

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR STEEPLE CLAYDON
FIRST PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Notes from the first public consultation meeting for the Steeple Claydon Neighbourhood Plan held at 7.30pm on 12th August 2015 at the Prince of Wales, Addison Road, Steeple Claydon, Bucks MK18 2NP

Team present:

- Mr Paul Firth (In the Chair)
- Ms Tonia Vincent
- Mr John O'Dwyer
- Mr Chris Coombs
- Ms Bev Trevitt
- Ms Betty Picknell
- Mr Adam Graveley
- Mr Ian Millard
- Mr Dave Jenner
- Ms Julie Milne

Parish Councillors present:

- Ms Diana Tanner
- Ms Doreen Weingart
- Mr James Clarke
- Mr Brian Drinkwater

1. Introduction

The meeting was opened at 7.30pm by Paul Firth who thanked those present for attending.

2. Presentation

Paul Firth introduced himself and stressed the importance of attending, understanding what is being achieved and contributing personal views and ideas. He explained that there is legislation giving councils the right to develop Neighbourhood Plans contained within the Town and Country Planning legislation. Neighbourhood Plans are being developed to allow local communities to decide what they want and identify land for development over the next 5 years.

Paul delivered a presentation, copies of which were made available at the meeting and which can be viewed on the website at www.steepleclaydonplan.org.uk.

Working through the presentation, Paul advised that it is known that Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) is going to be required to define its own housing needs and is likely to have to meet housing requirements from other councils which they have been unable to fulfil as they have run out of developable land. AVDC has attempted to develop a Local Plan but the first attempt has failed and the process has been started again. This is expected to be completed in late 2016/early 2017 but it has been recognised that Steeple Claydon cannot wait that long and therefore our Neighbourhood Plan (NP) will be completed in April 2016. This NP will become part of the statutory development plan once it has been made (brought into legal force) by the planning authority.

Great Horwood already has a Neighbourhood Plan but when AVDC received an application for development, it advised that it was not taking much notice of this Plan. There were numerous complaints from Great Horwood and neighbouring councils and AVDC's position is currently under scrutiny.

Paul referred to a 1967 plan that Betty Picknell (NP Team Member) discovered which accurately predicted the development of the village and is worth viewing.

A question was posed from one of the attendees;

Q. How was the team decided upon?

A. Information was published in the parish magazine explaining about the NP process and contact details were taken from attendees at a previous meeting regarding a planning application made by Gladman Developments. A list of areas in which assistance was sought was circulated and volunteers invited to an initial meeting. The team has changed a little with new members recruited as others have dropped out. Since the formalisation of the team, a group of supporters and helpers have been identified and will be called upon on an ad-hoc basis. Anyone with expertise in any of the areas identified on the website is invited to get in touch and will be added to the list of helpers and supporters.

Paul continued with the presentation and advised that the development of the Plan started in April 2015 and the area covered is defined by the parish boundary. A questionnaire will be circulated in early October 2015 asking the residents, businesses, local groups, etc. for suggestions and ideas for improving the village and helping it to flourish. Together with other planned consultations, one on Saturday 22nd August at the village hall and another to be organised whilst the questionnaire is in circulation, will assist in the preparation of the draft plan which is due to be completed in December 2015. The final consultation will take place in January 2016 with the final plan being completed in February 2016. AVDC will conduct a referendum and residents will be asked to vote. It is hoped that there will be a good turnout.

There have been 6 topics identified for consideration which are as follows:

- Housing
- Health
- Recreation
- Education
- Traffic and transport
- Business and history

with two overarching topics of sustainability and social cohesion. Whilst addressing each of the topics in the list, it must be possible to see sustainability and social cohesion benefits to any proposals. There is a topic leader for each and baseline studies are being conducted to determine what is going on within each at the moment, what problems are currently faced and what is wanted for the future to give an overall collective view and reach an agreed position on each.

The data created from the consultation will be analysed and used to shape the first report. This will be circulated and comments invited to ensure the data has been understood correctly and any amendments will be included in a second report. Throughout the process, views and comments are invited via the website, on the comments sheets available at the public meetings or in person to any of the team.

Paul advised that he has lived in Steeple Claydon for 25 years but until he started this process, he hadn't realised how many good points the village has and ran through a series of picture slides to emphasize this. Although it does have its bad points which include a high level of deprivation and families in need, he hopes this Plan will make Steeple Claydon a more cohesive village. He added that he noted down some thoughts he had for improving the village but again asked for help from residents on expanding this list. Questionnaires were circulated asking for responses to three questions as follows:

- What I most like about Steeple Claydon is....
- What worries me most about Steeple Claydon is...
- What I'd like to see in Steeple Claydon in the future is...

A question and answer session followed:

Q. Is there a terms of reference and is it accessible on the website?

A. Yes. There are also a lot of generic documents available on the website. Community Impact Bucks (contact Jean Fox) has helped a number of other villages to develop a Neighbourhood Plan is providing expertise. A presentation was made to the Parish Council by a private company which advised that it could complete a Neighbourhood Plan in 18 weeks. This was considered unrealistic and therefore a year has been set aside to complete the work. Paul confirmed that the team should confirm its terms of reference.

Q. Are you speaking to other villages which already have a Neighbourhood Plan?

A. Yes, we have a copy of Great Horwood's and Winslow's Plans as well as contact with Llew Monger, AVDC councillor, who led Winslow's NP development. Buckingham is at the questionnaire stage and members of the teams do get together to discuss this.

Q. If Steeple Claydon does not have a Neighbourhood Plan does this give AVDC carte blanche to do as they wish in the village?

A. Not only AVDC but developers as well. If it can be proved that the development proposals are sustainable from all aspects, then it is likely to be approved. The application by Gladman Developments for development of land in North End Road was refused but is being appealed. The application by Manor Oak Homes for development of land in Buckingham Road is currently being considered.

Q. Are you taking HS2 and the East West Rail line into consideration and the impact that these will have on the village or ignoring them?

A. We are preparing the Plan on assumption that HS2 does not exist, as it has not completed its passage through parliament. The Plan will include a contingency examining the impact if it does go ahead. This applies to the possibility of a station at Steeple Claydon as this will be tied into the HS2 project.

We are looking more at housing needs and identifying what we want, without focussing on what might happen. Protection from the impact of HS2 is the responsibility of the Parish Council. We may include a question regarding the East West Rail line and whether a station in Steeple Claydon is desirable. E-W Rail will include stations at Bicester and Winslow and the Plan will include this infrastructure where appropriate.

Q. What is the timeline and if AVDC publish their Local Plan (LP) before our Neighbourhood Plan (NP), will we have to amend the NP and what is the process for amendment?

A. If AVDC publish their LP first, we will have no choice but to amend the NP. This would mean another period of consultation taking into account the development plans in the LP. Once the LP is published we (and the other councils in AVDC) will have to review their NPs for compliance and fit with the AVDC plan.

Q. When will the formal vote for the NP take place?

A. The questionnaire will be circulated to households in October and from the responses submitted, the Plan will be drafted in December 2015. A final consultation will take place in January 2016 and any amendments incorporated with the final Plan being completed in February 2016. AVDC will conduct a referendum and at this point residents will be asked to vote.

Q. Are there more ideas to involve residents in a more cohesive way to achieve more active participation? For example, could the primary school hold a competition for the children to submit their ideas, or could a coffee morning be arranged?

A. This open event is the start of that public process although it is recognised that we need to develop a consultation strategy to reach those that do not usually get involved. We have asked for help from Community Impact Bucks to develop this and any other suggestions are welcomed. Adam Graveley (NP Team Member) added that we are targeting groups in the village and writing to all of the businesses and groups that we can

identify. For example, the village no longer has a cricket club and one of the supporters of the NP is looking into why it no longer exists and if there is enough interest to reinstate it.

Q. Will the questionnaire be online as well as in paper form?

A. Yes. Each paper questionnaire will have a unique code that can be used to complete it online. There will be one questionnaire per household with the option of obtaining additional codes for other residents in the household, although a disproportionate number of requests will be flagged as suspicious. Everyone should have the opportunity to complete a questionnaire even if all of the views in the same household are the same.

Paul asked if it was felt that there should be a questionnaire supplied for each resident and the unanimous response was yes, there should be.

Consideration will be given to supplying one per household with the option of requesting more and a log kept of how many per household are issued against the electoral roll. The responses should cover the views of the whole household and what they need, however, if only one questionnaire is submitted from one household and four are submitted from another, one household has four times the effect on the result. Betty Picknell advised that we would look at how other villages have addressed this.

Q. When the responses are analysed will there be interest in how many were supplied by each household?

A. Yes and one solution may be to deliver the questionnaires according to how many people registered on the electoral roll are at each address with a unique code for each questionnaire. How seriously the NP is taken will be reflected in the number of questionnaires completed. During the voting stage, a 65% turnout has been achieved in other villages and we hope to achieve the same and therefore we need to make sure that there is plenty of opportunity to vote and these are well publicised.

Paul again thanked all participants for their attendance and advised that this was a fantastic response. He also passed his thanks to the Parish Councillors that attended and the NP Team Members for their continuing efforts.

The meeting was closed at 8.30pm and an invitation extended to everyone to stay on and chat to the team.