



NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL
WINDMILL LANE
NORTHAM
DEVON
EX39 1BY

To: All Members of the Neighbourhood Plan
Advisory Group
Cc: All Northam Town Councillors

Town Clerk: Mrs Jane Mills MILCM
Telephone and Fax: 01237 474976
E-mail townclerk@northamtowncouncil.gov.uk

You are hereby summoned to attend a Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group Meeting on Tuesday 16th June 2022 at 6.30pm, to be held on Zoom.

Topic: Northam Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group
Time: Jun 16, 2022 06:30 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82697831351?pwd=QWRXTGIKaURyYyt1Z3N6YnFmOWFtdz09>

Meeting ID: 826 9783 1351
Passcode: 825660

M. J. Mills

Mrs Jane Mills Fd Community Governance MILCM, PSLCC
Town Clerk

Date of issue: **10th June 2022**

The following are members of the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group:

Councillors Hames, Sargent, Mrs Hodson, and Miss Woodhouse, plus the Mayor ex-officio.
(Two vacancies, one each for a Northam Ward and Appledore Ward elected member).

Non-Councillors: Mr G Allen, Ms Bartleman, Ms J Smart.

All elected Members of the Council are entitled to attend.



Lords of the Manor



The local Council for Appledore, Northam, Orchard Hill and Westward Ho!
Twinned with Mondeville, France and Büddenstedt, Germany
Office open: Monday to Friday mornings



Trustees of the Common Right

AGENDA

- 1 Election of the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group.**
- 2 Election of the Vice Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group.**
- 3 Apologies**
- 4 Chairman's Announcements**
- 5 To agree the agenda as published**
- 6 Declarations of interest:**
Members are reminded that all interests should be declared prior to the item being discussed.
- 7 To confirm and sign the minutes of the Planning Meeting held 26th April 2022**
(herewith)
- 8 Public Participation**
Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.
- 9 To consider Action Points** *(herewith)*
- 10 To consider feedback from Torridge District Council Officers** *(to follow)*
- 11 To consider the submissions from a member of the public regarding the wording of paragraph 6.12 of policy EN2 - PREVENTION OF COALESCENCE,** *(herewith)*
- 12 To consider the draft Community section** *(herewith, deferred from previous meeting)*
- 13 To receive feedback as shared with members of the Group on Sharepoint** *(circulated, deferred from previous meeting)*

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Northam Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group Meeting held by Zoom on Tuesday 26th April 2022

Present: Cllrs Hames (Chairman), Hodson, Woodhouse, Laws and Sargent.
Non-Councillor Members: Mrs E Bartleman, Mrs J Smart, Mr G Allen.
Cllr Tisdale (not an Advisory Group member)

In attendance: Mr G Langton – Deputy Town Clerk.
One members of the public.

2204/1320 Apologies
Apologies were received from Cllr Laws.

2204/1321 Chairman's announcements
The Chairman noted that Mrs Smart had submitted suggested amendments to the wording of Policy EN2, drafted in conjunction with a resident, Mr Arnold. It was agreed to include the amended text in the next draft version of the Neighbourhood Plan, which would be ratified at the next meeting of the Group.
Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Sargent (all in favour).

2204/1322 Declarations of interest:
Members were reminded that all interests should be declared prior to the item being discussed.

2204/1323 To agree the agenda as published
It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published.
Proposed: Cllr Sargent, Seconded Cllr Hodson (all in favour)

2204/1324 To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held 22nd February 2022
It was **resolved** to confirm the minutes of the meeting held 22nd February 2022.
They would be signed at a later date.
Proposed: Cllr Sargent, Seconded: Cllr Hodson (all in favour).

2204/1325 Public Participation
It was announced that members of the public were permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public would be entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and should not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.

The member of the public addressed the Committee explaining the reason for the amendments to strengthen and clarify Policy EN2, thus clarifying the Environmental Policies and their relationship with Local Plan policy NOR(h).

2204/1326 To consider the action points.
The Group noted that Statement of Community Engagement and Basic Conditions were being drafted and would be presented to the next meeting of this Group for consideration. The Group thought it appropriate the Cllr Hames also attend the feedback meeting with Torridge District Council .
Action Point: Deputy Town Clerk to inform Torridge District Council Officers.

The Group noted that Statement of Community Engagement and Basic Conditions were being drafted and would be presented to the next meeting of this Group for consideration.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that he would be seeking the Torridge District Officer's advice regarding the creation of a dedicated Facebook page.

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to contact Torridge district Council Officer.

The Group thought it appropriate the Cllr Hames also attend the feedback meeting with Torridge District Council .

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to inform Torridge District Council Officers.

2204/1327 To consider the submissions from a member of the public regarding Biodiversity and Heritage

It was **resolved** to suspend standing orders to allow a member of the public to address the Group.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Hames (all in favour).

Mr N Arnold outlined the work he had submitted for consideration.

It was **resolved** to re-enter standing orders.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Hodson (all in favour).

It was **resolved** to include the submitted paper in the next draft of the Plan.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Mrs Smart (all in favour).

2204/1328 To consider the draft Community section.

It was **resolved** to defer consideration of the submitted draft, alongside the revised text circulated by Cllr Hames at the next meeting of the Group.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Hames (all in favour).

2204/1329 To consider publicising the Northam Neighbourhood Plan at the May Fair on 30th April 2022

It was **resolved** to not present the Plan on the 30th April 2022, the detail considered to be too much to expect residents to engage with at the event.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded Cllr Hodson (all in favour).

2204/1330 To consider the reviewed feedback as shared with members of the Group on Sharepoint.

It was **resolved** to suspend standing orders to allow a member of the public to address the Group.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Hames (all in favour).

Mr N Arnold offered to share his notes from the 2019 consultation exercise, having kept a copy.

It was **resolved** to re-enter standing orders.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Hodson (all in favour).

The Chairman thanked him for his input and welcomed his offer to share his notes. The Chairman would also refer to his notes from those consultation meetings in 2019 and share any notes that did not appear on the SharePoint site.

It was **resolved** to defer consideration of the feedback until the extra detail had been shared.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Hames (all in favour).

Action point: Cllr Hames to share any available information via the Deputy Town Clerk.

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to share information provided by Mr Arnold when received.

2204/1331 To consider the strategy for consulting on the revised Neighbourhood Plan The Group discussed various methods for seeking feedback on the draft Plan from residents and interested groups across the Northam Town Area. Cllr Woodhouse noted that given the approximate population, to ensure significance there would need to be 377 responses from across the area.

The Group discussed the merits of using focus groups to identify themes that would then be put to residents more widely how this would be undertaken. Cllr Woodhouse offered to analyse feedback from focus groups for themes, should that approach be taken.

Cllr Hames considered that a date for the completion of this phase was essential, to ensure the work was prioritised.

It was **resolved** to defer final consideration of the method and timescales to after the receipt of the full feedback on the current draft from officers at Torridge District Council.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Hodson (all in favour)

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to circulate the full feedback from Torridge District Council Officers after the meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:23pm

Signed Dated.....

Northam Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group - Action Points

Arising from April 2022:

37. Cllr Hodson to draft the Statement of Community Engagement.	In progress	ongoing
38. Cllr Hames to draft the Basic Conditions Statement	In progress	ongoing
39. All members to review the feedback evidence as posted on the SharePoint site.	On the agenda	ongoing
41. Cllr Hodson to seek the social media Officer at Torridge District Council's advice on setting up a stand-alone Facebook Page.	Deputy Town Clerk has created a new, overarching Facebook account for the Council, under which sit the NTC and NNP Facebook pages. A new NNP page had to be created, the login details for the old one not being available. Details have been shared with members of the Advisory Group.	complete
42. Subgroup to draft specific questions and points for clarification by Torridge District Council Officers.	Questions passed to TDC Officers. Meeting arranged for 4 th May to receive feedback. Request made for Officers to attend a future meeting of this Group to present feedback.	ongoing
45. Include suggested changes to EN2 - PREVENTION OF COALESCENCE.	On the agenda	complete
46. Inform Torridge Officers of Cllr Hames' attendance at feedback meeting.	Cllr Hames attended the meeting.	complete
47. Cllr Hames to share any available information relating to previous feedback sessions via the Deputy Town Clerk.	The Deputy Town Clerk is awaiting the documents	ongoing
48. Deputy Town Clerk to share information relating to previous feedback sessions provided by Mr Arnold.	Shared as email accompanying the circulation of this agenda pack.	complete

Text of email communication with suggested revision to paragraph 6.12, policy EN2 – Prevention of Coalescence:

“As we have seen with the Bloody Corner Appeal, developers are keen to invent new interpretations of Policy NOR h) on coalescence between Northam and Appledore. In particular they are claiming that the policy only applies to the narrowest gap between the settlements and/or where there is inter-visibility between the settlements.

Although these interpretations are self-serving nonsense there is a very real danger that the inspector in the Bloody Corner might take them seriously. If they are supported in the Appeal they will certainly be used again in every application and they would wreck both NOR h) and our own NNP policy EN2.

We can prevent this danger by rewriting the supporting text to rule out these interpretations. Nick Arnold has drafted a small rewrite of paragraph 6.12 of the NNP. Here it is below:

EXISTING TEXT:

6.12 This Policy seeks to retain the separate identities of Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho! by resisting development that contributes to coalescence between these settlements. Where exceptionally, development is permitted, policy EN3 aims to mitigate any harm done to the rural character of the area by restoring and enhancing traditional boundaries.

REVISED TEXT:

6.12 Policy EN2 seeks to retain the separate identities of Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho! by resisting development that contributes to coalescence between these settlements. For the purposes of policy EN2 any development that narrows the gap at any point between the development boundary of Appledore and any point on the development boundary of Northam/Westward Ho! will be regarded as contributing to coalescence. The policy will operate regardless of the inter-visibility of development boundaries and/or application sites. Where exceptionally, development is permitted, policy EN3 aims to mitigate any harm done to the rural character of the area by restoring and enhancing traditional boundaries.”

Draft Community Profile

Northam Town Council is responsible for the area encompassing Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho! Each one of these settlements has a distinct identity with a green gap separating Northam and Appledore. Westward Ho! is a low-lying seaside resort to the north. Residential development spreads out behind the sea and along the top of a steep, wooded escarpment, joining Northam.. A long Blue Flag beach stretches in front of a pebble ridge.

Northam with a population of 12,425, is the second largest settlement in Torridge District. The populations of Appledore and Westward Ho! are 3,793 and 3,652, Northam itself has 4,980 residents.

Appledore and Northam's historic centres are designated Conservation Areas. Narrow roads and terraced houses radiate from Northam Square and St. Margaret's Church. Housing grew through the 19th and 20th centuries, initially spreading along the main routes, and more recently a number of housing estates have been built.

Bordering Bideford is a distinct area of large 18th and 19th century houses now straddling the A39 Westward Ho! was developed in the 19th century by a specially formed company as an affluent seaside resort and many distinctive Victorian buildings still remain, including the former United Services College where the writer Rudyard Kipling was a pupil. The building is the only listed structure in Westward Ho! The coast road east from Westward Ho! passes the Royal North Devon Golf Club. Founded in 1864 the Club is the oldest golf club in England.

Appledore is a maritime community with an important trading and shipbuilding heritage. Harland and Wolff operate Appledore Shipyard, one of Europe's largest indoor shipyards, based in Northam. The Royal National Lifeboat Institution maintains a lifeboat station in Appledore. Appledore's narrow streets and alleyways, containing independent businesses and characterful dwellings, are a major attraction for visitors. A proportion of houses are second homes, some let for holiday use.

Local services and facilities are available but people rely on Bideford for its range of retail and financial services, hospital and secondary education provision. Appledore and Westward Ho! have leisure services catering for holidaying visitors. Bus routes connect Westward Ho! or Appledore with Barnstaple via Bideford and Northam, but do not connect the two.

The Town Council provides for recreation. Animals are grazed on the Burrows by permission of the Council. 1500 Burrows permits are issued annually by the Town Council for purchase by Northam parish residents. These give permit holders access to the Burrows at a reduced rate. Locally there are livery and commercial riding stables. Football teams in Appledore and Northam, and a cricket club in Westward Ho! host team sports. There are pétanque clubs, a local sports centre and parks owned by the Town Council where play and exercise equipment can be used. Outdoor swimmers join surfers in braving the sea all year round. Allotments are provided by the Council at Burrough Farm and Windmill Lane.

There are Church of England churches in all three settlements plus a Methodist chapel and two Baptist chapels. There are two primary schools, with plans for a third to support the expansion in housing.

To meet government targets, Torridge District Council has allowed for 2110 new properties to be built in the area (see NDaT Local Plan 2031, policy NOR). A significant proportion of Northam parish is in the older age bracket and the area is popular for people of retirement age who wish to

move from other parts of the UK. The proportion of younger residents (0-19 age band) is significantly lower, at 16% than elsewhere in Torridge, at 20%, but the greatest degree of difference is in the proportion of the resident population in the over 60 age bands. Nearly 40% of Northam's population is over 60, compared to a northern Devon average of 31 per cent (NDaT Local Plan 2031).

Catering for all ages there are numerous community halls in each part of the parish; Appledore has three, the Blue Lights Hall, Community Hall and St Mary's Church Hall; Northam has four, Northam Hall, the Northam Community Centre, Northam Leisure Centre and Morwenna's United Community Centre; Westward Ho! has one, Kingsley Hall.

Based on the above profile of Northam parish and on surveys which have registered residents' priorities the Neighbourhood Plan will help to protect and improving our green spaces, to increase employment opportunities, to provide housing for local needs and contribute to a reduction of carbon emissions in the face of climate change.