

Community Engagement Meeting 14 Dec 23 Feedback

What

The East Cholderton Working Group (ECWG) hosted the second community engagement meeting, as with the first meeting aiming to: inform about neighbourhood planning; provide feedback on the NP survey results; explain how we are going to complete the NP; and to engage with and seek support/volunteers from the community to help us get there.

When

The event was held from 6-7pm on Thu 14 Dec 23 in The Memorial Hall in Thruxton. The event closed at 7.20pm (later because of good community engagement). Light refreshments were available (in line with the festive spirit, wine and a mince pie) and popular.

How

The event was hosted by Geraldine Grimshaw, Chair of the ECWG. Clive Pedlar, Amanda Davies, Anne Whatmore, Tim Grimshaw and Chris Harris helped organise the event. 30 others from the community attended. Diana Stephenson (Chair NPSG) sent apologies. Our NP planning consultant and CEO of Hawk Conservancy were not present.

As with the first meeting, a desk at the entrance provided the welcome, a table inside the hall held background material and there were four informal 'stands'. An additional set of display material was laid out on a separate table. Again, there was no formal presentation.

The signing-in sheet records the attendance. Feedback was gathered through 'post-it' comments, although this time feedback was minimal. A hot wash up from NPSG and WG attendees contributed to this record.

Overview

- The evening was very well attended from across the Parish (the last meeting had been largely Weyhill attendees) and everyone was positive and engaged, which showed continued progress in engaging with the community and – being close to Christmas – was pleasantly surprising. The event location was ideal – close to many in the community, good facilities for refreshments and plenty of space for displays and to mingle.
- The primary discussions were regarding housing, views, local green spaces and next steps. The historical belief that Amport Parish Council does not consider Weyhill to be part of it (and to a lesser extent, the PC is not engaged with East Cholderton) again surfaced. **Action:** Chair NPSG to continue to encourage wider community engagement by the PC, including through the NP.

Feedback

- **Capturing feedback.** A few members of the public were new to the NP process, so they needed some explanation to get them interested. A strong emphasis on the importance of feedback to capture views of attendees (for example through the post-its) might help engagement and feedback.
- **Strengthening engagement.** Some mingled, some didn't. People generally seemed to be more involved if they engaged in discussion with other people - whether or not with one of the team. Some struggled a bit with the light/size of print on the display sheets (post-it comment: '[Graphics] *are too small to understand – would have been better somebody explaining them.*'). Some suggested a presentation at the beginning. **Action:** NPSG to consider ways to strengthen engagement. Reflecting, with a pre-brief, SG and WG members might help host stands to raise awareness and highlight key messages with as many as possible at the event. Mindful of this, Sec NPSG has produced a set of outline high level commentary or 'speaking notes' for the stands, that could be used to introduce organisers to support the stand or could be used in a formal introduction presentation (or both) – attached at Annex A.
- **Next steps.** As work on the NP progresses, so the emphasis on '*next steps*' needs effort before the next Engagement Meeting. **Action:** NPSG to improve the description of the next steps at future meetings.
- **Public transport.** From feedback, traffic speed on narrow country roads and the availability of public transport are issues:
 - '[Traffic management to] reduce speed in villages to 20mph please.'
 - 'Public transport is inadequate [for] an ageing population. Subsidised transport does not come out as far as East Cholderton. No shops in the area – you have to go to Andover and pay for taxis.'
 - Action: The NP must address highways and transport issues to slow traffic, improve road safety, and seek to improve the availability of public transport.

Original signed

Tim Grimshaw
Sec NPSG
12 Jan 23

Possible high-level commentary

Reception (welcome)

Thank you for coming. Can we have your **name and which part of the Parish you're from.** Please fill in attendance sheet and agree to us using your email for consultation, engagement and to provide you further information and updates on progress. Consider introducing yourself to key volunteers (NPSG and WG members) and **sharing perspectives** with others attending this meeting. [Our planning consultant is on hand to answer the detailed planning and NP issues – if in attendance] Emphasise the **importance of feedback**, on post-its, to SG or WG members, or to the NPSG email address [npsg@amportparishcouncil.org.uk]

Background (getting started)

The Parish provides planning guidance (limited at it is) at present to TVBC and potential developers through the **Village Design Statement**, or VDS; it needs updating and will never fully articulate the community's perspective. We need a **Neighbourhood Plan (NP)** to do this and APC has TVBC's agreement, support and funding for the preparation of a NP. APC has delegated the preparation of the Plan to a **Steering Group which has terms of reference (ToR)** agreed by Council. We also have a consultant onboard to help us through this endeavour, most costs through a grant from TVBC. The NPSG has formed three Working Groups for each of the three principal areas in the Parish (Amport, East Cholderton and the pan handle to Cholderton Park, and Weyhill), each chaired by a local resident who is also on the NPSG. NPSG has delegated responsibilities to the WG through **WG ToR**. The first step was to survey the community on neighbourhood planning issues, through Apr/May 23. The consultant summarised the responses in a detailed **NP Survey Report. Initial findings** from this report were accepted by APC in July 2023.

Stand 1 (Introduction)

This stand orientates you to **our approach to preparing the NP** – why we need a NP, the process for preparing the NP, some of the key issues (eg housing, green spaces, important views) and some typical Q&A. The NP gives us an opportunity to have our say in planning issues with TVBC who have the delegated authority to approve development. There are some things the NP can and can't do. Importantly, **the NP must conform to TVBC's Local Plan. Once 'made', the NP has equal weight with TVBC's Local Plan** in consideration of planning issues. The map shows the **boundaries of the Parish**, from Weyhill in the North, through East Cholderton and West through the 'pan handle' to Cholderton Par, and south to Amport and the countryside south of the village. The three WG areas are shown on the graphic.

Stand 2 (Potential themes)

You may have completed the **NP survey in mid-2022**; it was well supported by residents from across the Parish. It provided **key initial insights into the views of the community** on a broad range of NP issues. An important initial focus was on what parishioners felt were the **key themes** that should be addressed in the NP. Responses showed universal support for the topic of the **natural environment & green spaces**. Sustainability/climate change, facilities, housing, design/conservation and highways were all seen as important too. The survey asked about the feel of the Parish and suggested **environmental protection, transport/highways and local facilities needed improvement**. Collated, survey responses suggested these six themes (slide 10).

Stand 3 (key issues)

The survey threw up a specific focus on a limited number of key issues.

- **Housing** took centre stage, prompted by TVBC's SHELAA graphic (slide 11). It's important to understand that these are only suggested sites, offered by potential developers or landowners. Some are simply not sustainable; all would need to go through the formal planning process, and none have started that process yet. Survey feedback firmly stated opposition to these developments (between 35-60% of respondents said individual sites should not be developed – slide 13). The survey suggests up to 50 new houses might be needed between now and 2040, with priority required for first time buyers and those downsizing, with 3-bedroom homes having most votes. Do you agree with the survey findings or have any additional comments on housing issues?
- **Green spaces** might provide protection from unwanted development; the process is quite rigorous. Land in a designated green space can only be developed in special circumstances. Our planning consultant has suggested some areas of the Parish that might be nominated as a green space (slide 17 & 18). Are there any green spaces you would wish to designated in the NP?
- **Important views** can be protected in the NP, meaning that new development requiring planning permission must demonstrate that it does not adversely impact the identified view. The planning consultant has developed some possible important views from feedback in the survey (board 7). What do you think of the importance of these views? Are there any other views you would wish to see protected?
- **Heritage assets** were identified by the consultant in the draft Character Appraisal (listed buildings, registered parks/garden, conservation areas and ancient monuments). In addition, the NP can propose non-designated heritage assets – buildings, monuments, sites, places or landscapes that might, for example, be of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest. Are there any assets you would like to propose as locally listed?

Stand 4 (NP Approach)

This stand explains **the process for developing the NP**, looks at how we are organised to prepare the NP ('governance'), considers the need for a 'vision', describes the next steps, and offers some basic Q&A.

This slide (board 1) shows the **four major stages in preparing the NP**. We are in the **second stage: 'engagement and information gathering'**. A series of these community engagement events are intended to get the community talking about what they want. The three WGs will work directly with residents within their own area to understand their perspectives and to start developing a list of the key issues they want to see the NP address. In the **third stage ('Writing the document')** the NPSG, working closely with the consultant and WGs, will develop the vision, and start to develop draft themes and policies, with options to meet them. At the end of this, the NPSG will prepare a 'pre-consultation' version of the NP. The **fourth phase is the period of statutory consultation**, at the end of which an agreed NP is put to a public referendum and, if the majority of residents vote for the NP, the NP will be 'made' and used by APC and TVBC to guide planning preparation and approvals for new development in the Parish.

The key **next steps** are as follows: (new slide required)

- **Form the Amport WG.**
- **Form specialist groups** to provide Parish-wide support such as community/ housing/ heritage; education; environment/ green spaces; economy/ business/ retail; highways/ transport; and photography.
- **Continue Working Group Meetings** to raise awareness, develop understanding, and identify and define key issues (for example, housing, green spaces, important views, traffic, pollution of Pill Hill Brook/SW scope).
- **Continue Steering Group Meetings**, to oversee planning and progress and resolve issues, to agree NP policy and options, and to write the NP, with support from the planning consultant.
- **Continue Community Engagement Meetings**, next in Feb 24, in Amport (Amport WG lead).
- Support TVBC '**Housing Needs Survey**' (first half 2024); Sec NPSG leads.
- Support '**Design Codes Survey**' by external consultant (first half 2024); Chair NPSG leads.