

Honeystreet Neighbourhood Development Order

Steering Group Terms of Reference

1. Background

In November 2012, Alton Parish Council was briefed by the owner of the Honeystreet Sawmill, Mr John Dunford, about the potential redevelopment of the area of land; approximately 1.45 hectares (3.6 acres) on the south bank of the Kennet & Avon Canal, occupied by the current Sawmill business. Impending retirement of the current owner, economic downturn coupled with a change in retail trends leading to additional drops in demand and the lack of buyer for the business, meant the current enterprise was likely to close, with a subsequent loss of employment in the community.

Preliminary development ideas for the Sawmill site were presented at a Parish Council meeting 29/01/15 by the owner's chosen developer HAB. Minute item 015/15. Agreement was achieved over the need to consult the parish, and Honeystreet residents in particular, at an early stage. The best early opportunity was the regular village monthly coffee morning on 07/03/15 and the Parish Council agreed to inform every household in the parish via a newsletter.

In April 2015, the Parish Council discussed and agreed to a request by HAB to seek a Housing Needs Survey to help inform itself and the developers of housing needs in the parish. Minute item 029/15. At the same meeting on 02/04/15 the Parish Council received an invitation from the developers for a PC representative to attend a "pre-application meeting" with Wiltshire Council planning department. It was agreed to send a representative, while making clear that "attendance does not signify support for the application." Minute item 033/15

At the pre-application meeting on 28/05/15, the Parish Council was advised the way to progress this development was by means of a Neighbourhood Development Order. Parish Council representatives had an additional, separate meeting with Wiltshire Council to outline how a NDO is progressed on 23/07/15.

The decision to proceed with a NDO was unanimously approved by the PC on August 20 (minute item 81/15). These draft Terms of Reference were then approved (82/15).

2. Purpose

The Steering Group's purpose is to design, implement and oversee the Neighbourhood Development Order process, so the NDO will progress to Independent Examination and, subject to the verdict of a community referendum, ultimate adoption by Wiltshire Council.

3. Principles

- The Steering Group will undertake the NDO process in a democratic, transparent and fair fashion, allowing opinions and ideas to be put forward by all.
- The Steering Group will give all those who live in the parish opportunities to inform and shape the process.
- The Steering Group will make this a positive and constructive process. Ultimately it is intended to take a holistic approach that will improve quality of life, strengthen the

community and provide potential alternative local employment opportunities within the structure development.

4. Tasks and Activities

- Work with the Parish Council and ensure that they are fully informed throughout the process, and appropriate decisions referred to them when applicable;
- All key decisions must be mutually agreed by the Steering Group and Parish Council which has to remain in control of the process – hence the need to ensure communication is effective and appropriate;
- Prepare a project plan to set out how they will create a NDO;
- The project plan should contain a timeframe to focus activity and to aid planning;
- Publicise the intention to produce a NDO, to inform and engage the community, and publicise all subsequent activities and progress;
- Meet regularly to agree actions and discuss issues that arise, in order that the process is dealt with in an efficient and timely manner;
- Gather baseline information;
- Obtain independent advice as appropriate;
- Establish and understand the needs of residents and what the long term vision or aspiration is;
- Decide on and, if required, set up sub-groups (or theme groups) to gather statistics, information and views, subject to this being agreed and delegated by the full steering group;
- Liaise with residents, owner and developers and Wiltshire Council throughout the development of the NDO;
- Consult as widely and thoroughly as is possible to ensure that the draft and final NDO is representative of the views of the residents;
- Analyse the available information to prepare the draft and final NDO;
- Produce minutes from Steering Group meetings and circulate to the Parish Council and Steering Group members (and others as agreed to be appropriate);
- Set up a mechanism to inform interested residents of progress e.g. monthly updates via the Parish website which already has a linked page to the Honeystreet Sawmill Development;
- Actively publicise the draft NDO for a period of six weeks consultation prior to the submission to Wiltshire Council and a further six weeks of consultation;
- Agree financial arrangements and budget with Parish Council.

5 Membership of Steering Group

- The Steering Group should consist of no less than seven Members;
- The Steering Group should have one Parish Council member from Alton Priors, one from Alton Barnes and two from Honeystreet. An additional person, a volunteer from the local area may also be appointed by the Parish Council to serve on the Steering Group;
- The Steering Group should have one member from the Developer HAB, plus the current Site owner John Dunford, neither will have voting rights;

- The Steering Group shall be quorate when at least four voting members attend;
- Wiltshire Council officers or Councillors, as well as other agencies appointed by the Council to support the process cannot be voting members of the Steering Group but are able to attend meetings and contribute to the discussions as required.
- If a member of the Steering Group wishes to resign, a suitable replacement must be sought by the Parish Council.

6 Roles within Steering Group

The Steering Group shall elect a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

If the Chair and Vice Chair are unable to attend a meeting then a temporary Chair (selected from the Steering Group members) will be elected for that meeting.

The Secretary also has voting and speaking rights if the person appointed is from the local community. The Secretary will take minutes from the meeting, record main decisions and action points; and make them available to the public plus any relevant information as appropriate via the Parish website and other methods as necessary.

7 Steering Group Meeting Arrangements

- The Steering Group (and sub or theme groups) shall meet regularly and as necessary;
- The public can observe the meeting and speak at the Chair's discretion;
- Decisions from sub or theme groups should be relayed back to the full Steering Group for ratification and/or information;
- From time to time other stakeholders or interested parties may be invited to attend a specific Steering Group meeting to give a presentation and/or discuss their interest in the proposed NDO
- A list of Steering Group members and contact details shall be maintained.
- Details of, and any changes to, the Steering Group membership must be notified to and agreed by the Parish Council.

8 Finance

- Alton Parish Council will not be liable for any expenditure for the NDO, unless it is provided by specific grants from the Government which have been successfully obtained before that expenditure is committed. Any cost overrun beyond the specific grant must be met by the site developers.
- Wiltshire Council will only be liable for its statutory obligations.
- All other costs must be met by the site owner/developer.
- Expenditure to be agreed by majority decision by the Steering Group.
- Finance decisions will need to be recorded in the minutes and notified to the body holding the funds.

9 Changes to the Terms of Reference

Any amendments to the terms of reference may be made at a Steering Group meeting and agreed by the majority of the Steering Group members. Amendments to be notified to the Parish Council and Wiltshire Council

10 Dissolution of the Group

The members will agree by a majority vote at a Steering Group meeting, to call a Special General Meeting for the sole purpose to dissolve the group.

Any remaining uncommitted funds held by the Parish Council on behalf of the Steering Group will be used for the benefit of the community. No individual member of the group shall benefit from the dispersal.

The draft Terms of Reference were approved by the Parish Council on August 20, 2015 (minute item 82/15) and adopted at a Honeystreet Neighbourhood Development Order Steering Group meeting on (date to be inserted).