditions, although some minor modifications may be helpful to ensure the policies are applied as intended.

30. In which case, it is recommended that some modifications are made and that the project proceeds to submission and examination.

Other bodies consulted but who chose not to comment:

- Brize Norton Parish Council
- Filkins and Broughton Pogges Parish Council
- Alvescot Parish Council
- Burford Town Council
- The Blue Cross
- The Cotswold Wildlife Park
- The Ministry of Defence
- National Air Traffic Control
- Civil Aviation Authority

Changes resulting from consultation.

Following close study of the results of the consultation and comments received from residents, amendments were made to several policies. As recommended in the summary report, one proposed Local Green Space (at Sheep Field) was removed from Policy SH7 and policy SH5 Bradwell Village Design was deleted. The Shilton Village Boundary (of Policy SH1) has been modified slightly on the Policies Map on the advice of the District Council and the boundary of the Local Gap (now policy SH5) has been modified to more accurately reflect the evidence (which has been added as an appendix to the Plan).

Finally, two criteria have been added to Policy SH2 Allotment Field in relation to managing foul sewage on site and to investigate completing a footpath link between the site and the village. Both points were raised by the District Council and the local community (and in the latter case by the Highways Authority in its comments on the Plan and Order). Some other minor rewording of policies and the supporting text has been done to improve clarity and the relationship between the Plan and the soon to be adopted Local Plan has been better explained.

Conclusion

The Parish Council and the Steering Group have attempted to consult with all interested parties as often as possible throughout this process. The progress of the Neighbourhood Plan and the CRTBO has been on the agenda of every Parish Council meeting held since May 2016. Discussions have been held throughout with WODC and both District and County Councillors. We believe that we have taken note of all the various views expressed and trust that the final documents will represent the final views of the majority.

Given there was no policy driver requiring the Parish Council to make a housing site allocation and given the innovative nature of the Order and CLT proposals, it has been vital to secure the majority support of the local community throughout. Although it could not expect everyone to be happy, the Parish Council has been heartened by the widespread support for the Plan and Order from across the Parish community. It has also recognised the importance of assuring the District Council that these policy innovations are technically well-founded and promote sustainable development.

Appendix 1

Letter to Landowners

Appendix 2

Sample posters used at consultation day.

Appendix 3

Letter from Martin Coldicott re Rose & Crown

Appendix 4

Leaflets distributed prior to Pre-Submission Consultation

Appendix 5

Regulation 14 Report.