

HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT TOPIC GROUP DOCUMENTS

LIMPSFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN | TOPIC GROUP DISCUSSIONS

TOPIC GROUP: HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

PREAMBLE:

LIMPSFIELD is often described as a dormitory village, and whilst wealthy, it is both dependent upon and addicted to income earned largely by London commuters. As a consequence housing is expensive and the village is not the centre of local life that a rural village would be. Do we agree that this is a fair description? If we do, do we like it and if we do not, can we do anything about it? *Whilst I think the commuters are a key part of the community, I think its important to reflect the relatively high proportion of retired people, and the lack of opportunity for younger people to live in Limpsfield due to high cost..*

In discussing this, I propose the following objectives for us to consider as a starting point

OBJECTIVES:

1. To ensure that Limpsfield remains a functional village and neither becomes a pure dormitory town, nor too predominantly demographically skewed towards one or other sector of the population. *Eg case for affordable housing ? First time buyers ? Part ownership schemes.*
2. To ensure that Limpsfield has housing that is appropriate to achieve this aim. What sort of housing is that? For example, are there enough smaller houses available in the village for those members of the parish that wish to downsize but not move away from the village? *See above – not just downsizing.*
3. To ensure that as a counterbalance to 2., Limpsfield remains attractive to young families to ensure that it has succession -*see above*
4. There are developmental needs that we can discuss, but where these stray into infrastructural needs, we need to cooperate with our findings with other topic groups whose primary aim that is. We also need to be cognisant that other than through the spending of the future CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy, from which Limpsfield will earn income through allowing new housing to be built) which will follow rather than run in parallel with housing development, we have limited influence on non-housing development – *one part of infrastructure housing can influence directly is parking, which is a key part of infrastructure support*
5. To assess what commercial development we want to see in the parish to encourage (and possibly recreate) and sustain village life; this may be particularly relevant to both the young and older sections of the community, particularly in the village itself, who may wish to have access by walking to facilities that are currently absent or inadequate.- *the provision of more pavements is a key infrastructure goal, for healthier living and less congested roads*
6. In conjunction with the Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG), to appoint an interested member of the Topic Group as chair. This is unlikely to happen at the first

meeting, but it is the aim of the NPSG to appoint non-parish councillors to these positions across all Topic Groups.

Cllr Bernie de Haldevang

Initial/Interim Chair of the Housing & Development Topic Group

LIMPSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to Parish Council:
Geoff Dessent

Tel No:
01883 722400
e-mail:
clerk@limpsfield.org
www.limpsfield.org

Address:
8 Hurst Green Close
Oxted
Surrey
RH8 9AN

LIMPSFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT TOPIC GROUP MEETING 27th SEPTEMBER 2016 – 8.00pm – 9.30pm 12 DETILLENS LANE, LIMPSFIELD

Present:

Topic Group Volunteers: Lucy Stuart Lee (LSL) - Chair
Sharon Waite (SW)
William Pratt (WP)
Jim Pearce (JP)

Councillors: Mark Wilson (MW)
Bernie de Haldevang (BdeH)

Clerk and NP co-ordinator: Geoff Dessent (GD)

Apologies: Roger Oldfield
Angela Williams
Neil O'Brien

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Although there have been previous meetings, there have been no previous minutes yet produced although some draft objectives for the topic group have been produced but not yet circulated.
- 1.2 The group felt that as there were only a few possible sites for development in the Limpsfield Parish as identified in the Tandridge District Council draft local plan, that it should consider those sites in detail at this stage, rather than adopt a more generic approach to the type and characteristics of sites which might be developed (which has been done in some Neighbourhood Plans).

2. Sites Identified by Tandridge District Council (TDC) for possible development

2.1 MW had studied the list of TDC possible development sites. His view (and with which all present concurred) was that there were five which were as follows:

- OXT 20 – Land at Pollards Wood Road, Hurst Green (Green Belt)
- OXT 22 – Wolf's Row Allotments (Green Belt)
- OXT 24 - Thornhill/ St. Michael's School, Wolf's Row, Oxted (Green Belt)
- OXT 50 – Hookwood Bungalows, Limpsfield (Not Green Belt)

- OXT 54 - Thornhill/ St. Michael's School, Wolf's Row, Oxted (Green Belt)

[GD has since checked this with TDC, and there is a slightly changing picture -note of meeting between GD and Piers Mason will elaborate on this]

2.2 MW explained that TDC owned the Hookwood Park Bungalows site and that it was next to the conservation area. It was also the only sheltered housing in Limpsfield and these were effectively almshouses. If this area was redeveloped and the same number of housing units were retained as re-configured sheltered housing, it was quite likely that only about 6 new housing units might be built.

2.3 The TDC list of possible development sites sets out some very large developments in and around Smallfield, much of which is not in the Green Belt. That area seems to have the most capacity for new development.

2.4 It was also noted that whilst some other areas in the District had significant amounts of Green Belt, the quality of the Limpsfield Green Belt is very high and included Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

3. Housing needs in Limpsfield Parish

3.1 All felt that there was a lack of affordable housing in the Parish. Developers can be forced to provide a percentage of affordable housing when they are granted permission to build more than 9 houses (although this figure needed to be checked). However, there was a second issue which was how to keep such housing affordable when these houses were sold by the initial purchasers from the developers and thereafter, as house prices in the area continue to rise risking such houses leaving the "affordable" category.

Action: SW to find out the current figures for developers to provide affordable housing units on any new development.

3.2 SW explained that the best way to keep "affordable" housing "affordable" was to do this via a Housing Association which could place conditions on whom the housing could be offered to as rental property and on a continuing basis. These conditions could also be used to ensure that the occupiers had some local connection.

3.3 SW referred to the successful and attractive new development of affordable housing in the centre of Tatsfield by the English Rural Housing Association.

Action: SW to contact English Rural Housing Association to find out more about how they and HAs operated generally. They had already offered to speak to her so she would follow this up.

Action: MW to speak to Piers White about the housing association he is involved with to see how it works (even though it is not local – this would be for information-gathering purposes).

3.4 Of the proposed TDC sites in Limpsfield, "affordable" housing would seem to sit best with the land at Pollards Wood Road (OXT 20) which would adjoin similar developments in Hurst Green and have good access to Hurst Green station.

3.5 There was a general concern about sites which were effectively "garden grabbing" although these tend to be individual applications, and do not feature in the TDC 5 sites. LSL noted that the Woldingham Neighbourhood Plan had some good ideas on managing this type of activity.

3.6 Another need identified was for people downsizing to smaller houses where, again, there was a lack of provision. There were a few smaller houses near the High Street or else people moved more towards Oxted town centre. The old allotments site (OXT 22) might be suitable for a Padbrook-style development of around 20 smaller houses. This might be suitable property for those downsizing.

3.7 There was also a concern that there may well be a need for more housing for younger professionals commuting as the train services improved with longer trains. This might well be another group needing smaller houses.

3.8 SW reported that where smaller properties or flats were built, these were often purchased by investors as rental properties. Some of these could be expensive to rent so did not necessarily satisfy a need for younger people starting out wanting to remain in the area where they had grown up as they could not afford the rent on these properties.

3.9 The Glebe Field, whilst not in Green Belt, was not on the TDC list of possible sites for development. The Glebe Field is registered as a Community Asset, and may well be registerable as a "Local Green Space" which should afford it some "Green Belt" type protection from development.

Action: The status of The Glebe Field should be checked.

3.10 Brook Field was owned by the Titsey Estate. It might be on a flood plain and was possibly not suited for development.

3.11 BdeH said that he was concerned that whatever development was to take place, the broad infrastructure required to support such development needed to be carefully thought through and this should be done in advance so that it was sufficient and did actually materialise.

Action: GD to liaise with CA and I Topic Group on future infrastructure needs.

3.12 MW proposed that in terms of new housing need there should be two broad objectives:

- Young people to be able to stay in the locality, as they grow up
- Downsizing needs for those with existing larger houses

3.13 It was discussed that it would be sensible to explore involving a housing association to find out what they offered, how developments were funded and how they

ensured that conditions for offering accommodation were complied with on an ongoing basis.

3.14 It was noted that some of the TDC sites were within walking distance to Hurst Green station for commuters.

3.15 Landscaping of new development would be important to ensure that existing housing continues to rise in value and that the overall appearance of the local environment is preserved and protected as much as possible – particularly where there is established screening in place already.

3.16 MW noted that the Oxted gas holder was also a proposed TDC site for new housing (OX 16).

3.17 If some of the proposed sites were to be released for development, this should be on the basis that the NP set out that certain other areas of land should be preserved as Green Belt or undeveloped land. In particular, this might include The Glebe Field and Brook Field and the land to the east of Red Lane.

4. Next Steps

4.1 A number of the topic group members were keen to visit the TDC proposed development sites I Limpsfield and the development in Tatsfield on the morning of Sunday 2nd October.

Action: LSL would email everyone to see who might like to go as a group.

4.2 A draft note of the Group's objectives previously prepared by BdeH was produced and circulated.

Action: MW said that he would update this and prepare a further draft to incorporate what had been discussed at the meeting.

4.3 No date for the next meeting was set. This would be set after the Visioning meeting on Tuesday 4th October when LSL would send an email around to see which date people could do.

Action: LSL would email everyone to set a date for the next meeting.

LIMPSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to Parish Council:
Geoff Dessent

Tel No:
01883 722400
e-mail:
clerk@limpsfield.org
www.limpsfield.org

Address:
8 Hurst Green Close
Oxted
Surrey
RH8 9AN

LIMPSFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT TOPIC GROUP MEETING 1st FEBRUARY 2017 – 8.00pm – 10.00pm 12 DETILLENS LANE, LIMPSFIELD

Present:

Topic Group Volunteers: Lucy Stuart Lee (LSL) - Chair
Roger Oldfield (RO)
William Pratt (WP)

Councillors: Mark Wilson (MW)
Bernie de Haldevang (BdeH)

Clerk and NP co-ordinator: Geoff Dessent (GD)

Apologies: Sharon Waite
Angela Williams
Neil O'Brien
Jim Pearce

1. Limpsfield Housing Needs Assessment

1.3 MW introduced his paper on Limpsfield housing need, showing that the population of Limpsfield had fallen between the last two censuses (2001 and 2011), with an average of 11 fewer people resident per year. Furthermore, recent information from Tandridge District Council (TDC) showed that there were currently 50 empty dwellings in the Parish. GD is checking on the number of new homes being built, to complete the picture – and seeking more information on the type of empty dwellings.

Action GD - to seek more information on the 50 empty dwellings and data on the number of new homes being built (Actions in hand from 2 Feb 2017).

1.4 MW also outlined the National Policy Planning Framework definition of Green belt, and felt that the 6 development sites so far identified (in the Green belt) all met all 5 criteria.

1.5 MW also referred to the issues which had arisen in Newick where the SoS for DCLG had imposed new building, which was out of line with the Newick Neighbourhood Plan. The learning from this was that for a Neighbourhood Plan to be effective, it needs to set out a strategic evidence based approach for all possible development sites, and not just those flagged by the District Council as sites identified currently by developers. MW also advised that there were lessons to be learnt on using the “rural exceptions” criteria which might be used to allow building on some green belt but not on other green belt areas BdeH felt it was crucial to check the Neighbourhood plan document with development planning lawyers to ensure it was robust, particularly given the Newick experience and the current LPC position to oppose all building of proposed green belt development sites.

2. Sites Identified by Tandridge District Council (TDC) for possible development/other Building options

2.1 MW explained that in addition to the 6 sites originally identified by developers in the TDC consultation, TDC had now suggested two further sites also both in the green belt, one at the end of Ballards Lane and a further site between the old allotments and Brassey Hill.

2.2 MW felt it was important to think about the Neighbourhood Plan’s approach to both land in the green belt, and that outside it. On the latter, the key aim within the NP would be to designate some (non-green belt land) areas as “Local Green Spaces” which can be done within a Neighbourhood Plan. Work was well underway on this through the Environment and Local Economy topic group, who have now identified 8 potential green spaces, including the Brook and Glebe fields. Another of the “Local Green Spaces” being put forward was to prevent urban sprawl continuously from the old allotments site to Brassey Hill.

2.3 MW also felt that there was an important point to be made about the site near to the Boulhurst way playing fields (a site for Oxted Parish being considered for development), that if the two were to be developed, this would be contrary to the ideals of the green belt which was to try and prevent urban sprawl and separate villages with green space as far as possible.

3. Housing needs in Limpsfield Parish/broader Oxted and Hurst Green area

3.1 All felt that there was a lack of affordable housing (for younger people and those working in the local shops, health and other amenity services) in the Parish, and recognised the need for downsizing options for those in large houses wishing to stay in the locality.

3.2 rCOH has previously advised that it is only possible to assess housing needs for a Parish which is isolated from other areas such as Woldingham. However, as Limpsfield is so close to Oxted and Hurst green, housing need should be considered across all 3 settlements. Oxted Parish Council seems to be very positive about new building including at affordable levels as set out in their response to the TDC local plan sites consultation. It therefore may follow that the need for future housing in Limpsfield would be very limited and might be more about replacing larger houses with a number of smaller ones,

provided this can be done according to the criteria being developed within the heritage and character topic group on housing density, plot size and building styles. And with also has regard to either the TDC off road parking standards or a tighter version of this to control traffic flows, parking and congestion. The group felt that the model used for Stanhopes and Padbrook had a lot to commend it with good off-road parking provision and a range of larger and smaller more affordable houses.

Action: GD to ask TDC for the Stanhopes/Padbrook Specification outline. (Action in hand)

3.3 The group also felt that there was a need for an in-fill housing development approach, which was not to block such development, but rather to manage it according to the heritage and character parameters mentioned above.

4. The Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey

4.1 The group agreed it was crucial to ask the right questions in the household survey about housing need, providing the context for residents of a declining population, empty houses, and the prospects of new housing development nearby which might meet some (if not all) of Limpsfield's future downsizing and affordable housing needs.

4.2 It was felt important to update MWs paper with the latest population figures and a reference to the amount of green belt and the number of empty dwellings.

Action: MW to update his paper and circulate.

4.3 MW felt it was important that ahead of the NP Steering Group meeting on 15 Feb to consider the household survey in detail, that the housing and development topic group should comment on the housing questions section the household survey. And he commended the Pullborough household survey as a good practice example. The group felt this was the best value it could add at the current time.

Action: GD to circulate the latest draft Household Survey (draft 1A), along with the Pullborough household survey. (Actioned on 2 Feb 2017)

5. Next Steps

5.1 Actions as above. No date yet set for the next meeting.

Action: LSL would email everyone to set a date for the next meeting.

LIMPSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to Parish Council:
Geoff Dessent

Tel No:
01883 722400
e-mail:
clerk@limpsfield.org
www.limpsfield.org

Address:
8 Hurst Green Close
Oxted
Surrey
RH8 9AN

LIMPSFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT TOPIC GROUP MEETING 6th March 2017 – 8.00pm – 10.00pm 12 DETILLENS LANE, LIMPSFIELD

Present:

Topic Group Volunteers: Lucy Stuart Lee (LSL) - Chair
Roger Oldfield (RO)
William Pratt (WP)
Ted Beresford-Knox (TBK)

Councillors: Mark Wilson (MW)
Bernie de Haldevang (BdH)

Clerk and NP co-ordinator: Geoff Dessent (GD)

Apologies: Sharon Waite
Neil O'Brien
Jim Pearce

LSL welcomed TBK to the group. TBK explained that he was a retired planning officer, but had worked largely in the Crawley area and whilst working had understandably decided to keep out of local planning matters in Limpsfield. However, he felt as he was now retired and as a Limpsfield resident, he had something to offer in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. This was very much welcomed by all.

LSL felt it was important that the NP was completed before May 2018. MW felt that if the referendum happened at the same time as the Local Council elections, this would increase the response rate, whilst acknowledging that it could get caught up in wider political issues.

1. Household Survey

GD explained that he would shortly be formally circulating the latest draft which would be 1E of the household survey to topic groups once Philip Bailey (chair of the NP Steering Committee) had had an opportunity to comment,

However, in the meantime the group made the following helpful comments about the current draft 1D of the household survey:

- In general, the survey looked to be too long, and it was important to find ways to make it more concise
- On the residents' letter TBK felt that it was important to say why the Parish Council was Developing a Neighbourhood plan and make clear what the purpose of the survey was in particular explaining why some details were valuable about who was completing the survey
- LSL suggested that we might also make it clear on the front page that this survey was coming from the Parish Council.
- All were keen to cut down the "about you" section, and felt the detailed questions about the type of dwelling respondents lived in was over-kill and would put them off filling in the rest of the survey. MW pointed out that if you had postcode, this would pretty much define the type of housing you lived in – his view was that the key pieces of information were House/Flat/postcode – and own/rent.
- All felt that the optional personal details might be put at the end of the survey and linked to entry into the prize draw, again to keep this section shorter
- All felt that the reference to sustainable development in the main body of the survey could be made more concise, and felt the footnote was largely adequate
- Under the housing section, all felt that the reference to CIL could be reduced with no references to percentages, not least as the Parish Council could bid on the district council's allocation of CIL
- The ref to large scale development in Limpsfield should be deleted as none of the sites proposed by developers to date were large scale.
- BdH was keen that where respondents were invited to tick what was important to them on a list of options, that they should show the priority of their preferences. RO felt that the crime section would particularly benefit from this approach, and in general it was felt all such sections should adopt this approach to get better quality information back
- There were a number of other more minor drafting points which will be picked up when topic group comments are incorporated into the near final version of the household survey.

GD felt that once topic groups had commented that the survey should then be finalised by the Steering group at their 22 March meeting to be put to the consultants AECOM to prepare in final format to then go out to residents. All agreed that an online version was important to ensure that a representative sample of responses is achieved – the initial residents survey showed that younger adults were far more likely to complete an online version of any such survey.

2. Other issues discussed

It was agreed that housing need could not really be assessed in Limpsfield in isolation, as for example it may well be that whilst there was a need to be fulfilled in Limpsfield for downsizers, it may be that Oxted and Hurst Green were better placed to provide more affordable housing for younger people/starter homes.

TBK felt that there were dangers in splitting up the various proposed plots to the south of Westerham road, and that the area might be better considered as a whole. MW said that whilst he accepted this point, it may be that one small part of this area (eg the old allotments) might be suitable for housing under a "rural exception" criteria, whilst preserving the rest of the land not to be built on. And under this criterion there would need to be provision for some affordable housing.

GD explained that the consultants (rCOH) who were advising the NP Steering Group was keen to have progress reports from all the topic groups by the end of March so that they could start to develop draft policies in parallel and to be informed by the results of the household survey, which realistically, was unlikely now to go out before early April.

3. Next Steps

The next meeting would be at 8pm, 12 Detillens Lane on 28 March to fine tune an end of March progress report of the group, and consider the latest 2 new proposed development sites (in Ballards Lane and to the south of the Wsterham road).

HOUSING TOPIC GROUP MEETING 16 OCTOBER 2017

POLICY DISCUSSION PAPER

INTRODUCTION

This paper tries to bring together some of the issues which the Housing Group needs to consider in order to help formulate housing policies for the Neighbourhood Plan.

BACKGROUND

The strategic framework for the Neighbourhood Plan is currently set by Tandridge District Council Core Strategy (2008) and its associated Detailed Policies (2014). However, a new Local plan is being prepared on a similar timescale to the Neighbourhood Plan. Regardless of which is formally adopted first, there is an expectation that the two plans should be complementary. In the context of housing, this suggests that any policies should be prepared taking into account the work which Tandridge has done on housing needs and on its preferred strategy as well as the local evidence which has been collected relating to Limpsfield Parish.

THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The provision of more new homes is a Government priority and local authorities are expected to support this through the allocation of housing land to meet 'objectively assessed needs' for market and affordable housing.

Tandridge District Council has identified its overall housing need as 9,400 dwellings over a twenty year period (2013-2033) or 470 dwellings per annum. This figure is disputed by the OLRG who believe it to be inflated. A new standardised methodology for assessing housing needs is currently being consulted on by the Government; if adopted, the new methodology would increase Tandridge's objectively assessed housing needs to 645 dwellings per annum.

There is no absolute requirement to meet the objectively assessed housing need as there may be circumstances where the adverse effects of development outweigh the benefits or there are specific national policies which restrict the amount of development that can take place. However, there is an expectation that local authorities seek to achieve their housing needs and this includes, for example, reviewing Green Belt boundaries.

Tandridge has set out its strategy for its new Local Plan. Whilst it does not actually define the number of houses, it confirms the need for 9,400 dwellings. In the short term the focus is on the main urban areas whilst in the longer term the focus shifts to a new 'Garden Village'. This could entail development on sites within or on the edges of the settlements. Tandridge recognises that increasing densities within these areas 'would risk unacceptably and inevitably altering their character'. However, additional work is programmed to explore whether there is any additional potential within the built up areas.

The strategy itself does not address the size or type of housing which is required. However the supporting information suggests that the Local Plan will focus on smaller dwellings (3 bedroom or less) and mechanisms for securing 'affordable housing' (publically subsidised housing of one form or another).

THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced to give local communities greater opportunities to influence the future of their area, safeguarding existing assets and helping to manage new development in terms of its form and location. In terms of housing this may mean identifying sites to meet housing needs or developing policies which influence the size or type of houses which are built. Policies may also be produced to help manage the way in which 'infill' and 'garden' development takes place (policies which fall within the remit of both the housing and building design and design groups). The policies must be in general conformity with the strategic plans of the District council and in line with the principles of sustainable development.

At the 2011 Census, Limpsfield had 1430 households, only a small (4.3%) proportion of Tandridge District. With 94% of the Parish within the Green Belt, housing is concentrated into the area around Limpsfield Village and the residential roads to the west. In this context most of the housing forms part of the wider urban area of Oxted, Hurst Green and Limpsfield.

In terms of dwelling size, Limpsfield stands out from Tandridge as a whole (and even more so when compared with Surrey or England) by reason of the proportion of larger houses. The 2011 census indicates that 53.4% of the dwellings had 4 or more bedrooms compared with 39.4% in Tandridge, 28.4% in Surrey and 19% in England.

In terms of tenure, owner occupancy is higher than in Tandridge as a whole (and again more markedly so in comparison to Surrey and England). The 2011 census indicates that 83.3% of the dwellings were owner occupied as compared with 76.8% in Tandridge, 73.9% in Surrey and 64.1% in England as a whole. Social rented accommodation is proportionately lower.

No separate housing needs assessment has been carried out for the Parish.

A preliminary review of the household survey suggests that a significant majority of the people responding do not wish to see more houses built in Limpsfield (78.2%) or close by in Oxted or Hurst Green (71.7%). Of those who stated that they did wish to see some more homes, nearly half (47.8%) indicated a need for houses with 3 bedrooms or less and for starter homes (47.1%) and approximately one third indicated sheltered housing (32.6%).

In terms of location for any new housing development, 64.5% said that they would not support development in the Green Belt under any circumstances.

POLICY AREAS

It is for the Parish Council, as the body responsible for the Neighbourhood Plan, to determine what matters it wishes to cover in terms of planning policy. Whilst many neighbourhood plans include housing policies and allocate land for housing, there is no requirement for them to be included.

Housing Numbers

Whilst the figures are disputed, it seems likely that the Tandridge Local Plan will look to deliver a significant amount of housing over the next 20 years. At present, the Plan seems

likely to allocate sites across the District to meet housing need, focusing on the main settlements and a new village and involving some release of green belt land.

Without a local housing needs assessment or other guidance, there is little scope for identifying a notional figure for the amount of housing which is needed in Limpsfield. The Government's draft methodology would do this **if** there were no up to date local plan. This involves a simple formula which apportions housing need on the basis of population. On the Government's draft formula 28 dwellings per annum would be needed over a 20 year period (20 per annum if Tandridge's existing housing need figures were used rather than the Government's).

Any significant amount of housing would appear to run counter to the view expressed by many local residents through the consultation and would therefore need to be very well justified if it were to be accepted at a referendum

Provided the Local Plan progresses as programmed, notional housing need figures need not be an issue for the neighbourhood plan itself. Tandridge will make decisions about where to allocate land to meet housing need taking into account its overarching strategy, the availability and deliverability of sites and its review of green belt boundaries.

Comment: The Topic Group is asked to consider whether it wishes to pursue the issue of housing numbers any further or accept that this will be a matter addressed in the Local Plan as part of a more strategic approach to the delivery of housing. This would not preclude separate decisions on site allocation to meet specific needs, should this be considered appropriate in the local context.

Site Allocation

Neighbourhood planning is seen as a method by which local communities can help determine where new development, in this case housing development, takes place. However, in terms of site allocations, the Limpsfield neighbourhood plan is, in technical terms, heavily constrained.

Revisions to the Green Belt boundary can only be made through the Local Plan process and are therefore the responsibility of Tandridge District Council. In the spirit of the legislation on neighbourhood plans, Tandridge Council has indicated, in its draft strategy, that there is an opportunity for neighbourhood planning forums to liaise with them on any proposals they might have with respect to green belt boundaries

Outside the Green Belt, there are currently no sites for housing that have been put forward through the Council's Housing and Employment and Land Availability Assessment process although Tandridge Council, in its draft strategy, has indicated that it is still exploring whether there may be sites which have not yet come forward

The one significant area of undeveloped land outside the Green Belt is the land between Detillens Lane and Granville Road (Glebe Field, Glebe Meadow, and Brook Field). Most (though not all) of Brook Field is within flood zones 2 and 3 and therefore unlikely to be suitable for residential development, and the whole area has been identified as a possible Local Green Space, a proposal for which there has been significant support in the community consultation.

In the absence of there being any housing allocations within either Local or Neighbourhood Plans, any perceived needs (for example for smaller or 'affordable' housing could only be met outside the Parish or when 'windfall' sites occur.

Comment. The Topic Group is asked, whether in the context of its understanding of housing need and of its assessment of local community views, it considers that there is a case for making housing allocations and if so on what broad basis. Given that there are still discussions taking place with a range of stakeholders, it may be that this will be a preliminary view

Housing Types and Sizes

The Tandridge Housing Needs Assessment signals the need for smaller and 'affordable' dwellings within the District. Although there is no local 'Parish' assessment, the statistics and the response from local residents suggests that this may also be the case at a more local level. The response from residents also suggests that consideration might be given to 'sheltered' accommodation of one form or another.

On larger windfall sites and on any allocated sites, the opportunity exists to seek to secure a mix of housing which meets the perceived local needs, for example by specifying a minimum proportion of smaller dwellings.

On smaller sites, this approach is more challenging, as the local character of individual roads becomes a stronger factor in influencing the shape and form of new development. However, if the Plan is to respond to perceived local needs then this should be considered. At this level, there is potentially a significant cross-over with the work being done by the Design and Heritage Group.

The issue of affordable or subsidised housing is more difficult. Tandridge District Council will be including affordable housing policies in its Local Plan, policies which will be backed by detailed viability assessments. It needs to be considered whether the Neighbourhood Plan can justifiably go any further.

Comment. The Topic group is asked to consider, in principle, what policies it would like to pursue with respect to housing types and sizes

Infilling and Garden Land Development

Tandridge District Council already operates a policy which limits the amount of garden or infill development which can take place and its new draft strategy suggests that this may continue. The Design and Heritage Group is also looking at this issue.

This approach is important if the character of the different residential areas is to be maintained. It limits the amount of housing which is likely to be delivered as 'windfalls' and Tandridge has already adjusted the 'windfall allowance' which it includes in its housing statistics to reflect this.

Comment. The Topic Group is asked to note the approach and consider any comments it wants to make.

Garden Village

The Garden Village is a strategic initiative being considered by Tandridge Council. Whilst again it should be noted that the Council's figures are disputed, a new village wherever located would go some way towards meeting assessed housing needs, reducing the extent to which new housing allocations are needed elsewhere,

Comment. the Topic group is asked to consider whether, in the context of the Neighbourhood Plan, there are any comments it wishes to make.

TBK 09/10/17

HOUSING POLICIES POSSIBLE DIRECTION

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Topic Group has considered how policies might be developed for the Neighbourhood Plan. In doing so it has taken into account the overall strategic framework set by the Government, the current Local Plan for Tandridge, the direction of the emerging Tandridge District Plan the particular characteristics of Limpsfield Parish and the views of local residents. Discussions with businesses and major landowners are still ongoing. This note sets out the proposed direction for this part of the Plan.

BACKGROUND

The strategic framework for the Neighbourhood Plan is currently set by Tandridge District Council Core Strategy (2008) and its associated Detailed Policies (2014). However, a new Local plan is being prepared on a similar timescale to the Neighbourhood Plan. Regardless of which is formally adopted first, there is an expectation that the two plans should be complementary. In the context of housing, this suggests that any policies should be prepared taking into account the work which Tandridge has done on housing needs and on its preferred strategy as well as the local evidence which has been collected relating to Limpsfield Parish.

THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The provision of more new homes is a Government priority and local authorities are expected to support this through the allocation of housing land to meet 'objectively assessed needs' for market and affordable housing. In this context, Tandridge District Council has identified its overall housing need as 9,400 dwellings over a twenty year period (2013-2033) or 470 dwellings per annum, although this figure has been disputed. A new standardised methodology for assessing housing needs is currently being consulted on by the Government which, if adopted, would increase Tandridge's objectively assessed housing needs to 645 dwellings per annum.

There is no absolute requirement to meet the objectively assessed housing need as there may be circumstances where the adverse effects of development outweigh the benefits or there are specific national policies which restrict the amount of development that can take place. However, there is an expectation that local authorities seek to achieve their housing needs as far as possible.

Tandridge has set out a draft strategy for its new Local Plan. Whilst it does not actually define the number of houses, it confirms the need for 9,400 dwellings. In the short term the focus is on the main urban areas whilst in the longer term the focus shifts to a new 'Garden Village'. This could entail development on sites within or on the edges of the main settlements. Tandridge recognises that increasing densities within the main settlements 'would risk unacceptably and inevitably altering their character'.

The strategy itself does not address the size or type of housing which is required. However the supporting information suggests that the Local Plan will focus on smaller dwellings (3

bedroom or less) and mechanisms for securing 'affordable housing' (publically subsidised housing of one form or another).

THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced to give local communities greater opportunities to influence the future of their area, safeguarding existing assets and helping to manage new development in terms of its form and location. In terms of housing this may mean identifying sites to meet housing needs or developing policies which influence the size or type of houses which are built. Policies may also be produced to help manage the way in which 'infill' and 'garden' development takes place. The policies must be in general conformity with the strategic plans of the District Council and in line with the principles of sustainable development.

At the 2011 Census, Limpsfield had 1430 households, only a small (4.3%) proportion of Tandridge District. With 94% of the Parish within the Green Belt, housing is concentrated into the area around Limpsfield Village and the residential roads to the west. In this context most of the housing forms part of the wider urban area of Oxted, Hurst Green and Limpsfield.

In terms of dwelling size, Limpsfield stands out from Tandridge District (and even more so when compared with Surrey or England) by reason of the proportion of larger houses. The 2011 census indicates that 53.4% of the dwellings had 4 or more bedrooms compared with 39.4% in Tandridge, 28.4% in Surrey and 19% in England as a whole.

In terms of tenure, owner occupancy is higher than in Tandridge (and again more markedly so in comparison to Surrey and England). The 2011 census indicates that 83.3% of the dwellings were owner occupied as compared with 76.8% in Tandridge, 73.9% in Surrey and 64.1% in England as a whole. Social rented accommodation is proportionately lower.

No separate housing needs assessment has been carried out for the Parish.

A review of the household survey suggests that a significant majority of the people responding do not wish to see more houses built in Limpsfield (78.2%) or close by in Oxted or Hurst Green (71.7%). Of those who stated that they did wish to see some more homes, nearly half (47.8%) indicated a need for houses with 3 bedrooms or less and for starter homes (47.1%) and approximately one third indicated sheltered housing (32.6%).

In terms of location for any new housing development, 64.5% said that they would not support development in the Green Belt under any circumstances.

VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The Draft Vision for Limpsfield Parish is 'to promote a vibrant community and to protect and maintain its heritage, character and green environment whilst responding in a sustainable way to demographic, social, health, lifestyle and economic changes.'

Draft objectives which reflect that vision and seek to address both the strategic context and the local circumstances might be:

- To help meet housing needs by supporting the delivery of new housing in sustainable locations across the Parish and in other locations within the Oxted/ Hurst Green/Limpsfield urban area.
- To ensure that new housing is only provided on sites and at densities which would not harm the prevailing character of the area in which they are set or the amenity of the properties which surround them.
- To help meet the need for smaller and more affordable homes by securing a wider mix of housing in new developments

POLICY AREAS

Housing Numbers

Whilst the figures are disputed, it seems likely that the Tandridge Local Plan will look to deliver a significant amount of housing over the next 20 years. At present, the Plan seems likely to allocate sites across the District to meet housing need, focusing on the main settlements and a new village and involving some release of green belt land.

There has been no local housing needs assessment or other guidance and there is therefore little scope for identifying a notional figure for the amount of housing which is needed in Limpsfield. The Government's draft methodology would do this **if** there were no up to date local plan. This would involve a simple formula which apportions housing need on the basis of population. On the Government's draft formula 28 dwellings per annum would be needed over a 20 year period (20 per annum if Tandridge's existing housing need figures were used rather than the Government's).

Any significant amount of housing would run counter to the view expressed by many local residents through the consultation and involve a significant risk to the character and environment of the Parish, both within the main residential areas and the surrounding Green Belt.

Against this background it is proposed that the Neighbourhood Plan does not identify housing numbers for the Parish, relying on the strategic decisions made through the Tandridge Local Plan. The numbers currently proposed by the District Council will continue to be a matter of debate and may change as work progresses and the Parish Council may continue to make representations on this.

Draft Approach/Policy

The overall level of housing need as identified in the adopted Local Plan will be supported. The amount of housing, if any, to be provided on allocated sites within the Parish will be determined as part of the wider strategic decision making process for the Oxted/Hurst Green/Limpsfield Urban Area.

Site Allocation

Neighbourhood planning is seen as a method by which local communities can help determine where new development, in this case housing development, takes place. However, in terms of site allocations, the Limpsfield neighbourhood plan is, in technical terms, heavily constrained.

Revisions to the Green Belt boundary can only be made through the Local Plan process and are therefore the responsibility of Tandridge District Council. In the spirit of the legislation on neighbourhood plans, Tandridge Council has indicated, in its draft strategy, that there is an opportunity for neighbourhood planning forums to liaise with them on any proposals they might have with respect to green belt boundaries

Outside the Green Belt, there are currently no sites for housing that have been put forward through the Council's Housing and Employment and Land Availability Assessment process although Tandridge Council, in its draft strategy, has indicated that it is still exploring whether there may be sites which have not yet come forward

The one significant area of undeveloped land outside the Green Belt is the land between Detillens Lane and Granville Road (Glebe Field, Glebe Meadow, and Brook Field). Most (though not all) of Brook Field is within flood zones 2 and 3 and therefore unlikely to be suitable for residential development, and the whole area has been identified as a possible Local Green Space, a proposal for which there has been significant support in the community consultation.

In the absence of there being any housing allocations within either Local or Neighbourhood Plans, any perceived needs (for example for smaller or 'affordable' housing) could only be met outside the Parish or when 'windfall' sites occur.

In these circumstances, it is proposed that the Neighbourhood Plan makes no housing site allocations but indicates that it will support the strategic approach of the Tandridge Local Plan when it is finally adopted. This would indicate a recognition that sustainable sites for housing do need to be brought forward but does not preclude discussion over individual sites and consideration of the 'exceptional circumstances' which could lead to a change in the Green Belt Boundary within the Parish.

Draft Approach/Policy

Sites to meet local housing needs will be allocated through the strategic local plan process not the Neighbourhood Plan. The delivery of housing sites identified within the adopted Local Plan will be supported.

The Parish Council will seek to ensure that any amendment to the Green Belt Boundary to help meet housing needs is only made if there are exceptional circumstances and the amendment is appropriate having regard to other options available

'Windfall' Housing Sites

There will continue to be opportunities for new housing on sites which are not allocated for development.

Policy DP8 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2 (Detailed Policies) seeks to manage the way in which housing development on garden land takes place. Through this policy the District Council seeks 'to encourage sustainable development whilst maintaining local character and distinctiveness, high standards of residential amenity and biodiversity'. The District Council's new draft strategy suggests that this may continue and the Council has adjusted the 'windfall allowance' which it includes in its housing statistics to reflect this.

This approach is considered of particular importance to Limpsfield Parish and provides a framework for maintaining the character and the quality of environment of the different residential areas. Policies for Design and Heritage in the Neighbourhood Plan are likely to develop the principles of this approach in more detail for different parts of the Parish.

Draft Approach/Policy

Policy HI Proposals for the development or garden land within the Parish will be permitted subject to the criteria set out in Policy DP8 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2 (Detailed Policies) and the more specific area based policies in the Design and Heritage Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Proposals will also need to meet other policies in the District Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan

Housing Types and Sizes

The Tandridge Housing Needs Assessment signals the need for smaller and 'affordable' dwellings within the District. Although there is no local 'Parish' assessment, census data and the response from local residents suggests that this is also the case at a more local level. The response from residents also suggests that, if housing development were to be considered, 'sheltered' accommodation for the elderly might be appropriate.

In these circumstances it is considered appropriate to establish policies that ensure that new development provides a mix of housing sizes, including smaller dwellings. On larger sites a minimum proportion is proposed. On smaller sites, the local character of individual roads is a stronger factor in influencing the shape and form of new development and it may prove more difficult to secure an acceptable form and layout for the development whilst providing a significant proportion of smaller dwellings. For these sites slightly more flexibility is proposed. In all cases there is a risk that smaller dwellings will be extended, possibly soon after planning permission has been granted, to provide additional bedrooms; to help maintain the new supply of smaller dwellings, conditions, it is proposed that planning conditions be attached to permissions.

Tandridge District Council will be including affordable housing policies in its Local Plan, policies which will be backed by detailed viability assessments. It is proposed that this approach is supported in the Neighbourhood Plan. However, in the absence of a detailed housing market assessment, no policy is proposed for the Neighbourhood Plan itself.

Draft Approach/Policy

Policy H2 All new housing developments should provide a mix of house sizes including a proportion of dwellings with three bedrooms or less. For developments of four or more dwellings, at least 50% of the dwellings should have three bedrooms or less.

Policy H3 In order to help maintain the supply of smaller dwellings, planning permissions for new housing will be subject to conditions requiring the prior consent of the local planning authority for extensions or alterations which provide additional accommodation at first floor level or above

The Parish Council will support the provision of affordable housing as a proportion of new housing developments, in accordance with policies in the Local Plan.

TBK 06/11/17