

**MINUTES
BERRICK SALOME PARISH COUNCIL
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
10TH JULY 2018**

A Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group ('the Group') was held in the Berrick Salome Village Hall on Monday 10TH July 2018 at 8:00 pm.

Present:

Chris Kilduff (CK) (Chair)
Ray Perfect (RP)
Sarah Russell (SR)
Douglas Taylor (DT)
Sarah Vaccari (SV)
Chris Cussens (CC)

1. Apologies for Absence

Sue Lyons (SL), Brian Tracey (BT), Derek Shaw (DS), Ian Glyn (IG), Conrad Shields (CS).

2. Nomination of Chair

CK was nominated to chair the meeting in the absence of both BT and CS.

3. Declaration of Interests

None.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 11TH June 2018, were unanimously approved.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes

5.1 Item 6.2 'Additional Field Work' - DT reported that none had been carried out due to unavailability of the field work team members.

5.2 Item 6.5 'Notable Trees' - CS had reported, via email, that no TPO's are recorded on the SODC web-site anywhere in the Parish.

5.3 Item 6.6 'Manor Farm, Berrick Prior' - outstanding, **Action: IG**

6. Historic Environment Record (draft v1).

An initial draft of an Historic Environment Record (HER) was tabled. The meeting considered that the inclusion of more recent (circa 1700 - early 1900s) data would be beneficial as would the identification of any land and buildings that had resonance today. **Action: DS, CC, and BT**

7. Character Appraisal (draft v1)

An initial draft Character Appraisal, prepared by Neil Homer, was tabled. The meeting noted that sections 1 to 6 of the draft contained the body of the appraisal while section 7 consisted of policy recommendations. The latter to be considered separately under item 8, below.

In regard to the Character Appraisal it was agreed that sections 1 to 6 required editing to ensure consistency of terminology, correction of minor descriptive errors and inclusion of additional field work, as follows:

- 7.1 the production of a revised draft shall be co-ordinated by DT. **Action DT;**
- 7.2 Members shall submit, preferably by email, any suggested amendments and corrections to DT for consolidation and incorporation into the revised draft. **Action All;**
- 7.3 additional field work, covering their respective localities, shall be carried out by individual or informal teams of Members. The same methodology, as used on 5TH June, shall be followed. Definition of settlement boundaries shall be included in that field work (see item 8.2, below). The findings of the field work shall be forwarded to DT for inclusion in the revised draft. **Action: All.**

8. Policy Recommendations

The NP policy recommendations made by Neil Homer in section 7 of his draft Character appraisal were considered. For convenience a copy of his recommendations are annexed hereto. Following discussion the Group was of the view that the NP policy recommendations in respect of settlement boundaries, design and landscape were broadly acceptable and consistent with the Group's previous thinking. In particular, it was agreed that:

- 8.1 the boundaries of the four individual settlements shall be defined in the NP;
- 8.2 proposed boundaries shall be defined as part of the additional field work (7.3 refers). The Group considered that inspection on the ground would assist in determining how tightly boundaries should be drawn in any particular location;
- 8.3 design policies to be referred to BT for comment. **Action: BT;**
- 8.4 landscape policies and the designation of green spaces were previously covered in the draft NP originally prepared by the Group. This shall be revisited and reviewed in the context of the policy recommendations. **Action RP.**

8.5 tree policies. It was suggested at the meeting that having specific policies concerning the retention of notable trees might be desirable. Guidance on TPOs and tree policies in general at District level shall be sought from SODC. **Action: SV**

9. **AOB**
None

10. **Next Meeting**
The date for the next meeting is Tuesday 14TH August at 8:00pm to be held in the rear room of the Berrick Salome Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:05 pm.

Signed Chairman

Date

ANNEX

NEIL HOMER'S NP POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Settlement Boundaries

7.2 The analysis [of the Character Appraisal] clearly demonstrates that the four villages in the Parish, although in close proximity to each other, are distinct settlements with distinct characteristics. Planning policy does not yet reflect these distinctions, nor does it clearly define settlements using mapped boundaries. The result is that the distinction between Berrick Prior and Berrick Salome is blurred in the District Settlement Hierarchy, and so is the distinction between Roke and Rokemarsh, with consequences for how Core Strategy/Local Plan policies are applied in the Parish.

7.3 It is therefore recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan defines the four villages on its Policies Map using the normal conventions for doing so (see Appendix X). When the District Settlement Hierarchy is updated after the making of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is expected that it will identify the four villages accordingly.

7.4 The boundaries will also enable planning applications to be determined in accordance with the relevant policies relating to the built up area of the village and its surrounding countryside. In essence, the principle of development inside the boundary will be accepted but proposals will be subject to the development management policies of the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan. Outside the boundaries, proposals will only be deemed suitable if they are appropriate for a countryside location.

7.5 In defining the boundaries, the Parish Council will be able to consider to what extent it wishes to make provision for infill development over the plan period. If the settlement boundary is drawn very tightly around the existing built form of the villages using the conventions (drawn in dark blue on the Appraisal Maps), infill development will only come about through the subdivision or densification of larger plots or through the development of vacant land that has buildings on at least two of its site boundaries and that is not otherwise identified as necessary to protect from development for one reason or another.

7.6 However, the character analysis has identified a number of plots of land that lie would outside a tightly-drawn boundary but where a case could be made for small development schemes (subdivision/densification or infill), given their specific characteristics, and so where the boundary could therefore be drawn to include them within it (drawn in orange on the Appraisal Maps). They reflect the reality of the transition zone between settlement and countryside in some locations where that definition is not strong but is visible. In effect, this approach lies between a Plan making little or no provision for development and a Plan making site allocations.

7.7 Those characteristics comprise one or more of the following:

- The land is functionally part of a developed plot that is suited to subdivision
- The land has soft (i.e. impermanent) but distinct physical boundaries to the open countryside – mature trees and hedges
- Local topography separates the plot from the open countryside
- Presence of buildings on two or three of the plot boundaries

7.8 If the Parish Council is minded to support such development over the plan period then it should ensure that the boundary definition is consistent in how the criteria in §7.7 are applied across all the villages. It will also want to be assured that design control is asserted through the use of a design policy for each village in the Parish.

Design Policies

7.9 In which case, it is recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan contains a policy for each village that identifies its key characteristics. These should include:

- common plot/building forms/arrangements
- views within and out of the village
- buildings, structures and landscape features that frame, punctuate or terminate a view
- the identification of the village centre even if that place no longer has a functional purpose
- open spaces that form part of the significance of a listed building or of the Conservation Area

7.10 The Policies Maps will be able to contain some of this information but the majority should be described within the policy itself. The policy should also make it clear that it is not expected proposals will have a slavish adherence to the identified characteristics, but they will be required to clearly demonstrate they have had full regard to the relevant characteristics in drawing up their schemes. The burden will be on the applicant to justify why a proposal will depart from the policy.

7.11 There also appear to be candidates for designation as Local Green Spaces (as per §76-77 of the NPPF). Its §77 states,

“the Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- *where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- *where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and*

- *where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”*

7.12 It is recommended that these candidates are assessed further against the second of the three tests in §77, as they should all meet the first and third tests. In each case, a justification should be made, with photographic and other evidence presented.

Landscape Policies

7.13 The analysis shows that the landscape around the villages plays an important role in forming a distinct setting within which they can be appreciated and enjoyed. It plays its most important role in preventing the visual coalescence between the villages, most notably between Berrick Prior and Berrick Salome and between Roke and Rokemarsh, where the distances between the villages is not great.

7.14 It is therefore recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan contains a policy identifying specific areas where the landscape performs a coalescence prevention function. The convention for defining such land – often described as ‘local gaps’ in development plans – is to identify the minimum land area that is necessary to serve the purpose. It is not necessary for the area boundary to follow a physical feature of the land unless such a feature obstructs the ‘line of sight’. The Appraisal Maps show an initial assessment of these gaps by defining the land in green.

7.15 The definition of land as a ‘gap’ does not prevent development that in use terms may be suitable to a countryside location. But, the policy is worded to prevent buildings or structures of a location, height and/or mass that may lead to the visual coalescence of two villages. Careful siting and building/structure design ought to be able to overcome this challenge.