

**Minutes
of Wells Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
held on Tuesday 15th February 2023 by Zoom**

Present:

Wells City Council: Cllrs Denise Denis, Deborah Orrett & Sarah Powell

Adrian I'Anson,

St Cuthbert Out Parish Council: Ian Humphreys

Mendip Local Plans Officer: Jo Milling

Planning consultant: Stuart Todd

1. Apologies for absence received from Helen Ellison, Cllr Shirley Eden & Tony Hathway
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 15th November 2022 accepted as a true record
3. Draft Consultation Statement Statement

AFI'A apologised for the slow production of this draft. He referred to the responses from the Council following the consultation:

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| Mendip | Following several meetings and email exchanges, amendments to ensure conformity with the Local Plan & NPPF | Acceptance |
| Public – by meeting, online and paper | General acceptance of policy content in contrast to projects such as car parking etc and infrastructure | Acceptance with addition of text to reflect means of control of level of infrastructure and opportunity for Council to influence |
| Statutory consultees | General content | Acceptance |
| Local Green Spaces | Objections to a small number from Mendip, Somerset, Blue School & Dean & Chapter | Advice from Local Plans Officer that integrity of inclusion on |

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| | | basis of NPPF criteria. Acceptance of all Spaces on that basis |
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DD referred to confusion of tenses and fonts at page 54.

JM advised that as the initial consultation is fairly elderly and the Statement need not rely so much on this element with more attention focussed on the second consultation and individual comments from the public.

ST referred to previous advice that the scope of the Statement should be A to Z with all documents on the Council’s web site and, generally, the work of the Independent Examiner to be made easy. Generally, the consultation had been extensive and reflected in the Statement. The lack of public comment on the policies effectively indicates consent.

4. Draft Basic Conditions Statement

ST explained the aim of the BCS and referred to its core at pages 13 – 15 and table at 18. He said that it makes it clear that the requirements of the Regulations in this respect have been complied with.

JO advised that the NP policy element could be more analytic. The evidence base section at page 22 could be expanded to provide a list. This would showcase that the work has been done.

On page 21, the last Local Plan policy should refer to DP2 and the list of Open Areas of Local Significance.

ST was thanked for producing the BCS so promptly.

5. Next steps

JO was thanked for attending the meeting and providing support throughout the process.

She referred to the forthcoming submission to Mendip of the amended Plan, the Consultation Statement, the BCS and all other relevant material. Somerset would then carry out the Regulation 16 consultation which will be more formal than that just carried out under Regulation 14. After collation of the responses, the names of three Independent Examiners would be produced with one to be chosen by consensus between Somerset and WCC.

The cost of the consultation, the examination and referendum will be borne by Somerset. The only cost to WCC will be a modest level of encouragement to vote in the referendum.

ST confirmed that the existing funding from Locality will support his fee proposal with no need for additional funding from WCC.

Next meeting – 14th March 2023