

Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan

Almost all of our attention remains on the site allocations process. As I write this, we are putting the finishing touches to a village event on that subject on 14 July. If you were unable to come along you can find the presentation and display material on our web site.

In parallel our discussions with the site owners continue, with the aim of them being in agreement with our draft site policies before we make our recommendations to the Parish Council on which sites to allocate, and publish the plan for a formal public consultation.

Unfortunately, I'm still unable to give a date when the consultation will start, but if things go well with the village event and the site owner discussions conclude satisfactorily, we hope to make our recommendations to the Parish Council at its August meeting and subject to its approval, publish the Plan shortly after that. When we do have a certain date, we will publish details of the consultation on our website, inform those on our mailing list, post notices on our Facebook page and on Nextdoor, and put posters up around the village.

We will try and keep response forms as simple as possible, but if you have any suggestions on how you think we should engage with villagers during the consultation, please get in touch.

We understand that site allocations may be the most contentious part of the consultation. That's understandable as development can be an emotional issue, but all the same I'd ask you to understand the plan cannot be influenced by emotion alone, and that objective comments, based on the facts, are the ones that will carry weight. We have what we think is a rigorous process for deciding which sites to allocate and we'd ask you to concentrate on that when making comments on the sites selected. Our logic is that if the process is a good one and we have applied it correctly, the results tell us which sites should be allocated and for how many houses, rather than any artificial limit set by planners.

Very briefly the process involves the following main steps:

- Review, and where possible, mitigation of the constraints identified by the independent site assessments;
- Definition of which policy criteria from the Local and Neighbourhood Plans are appropriate for rating each site against the others;
- Deciding the relative importance of each criteria and applying a weighting to each; and

- Rating the sites against each criterion on a five-step sliding scale, with each step objectively described.

The results are then summed to give an overall total for each site.

There are many other details and nuances to the process that I do not have space to go into here, so if you want to know more and weren't at the village event, please look on our website or contact me.

Over recent weeks both our new district councillors have attended our weekly meetings, and it's been encouraging to have both their support and their perspectives on the plan.

As usual, if you have any comments or questions on any of this, or anything else to do with the Neighbourhood Plan, or if you'd like to be added to our mailing list, please get in touch with me.

Chris Blow, STNP Work Group leader



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***Neighbourhood Plan
Shaping the future of
Saham Toney!***