

A Neighbourhood Plan for East Meon?



This matter will be the main topic to be discussed at the annual Parish Assembly to be held in East Meon Village Hall on Wednesday 24th April 2013. Please come along to hear the presentation and have your say!

Neighbourhood Planning is a new concept that has recently been introduced under the 'Localism Act 2011'. Since April 2012, local communities have been able to produce Neighbourhood Plans for their local area, putting in place planning policies for the future development and growth of their neighbourhood. This act modifies the 'Town and Country Planning Act 1990' but does not fundamentally change its main basis.

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a new way of helping local communities influence planning decisions in the area in which they live and work. It can be used to:

- Develop a shared vision for your neighbourhood (in our case, East Meon Parish)
- Choose where new homes and other developments should be built

of topics important and relevant to a particular parish

- They may be 'adopted' by the local authority, meaning they will be considered a relevant document and will be consulted when making a decision related to the topics in the plan
- They have no formal legal status in the planning system

Neighbourhood Plans are:

- Specifically related to building development (private and commercial) and land use only
- They have formal legal status in the planning system

What could be the benefits for East Meon Parish

- We could define the key features of the village and seek to protect them in a positive way. These may be:
 - Specifying where any future housing development will be placed

Planning Aid

What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

A Neighbourhood Development Plan can set out a vision for an area and planning policies for the use and development of land.

It will form part of the statutory planning framework for the area, and the local planning authority will be required to take account of the plan when determining planning applications.

A Neighbourhood Development Plan can support the strategic development objectives of the local authority, and can be used to address local issues that other plans cannot. It can also be used to set out an area's local character and what is important to the community.

Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?

When they exist, a town or parish council is the only body that can prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan in their area.

If a town or parish council does not exist then a community group known as a Neighbourhood Forum can prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The forum must have a written constitution, have open membership and comprise a cross-section of the community. The role of all members is restricted to advice and a non-partisan area that is predominantly commercial, a business and community centre or a public building.

What is the required process?

Stage 1: Defining the neighbourhood

The town or parish council, or neighbourhood forum, locally selects a Neighbourhood Forum to prepare the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The forum must be a body that is independent of the local planning authority, including the parish or town council, and must be a body that is independent of the local authority. The forum must be a body that is independent of the local authority.

Stage 2: Preparing the plan

A Neighbourhood Development Plan can set out a vision for an area and planning policies for the use and development of land.

Stage 3: Independent checks

The plan must be subject to independent checks by the local planning authority, who will ensure that the plan meets the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and that it is appropriate for the area. The plan must also be subject to independent checks by the local planning authority, who will ensure that the plan meets the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and that it is appropriate for the area.

Stage 4: Community Referendum

Once satisfied with the plan the local council will organise a referendum. A majority of people voting must support the plan for it to be adopted by the local planning authority.

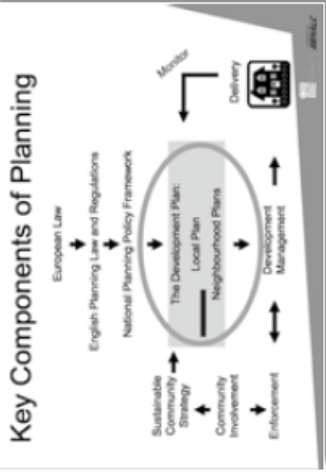
Stage 5: Legal steps

Neighbourhood Development Plans become part of the local planning framework for the area.

- Identifying and protecting the 'gateways' into the village
- Specifying the overall village boundaries
- Protecting the views from the high ground surrounding the village and parish
- Specify where we might allow rural businesses to develop and control inappropriate commercial developments
- Through an 'adopted' village design statement influence the design and materials used on new and modified buildings

What do the various interested parties think?

Parish Council – They have agreed that this item should be presented and discussed at the annual Parish Assembly.



Creating a Neighbourhood Plan is no easy task

- It is estimated it will take between 18 to 24 months to work through the full process to adoption
- It needs the resources in terms of the Parish, not just the Parish Council to make it work
- It needs funding – current estimates are between £8,000 to £15,000 for a parish of our size. There are currently government grants available to help. The

the Village to move it to the next step and set up a project.

Campaign for the Preservation of Rural England – Worthwhile doing, though, keep the plan simple and clear.

South Downs National Park – A steering group, set up by the Parish Council, have met with officers of the SDNP and discussed this matter in depth. The outcome from this meeting was the recommendation from the SDNP to pursue this matter. The SDNP have designed a toolkit to help parishes and town councils work through the issues involved and design a neighbourhood plan that is suitable for their needs

What would be the probable scope of an East Meon Neighbourhood Plan

The plan would include the whole parish but concentrate on the core settlement area of East Meon village and Frogmore. Areas outside of the main settlement area have very strong protections within the 'Local Plan' and will need less work. The following will need to be agreed after a wide and thorough consultation with all sections of the community:

- Redefinition of the Village Settlement Boundaries
- Identification of sites for any future housing development
- Update the 'Village Design Statement' and include the issue of scale, related to any new or redeveloped buildings built alongside existing properties

- Define the 'Village Gateways' and what needs to be done to preserve their special views and features
- Define any important 'green spaces' within the Village that need protection to retain the village character
- Address the issue of retaining the characterful views from the surrounding high ground such as Park Hill, Bordon Down, Smalldown etc.

Brian Biggs