



East Hagbourne Neighbourhood Plan (EHNP) Public Meeting, 19th Jan 2016, Hagbourne Village Hall

The meeting was convened to explain and clarify the process for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan with the help of experts from SODC.

Present: For SODC Charlotte Colver, Rona Knott
For East Hagbourne 19 people - see Attachment 1 for list.

Parish Council Chairman David Rickeard welcomed everyone and gave an introduction outlining why we want to prepare a NP at this time. A Parish Plan was put in place in 2011 and at that time there was no perceived benefit for small villages without a specific housing allocation in the SODC Local Plan to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. With the changes since 2011, East Hagbourne is coming under increasing pressure and it is now considered that a NP would be beneficial and could help avoid disorderly development in and around the village.

Cllr Crispin Topping, Chairman of the EHPN Steering Group outlined the progress to date (*the slides are on the web site*).

- A Steering Group had been formally appointed by the Parish Council. Membership will be a combination of Councillors and representatives from the broader community
- Terms of Reference for the group have been prepared.
- A submission had been made to SODC to create a NP based on the boundary of the parish. (*Charlotte Colver said that this had now been agreed, but that some paperwork remained to formally approve at which point requests for financial support could be made*).
- a dedicated web site has been set up at www.easthagbourneplan.net
- A preliminary walk-around of the village had been carried out on 16th January by a small group to identify significant features around the central village including areas that could be protected or enhanced. This will be extended to the whole parish in stages and provide a basis for discussion as the Plan develops.

A preliminary set of draft objectives has been generated as a basis for discussion - the range of topics may be reduced as we progress..

- Preserve the independent character of our village as Didcot expands
- Provide a soft transition from the built-up village area to the open country
- Respond in a measured and planned way to new housing requirements of our community including the provisions of SODC's Local Plan 2031
- Maintain and enhance the footpaths and green spaces as a resource for village and town alike
- Formulate policies to protect the village envelope from traffic noise, light pollution and unplanned development
- Maintain and enhance biodiversity within the Parish
- Encourage cycling ,walking and other non-car based means of transport
- Conserve and protect the historic core of the village within and adjoining the Conservation Area together with its 47 Listed Buildings and structures
- Nurture the volunteer ethos that animates our vibrant village
- Provide traffic management that promotes mobility while respecting and protecting the historic fabric of our village
- Promote and support business, community, sporting and religious activities and premises within the village that enhance the living experience in East Hagbourne and identify any gaps and future need



- Facilitate and support the successful provision of primary and pre-school education within the village and provide as necessary for possible future expansion

Rona commented that the Core Strategy is the current active document and that the Local Plan 2031 was in preparation. It will not be formally adopted until 2018, but the 'Preferred Options' are expected to be published in May/June. Whereas the 2011 Plan did not allocate formal housing allocations to small villages, it is expected that the 2031 Plan will do so. East Hagbourne is classified as a 'small' village and there is no plan to change the criteria for categorising villages. The current local plan remains valid, because there is a 5 year housing land supply.

Charlotte said that the list of objectives was comprehensive and there were no obvious omissions. Having a wide range of themes is a good approach, but the emphasis of the NP must be as a planning document and the policies must be written with that in mind. Transport and facilities are more community issues so need to be integrated appropriately.

The Neighbourhood Plan should "tell a story" - this is who we are, this is how we want to develop. It should be based on firm evidence, policies need to be justified if they are to carry weight.

Specific areas that should be considered are

- a housing needs survey
- landscape character study
- settlement study
- conservation and green spaces (open space accessible to the public is the priority)

NOTE: the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines 'local Green Space' - we should be familiar with the criteria.

We need to align with National and District policies, but should avoid just repeating these - add some local value.

There needs to be wide and regular consultation. Use events in the village, organisations like schools and clubs to widen the contacts. Evidence can include what people value, and we should keep a good record of all consultation activities.

Charlotte said that once the formalities of the designated area were signed off we would be able to apply for grants of up to £5k from SODC and £8k from Locality. In addition up to £10k could be available from the Big Lottery Fund. However, grants must be spent within a specified timeframe, so the timing of the application is important.

The process of writing the report was discussed - appoint expert report writers or do it ourselves. Charlotte pointed out that supervising a report writer was itself a significant task. Rona said it was better to devote resources to preparing the surveys and studies where expert help would be needed. There was discussion of how detailed the policies should be - to include guidelines for housing styles and materials, for example. Ultimately it is a matter of judgement how specific to get.

The value of a Housing Needs Study was questioned in the context of our village which is so close to the town. Although this is a different situation from a more remote village it would be valuable to highlight the need for particular categories of home (such as retirement homes or smaller houses).

A range of potential topics was discussed

- Land usage and the value of features such as ridge and furrow could form part of an archaeological survey.
- Work patterns were a valuable source of information: home working, farmers' needs, village businesses such as the garage and pub, availability of broadband.
- Light pollution and security lighting were of importance to the village environment.

A young attendee asked how young people could help. This is an important aspect, because the Steering Group and support committees need to represent the whole community, not just Councillors. They should give attention to engaging younger people through school/playgroup sessions and other avenues.



Charlotte and Rona explained that SODC have support officers who will be able to help with the process as we go along. They requested that there is not too much email traffic and that any mail contains the word "East Hagbourne" clearly in the title. The NP will eventually have force as part of the Planning process. Some weight is gained at the final draft submission stage, but the full force comes after it has been accepted in a referendum.

In closing the meeting Cllr Rickeard thanked Rona and Charlotte for sharing their experience with us and said that minutes of the meeting would be circulated to all attendees as well as being posted at www.easthagbourneplan.net .

Cllr Topping said that the Steering Group would be moving forward as quickly as possible and would form sub-committees for specific areas. He hoped that those present would contribute to those activities.

ATTACHMENT 1

ATTENDANCE LIST

(with affiliations where appropriate)

For SODC: Charlotte Colver, Rona Knott

Bill Barksfield	
Sally Barksfield	
Andy Barmer	Mindthegreengap.org (MTGG)
Derek Button	EHPC
Ann Dundas	
Sue Harris	
Jean Elliott	EHPC
Richard Elliott	
Anne Jenner	
Terry Jenner	
Ian Leishman	West Hagbourne
Mike Mulligan	
Yen Rickeard	
Richard Steptoe	
Ros Steptoe	
Pam Sutherland	
John Townsend	
Justine Wood	MTGG, Steering Group
Nick Wright	MTGG
Apologies from	
Iain Duff	EHPC, Steering Group
Marcus Wood	MTGG