



Walberton Neighbourhood Development Plan Consultation Statement

1. Introduction

Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015) requires that where a qualifying body submits a plan proposal to the local planning authority it must include (inter alia) a consultation statement being a document which:

- ' Contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan
- ' Explains how they were consulted
- ' Summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted
- ' Describes how those issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, have been addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan

This consultation statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of that regulation in respect of the Walberton Neighbourhood Development Plan.

2. Background

The Parish of Walberton covers an area of 1,044.19 hectares and has a population of 2,175 (2011 Census). The Parish is in general rural but contains three distinct villages Walberton Fontwell and Binsted each in its own setting. Walberton Parish Council (PC) provides local government service for the whole Parish. The surrounding parishes are Slindon to the north, Yapton to the south, Tortington to the east, Aldingbourne, Barnham and Eastergate to the west. The nearest major towns are Chichester (8 miles), Bognor (5.5 miles) and Littlehampton (5 miles).

Walberton is the largest of the three villages; it lies between Binsted to the east and Fontwell to the west. It has a form, with development either side of The Street, and along the roads leading into the village.

Binsted has the smallest population. It is spread out along a single road, part of which is privately owned; there are some very large properties intermingled with farm cottages and buildings. There are few new buildings apart from some extensions/rebuilds and two barn conversions.

Fontwell is a more compact settlement than Binsted. It is situated in the northwest corner of the Parish, bounded to the north by the A27; its central street is the old A27 route, Arundel Road.

Walberton Parish produced a Neighbourhood Plan which was “made” by Arun District Council in March 2017. The referendum vote was 95.66% in favour and a turnout of 48.17% - the highest in Arun District.

Since then Arun's Local Plan has been updated and Walberton Parish commenced work on a Review of their Plan in July 2017.

The Steering Group continued their work with new members whose skills encompassed an international sales and marketing event planner, an international company managing director, a system analyst, a veterinarian, software and network engineer, builder / property developer, statistician, technical / scientific author, finance officer and local authority land agent, chartered engineer.

3. Community Engagement

The Group agreed that, the previous eye-catching branding / logo, having successfully previously engaged our community, would be continued as an essential to promote maximum community engagement and also to ensure that the necessary consultation process drew in parishioners via the villages' website which contained links to important Plan processes and a dedicated email address.

Starting in May 2017 and continuing throughout 2020 issues of Neighbourhood News, banners and posters were produced to promote various aspects such as Open Days, Drop-In events, the Survey & Questionnaire, and the Consultation Day. Over the period there were various different and bespoke sets of banners which were placed in different locations throughout the villages. Posters promoting these were also placed on all notice boards, various residents' houses, shops, the two pubs, dental surgery, all three churches, Village Hall and the Village Pavilion.

The banners and posters encouraged everyone to participate and increased awareness of the Plan Review process; as a side benefit, they also served to improve the cohesion between the three different villages. A total of three different newsletters was delivered to all 875 residences and the 72 businesses in the Parish over the Plan Review period. The Group also made use of a Facebook page and Twitter feed and monthly emailed community newsletter that regularly featured the NP Review

Branding was consistent throughout and parishioners have become aware of the Plan Review and are being kept informed on a regular basis. Regular updates on progress with the Review were given to the PC, which was sent all drafts of the Plan for consideration and comment. Hard copies of all key documents are kept in the Parish office for any councillor or member of the public to read.

The result of this feedback and the hard work of the members of the Steering Group was to have been put before residents on 21st March 2020 as a launch of the Reg 14 PreSubmission Draft. Due to the Covid-19 lockdown imposed at that time, our Open Day had to be cancelled. However, this did not prevent any consultation at all as the principal features of the Review were posted in the windows of the Pavilion and were inspected by many residents. Another Open Day took place on 18th July in accordance with current Government guidance on Covid-19 and social distancing.

4. Survey Responses

Taking advantage of the experiences of other parishes and having taken local soundings, the Group put together a local Parish questionnaire with a map of the area showing 11

possible development sites (Survey). In March 2019 the Survey was delivered by hand to each of the homes and businesses, a total of 1,044, in the Parish. Almost 400 responses were received, and the results were then analysed with other inputs so as to seek continued approval of the objectives and policies for the Plan, overlaid with a Parish Vision.

The Survey results and specific site analyses can be found in the Evidence Base, along with analyses of the other responses and over 900 freeform replies. Below is a summary of the leading issues that were identified from the Survey, other than the housing site reactions.

Environment and Sustainability

- ' The existing setting of the villages within open countryside should be preserved, with no development in the gaps between villages
- ' Green spaces within the villages should be protected and enhanced. It is important to ensure key habitats and wildlife corridors in the Parish are protected
- ' It is important to protect archaeological sites of special importance, even those without statutory protection
- ' Traffic increases and road conditions were a concern frequently raised, as were flooding and sewerage worries
- ' Housing density, infrastructure and traffic volumes were the main additional concerns raised.

Village Facilities

- ' Facilities strongly supported for retention or improvement were existing village stores, bus services, allotments, sports and games and social facilities for young people
- ' The main additional or improved facilities referred to in responses were footpaths and cycleways, improvements to Doctors' Surgeries, traffic and road improvements, and playing field improvements

5. Housing Needs Survey

A survey was posted to all households in the Parish in July 2015 and the results can be seen in the evidence base.

This Housing Needs Survey was commissioned and drew statements from 42 people indicating a need to move to more manageable accommodation, citing bungalows, flats, assisted living and sheltered accommodation as requirements. Of all the 59 residents who said that they would require a home in the next 5 years; 80% of them wanted a home to buy or own and 20% would want to rent

6. Diary of Consultation

The Group met formally on many occasions and an organised timetable of events, leafletting, publicity, consultation and information-gathering took place. The Group diary reveals the following: -

2017

10 July 69 Holly Tree – first discussions about a Review
August Housing survey
28 July Public meeting – over 250 attendees
15 September 70 Holly Tree

2018

19 Feb 71 Holly Tree
1 March 72 Holly Tree
1 March Developer meetings
26 March 73 Pavilion
29 March 74 Mallards
3 April Developer Meeting
3 April 75 The Pines
19 April 76 Pavilion – Developer meeting
23 April 77 Pavilion
May Neighbourhood News 8
16 May Annual Parish Meeting – presentation to residents
15 June Arun D C - “Methodology for Distributing the Housing Figures”
18 July Arun Local Plan adopted – Steering Group review
4 September 78 Mallards
24 September Meeting N Plan officer at Arun DC
8 October 79 The Pines with Arun District Council officer 22 October
Neighbourhood News meeting - Mallards
23 October Meeting at Arun DC
2 November 80 The Pines
21 November Developer meetings
November Neighbourhood News 9
7 December 81 Connest - including a landowner

2019

14 January 82 Mallards
26 January Open Day – 148 visitors
4 February 83 Mallards
18 February 84 Pavilion
8 March 85 Mallards
March Neighbourhood News 10 and questionnaire 378
29 April 86 Pavilion
13 May 87 Pavilion
21 May Annual Parish Meeting
3 June Administrator meeting
7 June Developer meetings
24 June 88 Pavilion
8 July 89 Pavilion
25 July 90 Pavilion
12 August 91 Village small hall
12 September 92 Gable House
11 November 93 Mallards
27 November AECOM site selection meeting 10 December AECOM SEA meeting
16 December 94 Mallards

2020

7 January Meeting with Plan administrator
13 January Developer meeting
31 January Meeting with Arun DC officer
27 January 95 Pavilion
7 February Meeting at Arun DC
10 February 96 Pavilion

17 February	Meeting with Plan administrator and IT
25 February	97 Mallards
9 March	98 The Pines
3 July	Neighbourhood News 12 distributed to all households and businesses
15 July	Residents and businesses Consultation email
18 July	Consultation Display – Walberton Playing Field and Pavilion windows
and web site	

Ongoing: Monthly article in the Parish Magazine since July 2017

These reports are in the Evidence Base.

7. Housing Sites Site Selection Process

The Group publicised the intention to prepare a Plan Review by way of 3 editions of Neighbourhood News, posters, banners, 2 Open Day events, a public meeting and at the Annual Parish Meeting in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Contact was made with the owners of all sites listed as available by Arun District Council in HELAA and all owners who had contacted the Group or the PC. It notified them of the proposed Open Day on 26 January 2019 and informed them that details of their site would be included on a map of possible sites for development; it invited them to provide further information if they wished.

The Group made a number of site visits before the Open Day to meet site owners or their agents and discuss their proposals, so as to ensure an even-handed approach and a proper level of information on which parishioners could make choices. Not all landowners fully embraced the Plan Review production process, while others became fully engaged.

The Open Day on 26th January 2019 was attended by 148 people. A map showed 11 potential sites.

The full responses to the Survey are available in the Evidence Base and confirm that there was overwhelming opposition to development in the gaps and countryside surrounding the three villages and on large sites and that there was support for development on brownfield sites (both inside and outside the Built-Up Area) and for the idea that the 60 homes should be on different sites throughout the Parish and not all on one site.

The Group had conferred about the method of choosing sites and a formal list of criteria was agreed, together with the way to apply them; the Group looked at other parishes' processes compared with its own preferences and terms of reference.

Assistance was sought through Locality and AECOM were appointed to review all potential sites within the parish and produce a report which can be found on the evidence base.

The Steering Group reviewed this report and took in to account the survey's unpopularity ranking of sites.

Further meetings with some site owners were held to discuss queries on, or refinements to, their proposals; the issue of sheltered housing was considered for example. The Group was then able to make its individual site assessments of all sites, against its pre-agreed

criteria and reach its final recommendations for sites providing 68 homes including housing for the elderly and those wishing to downsize.

The Site Selection Analysis can be found in the Evidence Base along with an assessment against known constraints which included sustainability considerations.

The Steering Group benefitted from the involvement of professional independent specialists (AECOM) to ensure the site selection process was sound and accords with the national and local planning policies.

AECOM were also engaged to draft SEA and HRA reports to ensure the soundness of our developing environmental policies.

The Group found informal consultation with officers from ADC helpful in ensuring that new policies were in alignment with the new Local Plan.

8. Parish Resident Consultation

The Survey results, together with a total of over 900-freeform suggestions, were backed up with verbal and written comments collated from the Open Day and the Consultation Day. These included comments on individual sites especially where housing proposals on them were refined during the consultation process. Details of these appear in the Evidence Base.

The Group is satisfied that the management of the consultation process with residents allowed it to elicit not only their site preferences but also the full range of parishioner worries and concerns and needs in the future. It also drew in their positive suggestions about the Parish's change and development in the years ahead.

Each of the leading issues, with others that were raised, was considered by the Group and carefully addressed. The Group was required to make judgements, where parishioners' preferences were deemed to conflict with legislation and guidance, for example in respect of local green spaces

The Group was grateful for and gratified by the level of engagement from landowners and residents, with the result that it believes it was able to produce a broadly acceptable and justifiable reviewed set of policies and new sites through a rigorous and fair process that will stand scrutiny.

9. Regulation 14 Consultation

Statutory consultees are being consulted through the Regulation 14 process.

The Draft Plan is being sent to a list of statutory consultees and others (see Evidence Base).

9 Conclusion

The Consultation Statement details how the Group consulted with residents and businesses in the Parish, widely and intensively. It sets out what processes were followed, and details how and when views were sought, what views were sought and how feedback was received on draft proposals.

The Walberton, Binsted and Fontwell Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group

30th June 2020