

WESTBOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

CONSULTATION STATEMENT

SUBMISSION VERSION APRIL 2017





WESTBOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2017 TO 2029

SUBMISSION VERSION. APRIL 2017

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INDEX TO CONSULTATION EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS:

Where references are made to other Consultation Documents, (CS1 to CS50), these are available on the Westbourne Parish Council website, <http://www.westbournepc.org/>

CS01	Neighbourhood Plan Flyer April-May 2013
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I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Consultation Statement details the communication process with the residents, local groups and businesses along with the wider stakeholders of the Westbourne Parish which includes the village of Westbourne and the hamlets of Aldsworth and Woodmancote, population 2,300. This comprises 1100 households and a wide range of businesses and community groups. Part of our neighbourhood is in Chichester District Council's local planning authority area and part is in that of the South Downs National Park Authority.
- 1.2 In consultation with residents and stakeholders, a Village Design Statement for Westbourne was produced in 2000, followed by a Parish Plan in 2006 to protect and enhance Westbourne and its community. For the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2029, future housing development including plots and pitches for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People and the protection of views, green corridors, gaps, valued green spaces and natural habitats, are the focus of consultation with residents. The original Village Design Statement has been revised alongside the current Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.3 The charm of the parish lies in its rural location covering 1,846 acres of countryside nestling in a patchwork of open fields and woodland interlaced by streams, valuable wildlife habitats and country lanes with small open spaces deep within the village. Its buildings range from timber-framed thatched cottages and Georgian mansions, to Victorian terraces and modern houses. It incorporates 66 listed

buildings. Residents appreciate Westbourne's rural charm, its sense of community and relative isolation from the south coast conurbation.

2. SETTING UP THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 2.1 At the Westbourne Annual Parish Assembly on 25th April 2013 presentations were made on various aspects of producing a Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan by representatives of Chichester District Council (CDC) and the Chairman of Boxgrove Parish Council. *See: document CS1 for the publicity poster for this meeting.*
- 2.2 A subsequent public meeting was held on 2nd May 2013 where the majority of people present agreed that Westbourne should produce a Neighbourhood Plan. *See: documents CS2 & CS3 for the publicity and notes from this initial meeting.*
- 2.3 Following this first meeting, a Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (WNPSG) was established comprising Parish Councillors and local volunteers under the auspices of the Westbourne Parish Council (WPC). An initial meeting was held on 16th May 2013 and a plan of action was agreed. *See: documents CS4 & CS5 for the Minutes and Terms of Reference.*
- 2.4 A primary action from this meeting was to approach CDC to agree the designated area for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.5 While area designation was being established, initial consultations took place to garner residents' opinions, on

the assumption that the designation would follow the Parish Boundary.

- 2.6 Area designation was agreed with CDC on 13th December 2013. This followed the Parish Boundary and includes the hamlets of Woodmancote and Aldsworth. *For the letter from CDC confirming designation and a map of the area see: documents CS6 & CS7.*

3. SUMMARY OF VILLAGE-WIDE CONSULTATIONS

EARLY CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (WNPSG) decided to conduct an initial public consultation, firstly to explain the purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan and secondly to establish the local issues that were important to residents. An initial questionnaire was delivered to every household and a 40% response was achieved. *See: document CS8.* The results of this initial questionnaire are included with the responses recorded from the Open Day. *See: document CS9.*
- 3.2 This was followed up by an 'Interactive' Open Day at Westbourne Parish Hall on Sunday 14th July 2013 to engage further interest. More feedback was invited on the main areas of concern identified in the initial questionnaire. The main issues that arose from these two initial consultations were as follows, (Housing Development, and Roads and Parking receiving by far the most comments):
- 1 Housing Development: opposition to further development - fears connected to a potential increase in

flooding, more traffic, spoiling the character of the village and lack of local facilities. Brownfield sites should be used. Large Hampshire Farm development already close by.

2 Roads and Parking: traffic calming measures needed. Heavy traffic danger to pedestrians. Poor maintenance of roads and pavements. Lack of parking.

3 Environment: keeping the rural atmosphere of the village. River management. Preserving wildlife. Concerns over litter.

4 Flooding and Drainage: flood alert improvement. Concerns over future flooding and drainage. Obtaining buildings insurance.

5 Local facilities: more local and sporting facilities. Youth club needed.

6 Health facilities: need to keep doctors' surgery in the village.

7 Historic Building Preservation: support needed to maintain historic buildings.

8 Public Transport: calls for a better bus service.

9 Schools and Playgrounds: primary school heart of community. Residents wanted the school swimming pool opened to the public during the school holidays.

10 Community: Westbourne should retain its character, preserve integrity and ensure a balanced village. Retain/expand essential facilities. Protect from over development. Further information on these responses are recorded: *See: document CS9.*

- 3.3 During September and October 2013, work began to set up a Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan website which would be easily accessible to residents and which could inform and update them on progress. This was achieved by linking

with the Westbourne Village website. Updated reports, documents and minutes of meetings informed residents about the latest developments as well as sections on how to get involved, what happens next and FAQs. *Please see www.westbournevillage.org and follow the link to the Neighbourhood Plan.*

- 3.4 WNPSG contacted neighbouring Local Authorities and stakeholders in the area during November 2013 to inform them of Westbourne's intention to develop a neighbourhood plan. *For a list of contacts and a copy of the letter please see: documents **CS10 & CS11.***
- 3.5 In November 2013 a consultation event was held to involve local businesses and community groups to canvass their views and opinions, and their feedback was recorded. The main findings and common themes were:
- 1 Roads, traffic and public transport: poor road surfaces. Traffic management/calming needed. Lack of parking. Improvements needed for pedestrians and cyclists. Better public transport services.
 - 2 Local facilities, Healthcare and Schools: youth facilities needed. Maintain presence of doctors' surgery and post office. Maintain local shops. Primary school at maximum intake. Retention of open spaces.
 - 3 Flooding and environment: any new development shouldn't increase water problems. Drainage ditches not maintained. Erosion due to flooding on road edges. Protect natural environment.
 - 4 Housing and historic building preservation: new housing must complement area and conform to ECO

standards. Affordable housing necessary. Small developments (4-6) preferable. Housing must meet villagers' needs. Preserve historic buildings.

5 Employment and local businesses: encourage, maintain and promote local businesses. Lack of parking in the village a barrier to local business. *For a full report on this event and list of contacts please see: documents **CS12, CS13 & CS14.***

- 3.6 On 18th January 2014 a public meeting was held with 97 residents attending. The primary purpose of this event was to inform residents of the process of a Neighbourhood Plan. Rowena Tyler from Action in Rural Sussex gave a presentation explaining the various stages through to Referendum and acceptance of the plan. This was followed by questions and discussion of some of the local issues already identified through the initial questionnaire and Open Day (Section 3.2). *For a copy of Rowena Tyler's presentation please see documents **CS15.***

4. RESIDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

- 4.1 Based on the key themes which had arisen from issues raised in the initial questionnaire and Open Day, the main questionnaire was divided into the following categories: Housing, Roads, Community, Economy and Environment. Task groups were formed within the steering group to take on each category to devise the questions and later analyse the results. A youth section was also added to involve and encourage young people in the village to give their own views. The questionnaire was designed to incorporate a colourful, user-friendly format with clearly defined sections

to enable speedy feedback. *Please see document CS16 for a copy of the questionnaire.*

- 4.2 May 2014: The Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire was delivered to each household in Westbourne, Woodmancote and Aldsworth.
- 4.3 10th May 2014 a 'Drop In' day, advertised in the questionnaire, was held for residents to call in and discuss any queries they had about completing it.
- 4.4 The beginning of June 2014 was the deadline for the return of questionnaires and the information was collated by the steering group during July and August.
- 4.5 On 4th October 2014 a public consultation event was held in the Parish Hall to give feedback to residents on the results of the questionnaire using the key themes as listed in 4.1 above, a summary of which follows:
- 1 Our Homes: This section aimed to establish residents' views on new development within Westbourne village. Over half of the respondents agreed that development should take place on small sites in order to spread the impact and most wanted them to be focused on brownfield sites. Nearly all respondents wanted new development to include flood risk management. *For further information please see document CS32.*
 - 2 Our Roads: There was support for a car park but there was no firm consensus as to where it should be sited. Suitable traffic calming measures were favoured and there was general support for a 20mph speed limit. An area in which there was significant overall agreement was for an

improvement in the Square to increase parking, reduce congestion and facilitate safe crossing of the road. Improved public transport was favoured although there were some doubts that such services would be financially viable. *Please see document CS30 for further information.*

3 Our Economy: There was great support for more independent shops in Westbourne and also for the idea of a Business Forum, although many did not think there was adequate infrastructure to support new businesses. Well over 60% of respondents felt that a public car park was essential. There was also strong backing for the creation of more employment opportunities for young people and the promotion of tourism in the area. *Please see documents CS27, and CS28 for further information.*

4 Our Environment: This section of the questionnaire was divided into three groups – Environment, Sustainability and Natural and Built Environment. Respondents put a high importance on sustainable development but had only a moderate interest in the impact of climate change. Responses indicated a mixed view between conventional and renewable energy sources. However there was a broad acceptance that the community needed to reduce its carbon footprint. Pollution concerns centred around fly tipping, dog dirt and noise. A high priority was given to the protection of wildlife habitats and the retention of green corridors as well as the protection of local agriculture. To nearly 80% of respondents the safeguarding of the natural beauty and tranquillity of the area was of the highest importance. Flood defences had a high level of concern and comment. Great value was placed on the historic fabric and character of Westbourne. *Please see document CS29 for further information.*

5 Our Community: This section addressed such issues as youth provision, health care, leisure and recreation and the school. Nearly everyone thought it important to retain a doctor's surgery in Westbourne. Just over half thought there should be more open spaces, but there was divided opinion on increasing sports facilities. A number of respondents felt that Westbourne School needed some expansion and a sports area. *Please see document CS31 for further information.*

6 Our Youth: Young people aged between 11 and 18 had a section in the questionnaire to air their views. Many appreciated the village ambience and felt it was comfortable and safe. The support for new houses in the village was divided with many anxious about the effect too much development would make, whilst others saw the need for new homes because of population growth. There was great feeling that the present character of the village should be maintained and suggestions were made for leisure facilities in and around the village. In addition to the questionnaire, two meetings were held with groups of young people, one at Bourne College and one at the church youth club. *Please see documents CS33 and CS34 for further information.*

7 The local primary school was also approached and pupils worked on a project of how they would like Westbourne to develop over the next 15 years.

4.6 In addition to the above feedback presented on display boards at this meeting, Rowena Tyler from Action in Rural Sussex gave a presentation on the progress of the plan to date and the next steps. *Please see documents CS17 and CS18 for the publicity for this event and for a copy of her*

report. John Herson from WNPSG presented his report, Issues and Options, which considered solutions for allocating 25 dwellings and the possibility of an additional settlement boundary at Woodmancote. *This report, which is included in full in document CS19, also contained residents' responses to the questionnaire.*

5. SITE SELECTION CONSULTATION

5.1 The next action for WNPSG was to call for sites for potential development in Westbourne. The WNPSG Housing sub-group took on this task. An announcement was prepared and published in the Chichester Observer, calling for landowners to come forward and identify sites they were hoping to develop. *Please see document CS20 for a copy of the article.*

5.2 Articles were also written for publication in the Westbourne Magazine and for the Neighbourhood Plan section on the Village Website. *Please see document CS20 for copies.*

5.3 In addition to these articles, individual landowners who had been identified as having a potential interest in developing some of their land, were approached directly by letter. *Please see document CS21 for a copy of this letter.*

5.4 The WNPSG contacted neighbouring Local Authorities and Stakeholders in the area to inform them of the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan and to invite representations. *For a copy of the letter and a list of contacts please see documents CS10 and CS11.* We received no substantial responses.

- 5.5 The closing date for submissions by landowners was 18th April 2015.
- 5.6 On receiving submissions, meetings were arranged for members of the Housing sub-group to meet landowners and discuss their proposals individually. These meetings took the form of informal discussions covering potential development opportunities. *Their suggested sites were incorporated into the site selection presentation: please see documents CS23, CS24 and CS25.*
- 5.7 Housing sub-group members then made a series of visits to the potential sites to gain a clearer picture of the proposals put forward in order to give an informed presentation to the Westbourne community.
- 5.8 An Open Day for Westbourne residents to attend a presentation of the sixteen potential sites then took place in Westbourne Parish Hall on Saturday 11th July 2015. Information was displayed on each site including issues such as availability, sustainability, acceptability and achievability. Members of WNPSG were present to answer questions and a scorecard was available for each of those attending to register their comments and preferences. In addition, post-it notes were available for attendees to contribute any further comments or ideas. *Please see document CS22 for the publicity for this event and documents CS23, CS24 and CS25 for a copy of the information presented, including a map and an analysis of each of the sites, the scorecard for residents to record their preferences and comments received.*
- 5.9 An article in the Westbourne Magazine for August 2015 was published to tell residents that information about the sites (as presented at the Open Day), along with the option to complete a scorecard, was available on the Westbourne Village website. Phone numbers of WNPSG members were also published for residents wishing to make enquiries. *Please see document CS26 for a copy of this article.*
- 5.10 Members of WNPSG also took a stand at the Westbourne Church Fete in August to answer any further questions from residents and encourage more participation in the consultation.
- 5.11 The preferences registered on the Open Day and on the Village Website together with an analysis of the preferences by postcode, *are recorded in documents CS35, CS36 and CS37.* Residents showed a marked preference to smaller development sites outside the village settlement boundary, with the exception of the Mill Road site. Sites within the village settlement boundary were not strongly favoured. The scores reflected a desire for multiple small developments. In analysing the postcode scores there is some indication that residents voted for potential developments at the furthest point away from their own houses. Strong opposition to the Long Copse Lane development continued to be expressed.
- 6 SITE SELECTION
- 6.1 Subsequently members of the Housing sub-group working with advice from a professional consultant and taking into

account all the views gathered from residents and professionals so far, analysed the pros and cons of each site. Of the sixteen sites identified, thirteen had to be eliminated on grounds of unsustainability, insufficient number of units, flood risk and strong community opposition. The steering group were not able to give the community their most popular choice of sites, being constrained in the selection after unsustainable and unacceptable ones had been excluded. The three sites proposed reflected the community's desire to have a number of small sites developed around the village. In this way the Housing sub-group developed a set of recommendations to meet the requirement to supply 25 new houses in Westbourne and produced a Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission document.

- 6.2 This process was delayed pending an appeal by Southcott Homes regarding the development of the site adjoining Long Copse Lane. Southcott Homes, despite strong opposition from villagers, had been applying to CDC for planning permission to develop houses on this site. The company had first applied for permission to erect 22 dwellings. This application was refused and the decision upheld at appeal. A following application was entered for 16 dwellings. This was also refused but approved at appeal. This decision was to significantly affect the site selections that had been made. *Further details can be found in document CS50.*
- 6.3 To keep Westbourne residents informed during this time, an article was written for the Westbourne Magazine. *Please see document CS38.* This article urged residents to

understand and accept the complexity of the Neighbourhood Planning process and the fact that a number of the sites put forward for development, and which had been approved by many residents, were not viable under the criteria of availability, achievability, suitability or sustainability

- 6.4 In order to comply with the Chichester District Council (CDC) Local Plan timetable, a plan was prepared in December 2015 putting forward 3 sites for development. This did not include the Long Copse lane site as it had proved so unpopular with residents during consultation.
- 6.5 At the same time, the Southcott Homes appeal for 16 houses on the Long Copse Lane site was allowed by the Inspector. Consequently, this initial plan was reworked to take into account the allowed development on a site which had previously been rejected because of its unacceptability to Westbourne residents.

7 PRE SUBMISSION 1 CONSULTATION REGULATION 14 - FEBRUARY 2016

- 7.1 The reworked plan, Pre Submission Plan (1), was drafted in January 2016 for review. WNPSG formally consulted widely on this Plan over the period of 26th February to 22nd April 2016.
- 7.2 A printed copy of the Plan was displayed in various public places in and around Westbourne and also on the Westbourne Village Website. In addition, an Open Day was held in the Parish Hall on 13th March for residents to view the Plan, to ask questions and to register their comments.

The Plan was also sent to CDC and SDNPA as well as appropriate statutory bodies, developers, landowners and local organisations for their comments. All residents and interested parties were encouraged to register their comments in writing by email, on comment cards or on the Village Website.

- 7.3 *Please see documents CS40 and CS41* for the publicity poster for the Open Day and the comment cards. *Documents CS42 and CS43* contains a copy of the letters to the statutory bodies and local organisations.
- 7.4 There were 70 responses made up of 61 residents, 7 statutory consultees and 2 developers. The results of all the consultation responses were tabulated and each comment had an individual response. Please refer to the Consultation spread sheet in *documents CS39*.
- 7.5 Having analysed the results and considered all the comments received, a number of amendments were made.
- 7.6 As a result of comments from statutory consultees, there were some drafting changes to improve clarity. Comments on Policies OA1 (Development Allocation), OA2 (Affordable Housing Strategy) and OA4 (Spatial Strategy) formed part of our overall policy review and changes, e.g. Policy OA2 became supporting text within OA3 (Community Facilities).
- 7.7 There were no major changes as a result of Developers' comments. However concerns raised over OA4 (Spatial Strategy) were addressed as part of our overall policy review.

- 7.8 One of the key issues that arose from this consultation with residents was their concern over the changing demographic within the parish and the difficulties this could create. In order to address this, a new draft policy OA4, the Community Balance Policy, was drawn up and incorporated into the revised draft of this new plan, Pre-Submission Plan (2), after careful consultation with the CDC.
- 7.9 The need for extra car parking in the village was also expressed and a petition in favour of establishing a car park in a convenient situation close to the village centre was circulated and signed by twenty one local businesses. *See documents CS44, CS45 and CS46*.
- 7.10 As part of Pre-submission (1) some changes were proposed to the settlement policy boundary. Following comments from residents and on further reflection by the steering group it was decided to revert to the original boundary.
- 7.11 Given the level of change to the plan following the consultation process, CDC required the WNPSG to undertake a second consultation process (Pre-submission (2)) to give residents, statutory consultees and developers the opportunity to comment on the revised plan.
- 8 PRE-SUBMISSION 2 - FURTHER CONSULTATION REGULATION 14 - NOVEMBER 2016**
- 8.1 Pre-submission (2) was submitted by WPC to CDC for review on 21st September 2016. It was then made available for full consultation between the 14th November 2016 and 6th January 2017.


- 8.2 WPC delivered a newsletter to each house in the village at the beginning of November, updating residents with progress so far and publicising a Drop in Day at the Meeting Place in Westbourne on Sunday 27th November. The Drop in Day was also well publicised by village banners. Here local people and stakeholders could see the Plan displayed, give their comments on comment cards and question members of WNPSG who had organised this event. The newsletter also provided 'cut-out' comment cards which could be returned to WPC, as well as the opportunity to comment by email at westbournepc@outlook.com. *Please see document CS47 for a copy of the newsletter.*
- 8.3 In addition, a focussed consultation event was undertaken in relation to draft Policy OA4. A member of WNPSG visited each existing Traveller site with a copy of the revised plan and had informal face to face discussions to consult travellers on their views, in particular to the proposed OA4 Policy which may have a direct impact upon them. No written responses were received although the travellers were encouraged to express their views verbally and in writing. *Please see document CS49 for a statement regarding this consultation.*
- 8.4 Not surprisingly the response from residents was lower in number than the previous consultation for Pre-submission (1). A total of 7 responses were submitted by residents.
- 8.5 Comments made by, and responses to, parish residents and all other interested parties to this Pre Submission (2) *can be found in document CS48.*

- 8.6 The response of CDC was comprehensive and a meeting was held with the Neighbourhood Plan officer to review and respond to the comments. Most of the responses from other statutory consultees were minor in nature.
- 8.7 There were 3 developer responses made. These were largely seeking bigger allocations on the allocated sites with a suggestion for fewer restrictions in the policies. The consultation response table in [document CS48](#) shows how each of these representations were carefully considered especially in respect of previous planning refusals and appeal decisions on the Chantry Hall and Long Copse Lane sites. There is a clear rationale, based on unacceptable impacts identified locally and confirmed by appeal inspectors, why the sites have been allocated and designed in a great level of detail. This is to achieve the sustainable development solutions required, having regard to the impacts and to create solutions the community can support.
- 8.8 During this time the Plan was also available to view on the village website, www.westbournevillage.org.

9 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to extensive consultation over nearly four years and has benefited from wide community support and stakeholder engagement.
- 9.2 The Neighbourhood Plan has been a standing item on the Parish Council's monthly meeting agenda since work began and regular updates on progress have been given. The

- Westbourne Magazine and website have had regular updates on progress to the wider community.
- 9.3 In addition, a number of public events have been held in the Parish over the whole Neighbourhood Plan preparation period and these have been attended by members of the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with the opportunity for residents and stakeholders to discuss any issues and have questions answered.
- 9.4 Levels of engagement have generally been high with a fair proportion of the local population participating.
- 9.5 The Neighbourhood Plan has been constructed using a large amount of feedback from residents and stakeholders. Throughout the process WPNSG have held discussions with both CDC and SDNPA on the progress of the plan. Whilst some issues are aspirational, the plan represents a balance between local desires and the formal planning policy context with which the plan must comply.
- 9.6 Engagement with landowners and developers has taken place when the details of any land interests have been known. Site Assessment Criteria, taken from national guidelines, assessed each site for availability, sustainability, acceptability and achievability.
- 9.7 The two Pre-Submission consultations have been a very useful phase in the understanding of the concerns of residents, statutory consultees including CDC and those of the developers. There has been extreme care taken to consider all representations and to revise the plan where this had been possible and to provide a written response to all points made, even when these have not led to a change in the plan.
- 9.8 The process has been transparent and fair and has not given rise to any complaint about the procedure for consultation throughout the drafting of the plan.
- 9.9 Thanks to all the people who have worked to ensure that the plan has been published to as many residents and stakeholders of the parish as possible.
- 9.10 Residents are thanked for the continued involvement and comment on the development of the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan.

A low-angle photograph of a tree, showing dark, silhouetted branches and green leaves against a bright blue sky. The text is overlaid in the upper center of the image.

PRODUCED IN CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMUNITY BY
WESTBOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
ON BEHALF OF WESTBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL