



St Margarets and Stanstead Abbotts Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting

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| Meeting date: | 6 March 2019 |
| At: | 19:30, The Maltings Cafe |
| Present: | Julia Davies (Chair); Maria Tasker; Leah Pybus (minutes); Andrew Clayden; Robin Jewett, Clare Maynard, Sarah Chapman, Mike Dorman, Vanessa Murphy; Anne Washbourn; Rowan Lloyd; Rob Bennett |
| Apologies | Beth Knight, Gini Trower |
| Guests | Stephen Adams |

1. Flood Defences Guest speaker: Stephen Adams, EAS (The Maltings)

SA explained that floodzone ratings are based on the likelihood of extreme events. (E.g. FZ3 has a 1 to 100 a year chance of flooding plus 35% for climate change; FZ 2 a 100-1000 chance. Floodzone ratings are based on historic risk which may be out of date and fail to take into full account the nature of hard/soft flood defences flood mitigation measures now in place. 1-100yr plus 35% climate change is FZ3. An area designated FZ2 or 3 may only contain certain areas at that flood risk level rather than the whole site, so we would need to model areas to really understand the true flood risk. Ultimately there may be possibilities to build on FZ2 areas if modelling shows that the risk of flooding is lower than the rating suggested, which may mean that some of sites within the village may be options for development (infilling between existing housing) even if the sites are designated FZ2.

Floodzone categories are based on rising water bodies i.e. rivers, not flooding from undraining surface water (fluvial/pluvial). Consequently, flood categories don't necessarily match with flood experiences reported by people living in the village. Poor drainage systems seem to be more of a cause of flooding compared with rivers.

The presentation was given based on modelling undertaken on flooding on Marsh Lane (Scout Hut location). The modelling showed that the flood risk on this site comes more from land water draining from the north of the site. Therefore the real flood risk comes from poorly draining surface water rather than flooding from the local rivers. There has been no recorded flooding due to rising river water recently on the fields adjacent to the Scout Hut.

It is also possible that FZ3 might be brought down to FZ2 where new defences have been put in place since the FZ3 designation if the modelling can demonstrate a reduced level of risk (flood mapping does not distinguish between hard and soft defences which can skew the designation). We would have to do some modelling on a site by site basis to understand what is and isn't possible.

Sequential tests can be used in inconsistent ways by planners – can be accepted or rejected depending on the decision they want to make.

2. Updates:

- > Anne W is plotting sites but needs the photos from the walkarounds. **Action:** CM to put back on drop box so the sites can be plotted to go to the next stage on housing.
- > **Business group:** draft survey been developed. Simpler than residential survey but will be done in same look and feel. **Action:** Anne to design survey in same style as community survey. Survey will be 4 sides and sent to the 300 business in the village – half are in the Maltings – returned to Andrew Clayden’s business in the Maltings area. There may be more businesses in the village than records suggest as some business are run from people’s homes. **Action:** use social media to advertise the business survey to maximise reach to any businesses not known of. An open day is being planned for May in the Maltings, similar to the public open days. The business group also consulted with the village club at their monthly meeting, giving a talk on the process. Need to understand business needs over time from start up to expansion and downsizing so village can provide for businesses over a lifetime.
- > **Housing group:** call for sites has gone out in the local paper and is on the website. Deadline 5th April Neighbourhood planning email is on the advert - no responses at the time of reporting. Need to decide what we do if there is no response. **Action:** JD to update the date on assessment. Need to do site assessment criteria now, ahead of the 5 April deadline. **Action:** Management team to discuss need to ask the council to do a housing needs assessment. Character assessment of the village is being carried out –village has been sectioned into 6 character areas with a set of criteria to assess each area against, based on a Planning Aid tool (criteria include: topography, scale, materials, use, views etc). This will help lead to design guidelines to identify sites. Could do with some open village workshops on aspirations for the future of the village to inform this also.
- > **Ecology group:** **Action:** Not met this year – due to meet on 20 march. **Action:** CM to send LP the first survey feedback to put into the consultation report. **Action:** all sub groups to add their write ups of open days into the consultation report, here in drop box:
(<https://www.dropbox.com/home/Stanstead%20Abbotts%20%26%20St%20Margarets%20Neighbourhood%20Plan/03.1.%20Comms%20Sub%20Committee/Open%20Day%20Admin?preview=Neighbourhood+plan+consultation+report.docx>)

Steering group needs a workshop to bring together the ecology maps with the housing sites – layer over the different maps. Anne has over-layered housing sites with the natural environment. Need to map bridal ways/public access so these don’t get blocked off. Need a policy to protect public rights of way from being blocked by developments.
- > **Heritage:** Clear what is above the ground but need to know what is underground so we can ask for investigations. RB is using photos and maps to try and identify where there may be possible historical sites and features, and is in touch with Heritage Teams which has a report on archaeological sites of interest close to our boundary. Already found: Neolithic henge found in St Margarets, with possible sites north of Kitten Lane. RB looking around the settlement area to identify anything there and plot it. Needs to be included in the workshop referred to above.
- > **Communications:** Dates to go into schools have been set. Looking for people to cover the events. Feeling like too much of a push to do before Easter **Action:** CM to go back to head to find new dates but need to be conscious of what will work for the schools. 2x1hr sessions for different year groups recommended. Need to keep groups small if we want to do

activities as part of the engagement. **Action: CM** to do a doodle poll to find out when people can cover events so these can be coordinate with school availability. School engagement should focus on: What they like/not like and what they want to see in the future. SATs in May so might not be a good month to aim for.

- > **Transport:** Looking into the possibility of traffic lights on Amwell roundabout – looking for stats on accidents on the R/A going back 5-10 years to provide evidence for need for lights. Probably a strong case given the volume of traffic. Asked Jonathan Kay to attend St Margarets Parish meeting to discuss Amwell R/A lights. Looking at the A414 development plans. Looking at how to engage council on weight restriction enforcement. Julia Whitting is attending a GA company panel – hoping someone from GA will go to Parish Meeting. Also looking into speeding and gathering data to support speed management measures. Report is being done on parking in St Abbots for commuters – capacity and costs. Need to look at possibility of sites for additional car parks. Can we look at bicycle racks in the train station car park?
- > **Other issues arising:**
 - Section 106: JD confirmed the money is available and can be used more generally than the original purpose specified.
 - Volunteers from away days: everyone to come up with ideas for volunteers who put themselves forward to do something.
 - Updating people: Emailed the people who wanted to be contacted. 10 have bounced back. Emails not typed up correctly or in boxes are not accepting attachments.

3. Writing plan

- > Community feedback flier: JD send to vicar as word or jpeg – pdfs are coming out blurred. Plan is to get something in April but they can't do this due to easter.
- > Leah to do some pie charts for Julia's flier – this weekend.
- > Policies: these need to have context and link to the vision statement, using wording from this to introduce policy. Policies need to be coded.
- > Next meeting – each sub-group lists their policies if possible.
- > Jacqueline wants to meet sub groups from 25 March. Postpone this – groups are not ready. Find alternative dates.

4. Budgets

- Coming to end of grant period. £150 underspend. Putting in a bid in April.
- Subgroups to let Mike know how much they want in terms of budget, including how much of JVs time they need?

5. Next meeting:

- Thursday 18 April 2019, 7.30pm, The Maltings.