

TOLLESBURY

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



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Notes of the meeting of Tollesbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on Thursday 16th September 2021 commencing at 7.30 pm via Zoom.

Present: Roy Clare (RC), Simon Lewington (SL), Gail Norton (GN), Simon Plater (Chairman), Andrew St Joseph (ASJ), Emma Stephens (ES)

Admin: Michelle Curtis (MC)

Simon Plater, Roy Clare and Andrew St Joseph are members of Tollesbury Parish Council.

Emma Stephens is a Maldon District Councillor

The meeting opened at 7.30 pm.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence from David Hillyer and Sue Palmer.

2. **Notes from the Previous Meetings**

Deferred to the next meeting.

3. **Neighbourhood Plan**

3.1 Planning Consultant

The Chairman reported that the Steering Group agreed to push forward with the Tollesbury Neighbourhood Plan at the last meeting. He had written to Maldon District Council to ask if there was any information on housing numbers. Anne Altoft-Shorland, Lead Specialist – Local Plans, Maldon District Council, who is working with Maldon District Council on the new Local Development Plan (LDP), replied to the letter. The Chairman advised that he has also spoken with Anne, who was happy to give an update on the LDP. Currently, MDC has carried out a 'Call for Sites'. The strategy of the new Planning Policy Team is going to be very different from what has been done in the past. It was recognised that the previous plan had allocated the housing into few areas. The new team will be adopting a very different approach, and the housing may be dispersed around the district.

Anne recognised that Tollesbury was a very sustainable village. Anne indicated that the housing figure at MDC was not robust. It currently stood at 3.2 years and stated this might fall lower than this, possibly below 3 years, leaving Maldon in a very vulnerable situation. Anne stated that should it fall below 3 years, all Neighbourhood Plans would need to be reassessed. The housing figures are currently unknown as the process is currently ongoing.

The Chairman advised that he had spoken to Andrew Cann, Planning Consultant, regarding the possibility of the housing figure falling below 3 years and the need for Neighbourhood Plans to be reviewed. Andrew did not think this was the case.

Andrew advised that we may need to increase the housing numbers and suggested that we continue with the plan but indicate that we might consider taking additional housing, putting us in a stronger position to defend our position.

The Steering Group agreed that the current proposed site in North Road could be expanded.

SL stated that the plan of 30 houses has been evidence-based, and anything higher would not be evidence-based.

The Chairman advised that MDC does not have to work to those parameters and can allocate housing as the government set. As the current LDP is failing, MDC is currently assessing everything, and it would appear that they are going to put more housing around the district rather than in four strategic sites as per the current LDP. If Maldon is minded to disperse the housing around the district, would we be better positioned to increase the housing numbers in the Neighbourhood Plan?

Members had an open discussion regarding the potential number of houses, other possible sites and whether the current planning applications in the system (Woodrolfe Road and the Bus Depot) would be considered by MDC.

The Chairman stated if we make the site in North Road bigger, there would be an opportunity for other housing schemes and community involvement, i.e. Community-Led Housing.

The Chairman suggested that a Highways Assessment was carried out to get the maximum number of properties for the proposed North Road site with one access.

ES stated that road traffic surveys were recently carried out by a Developer on the North Road site and whether it would be possible to

get a copy of the survey results. The Chairman advised that the Catholic Church carried out the survey, and he would contact Simon Hall to see if they would be prepared to share the information with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

The Chairman agreed to obtain a quotation for a traffic assessment on the North Road site.

There was also discussion about whether an area to the west of the village should be allocated for the industrial area as the current location is in flood zone 3. Residents suggested this at the first Neighbourhood Plan workshop held.

ASJ advised that in the Shoreline Management Plan, the official view is to 'hold the line' until 2105; this means that there would be either a managed realignment or hold the line and the designation for the area between the sewerage works and the marina is 'hold the line' but this does not take into account major storm surge events which over the last 400 years have had a frequency of approx. 1 every 50 years. The 2013 surge was 1.3m, we have had surges since then of 2m, but they occurred at low water. The high surge in the last 100 years was over 3m (which is higher than the 1953 surge).

3.2 Next steps

ES to arrange a further meeting with Anne Altoft-Shorland.

4. Next Meeting

Thursday 14th October 2021 – 7.30pm via Zoom

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.