

Notes from the Fremington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting on Monday  
11<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 11am in the Parish Council Offices

Present: Cllr Alan Rennles (Chairman), Fremington Parish Council  
Cllr David Chalmers, Fremington Parish Council  
Mr David Jury  
Mr John Gulliver, North Devon Public Transport Users  
Cllr Mrs Sue Kingdom, Fremington Parish Council  
Mr Mike Kelly, Planning Partnership Ltd  
Mr Graham Townsend, Planning Partnership Ltd  
Mrs Victoria Woodhouse, Parish Clerk, Fremington Parish Council

Apologies

Mrs Lorna Kimberly, Fremington Primary School

Alan welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that Planning Partnership Ltd had been appointed, following a quotation process, to take the Neighbourhood Plan through its next stages and to draft format.

Mike and Graham introduced themselves to the group and provided some background on their experience as Planning Officers, they then explained that they are now providing consultancy, in particular on Neighbourhood Plans, and work closely with a qualified Neighbourhood Plan Examiner which is important to ensure you follow their advice to ensure your Plan is sound and 90% of your policies are not deleted which has happened in other areas.

Graham explained that the group had gathered a lot of useful research and information from consultations, however, some of the content would be outside of the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan but it would be useful for the Parish Council to inform work alongside the Neighbourhood Plan, which is a spatial planning document and the limitations of such need to be recognised. There didn't appear to be any surprises from the consultation responses.

The group was reminded that a Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to stop development but can ensure that development that takes place is more plan lead. It was explained that where the North Devon Council (NDC) receives a hostile planning application, with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, NDC only has to demonstrate a three year land supply instead of five. It was believed that there would be difficulty in justifying a five year land supply at the end of this year, however, even in worst case scenario it has not dropped below three.

Mike and Graham discussed their process for delivering the draft document and explained that there would be a half-day session to report back and outline draft policies and implications and so the plan can concentrate on what is important to the parish.

The group reaffirmed the importance of including transport in the document, it was understood that not all aspects could be covered by the plan but it is an important issue to the community and spaces for logically placed bus stops and roads wide

enough for buses etc. should be considered along with enough roads and footpaths to connect and it needs to be in simplistic terms in an easily understood Plan.

Mike confirmed that this is about “connectivity” and sustainable transport and any new development should look to enhance the connectivity and sustainability, although sustainable transport is within the Local Plan it can be emphasised through the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan should avoid duplication and add value to the Local Plan (any duplication is likely to be removed by the Inspector), the group needs to consider what is locally distinctive.

The proposal by Devon County Council for a Bickington Link which would be provided by further development was briefly discussed with Mike confirming it was not supported through the Local Plan, it was noted that the Steering Group had also not supported the proposal.

Green infrastructure was discussed, it was noted that members of the public had raised several concerns about open space and preserving these areas. They also raised concerns about the lack of infrastructure to support the developments especially community facilities and services which also need to be well located and the spaces for these services need to be considered.

It was noted that there is an infrastructure policy within the Local Plan, however, this doesn't mean it will be delivered, the Neighbourhood Plan wouldn't look to duplicate this policy but could look to be more specific about local requirements.

Mike confirmed that more could be made of the parishes green infrastructure and how you get to them which is not picked up in the Local Plan, he explained that the Parish has several designations such as a SSSI, nature reserves, conservation areas, the Tarka Trail and Coastal path along with the heritage of the parish such as the history of the pottery.

Mike explained that design is also something that can be included in the Neighbourhood Plan and again should link locally to the distinctiveness of Fremington, you would pick out those designs that reflect the village(s) and are of good design for inclusion.

Members discussed the entities within and separate areas of the parish and felt it was important that this is recognised within the document. Graham confirmed that this would also link to the original designation and one of the arguments used to support that designation and protecting the green wedge. It was noted that the Parish Council has already had issues with people understanding the boundaries of the parish and felt this would need to be given some thought for the plan and reflect the different communities within the parish. Mike suggested that in the future the Council could look to secure 106 money towards signs within the parish.

Graham and Mike asked the group to think of any assets which they consider should be listed or investigated for listing as an Asset of Community Value.

Graham and Mike confirmed that they would carry on with the process of pulling out those themes and draft policies and would arrange a brainstorming session with the

group towards the end of March 2019, they asked that members start to think about the design of the document which should be attractive and accessible.

Mike referred to paragraph 28 of the National Planning Policy Framework along with paragraphs 29 and 30 and as follows:

“Non-strategic policies

28. Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.

29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies<sup>16</sup>.

30. Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.”

Which is the latest advice from the Government on Neighbourhood Plans.

It was noted that the Steering Group still had grant funding it could apply for from Groundworks and the question was asked when it would be most appropriate to look to secure these funds. It was agreed that Graham would consider and liaise with the Clerk.

It was noted that it had been agreed to try and produce a draft of the document prior to the May elections.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm.