

Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031

Consultation Statement

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Washington Parish Councils to comply
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(General) Regulations 2012

July 2015



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Membership of the Steering Group (September 2013 to July 2015)

Chair	Anna Worthington-Leese	Storrington & Sullington Parish Council
Vice Chair	Lesley Britt	Washington Parish Council
Members	Christine Beglan	Washington Parish Council
	Glenn Donnelly	Storrington & Sullington Parish Council (resigned Nov 2014)
	Patrick Heeley	Washington Parish Council
	Marcel Hoad	
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	Richard Jerman	Storrington & Sullington Parish Council
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	Geoff Tute	
	Lisa Wheatley	Storrington & Sullington Parish Council

1. Introduction

This Consultation Statement supports the Submission Neighbourhood Plan and Sustainability Appraisal in accordance with the Community Engagement Statement and Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. It contains the following:

- Details of people and organisations consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Plan;
- Details of how they were consulted
- A summary of the main issues and concerns raised through the consultation process; and
- Descriptions of how these issues and concerns have been considered and addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

Recent Guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government (10 Sept 2013) states that:

“the consultation statement submitted with the draft Neighbourhood Plan should reveal the quality and effectiveness of the consultation that has informed the plan proposals.”

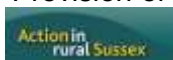
This statement sets out details of events and consultations. It lists the activities in which the local community has been involved and the work of volunteers. The aims of consultation in the Parishes of Storrington & Sullington and Washington have been to create an interest in Neighbourhood Planning and what it could offer, to build up a knowledge-base about the Process and to engage residents in decision-making in order to achieve a high quality Neighbourhood Plan that would receive broad approval.

2. The Plan preparation process

The process was initiated by Storrington & Sullington Parish Council (SSPC) on 23rd April 2013 when it resolved to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. As the village of Storrington acts as a hub providing infrastructure and services to neighbouring parishes invitations to take part in a cluster plan were extended to a number of adjoining Parish Councils; Washington Parish Council (WPC) resolved to join SSPC to produce a joint Neighbourhood Plan on 22nd July 2013.

2.1 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

On 10th September 2013, the Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan (SSWNP) Steering Group was formed, comprising four Members from each Parish Council and four volunteer residents of the Parishes (two chosen by each Parish Council). Terms of reference for the Steering Group were established at this meeting. (See appendix B1). Action in rural Sussex were appointed as consultants to advise on the preparation of the SSWNP and an Agreement for the Provision of Services was signed by both parties on 2nd October 2013 (see appendix B2).



In September, 2013 an application was made to Horsham District Council (HDC) for designation of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and formal approval was received on 30th January 2014 (See appendices A1 & A2). The Steering Group applied for grants from Locality and from Horsham District Council in November 2013 and funding was granted in December 2013. (Applications and confirmation of funding can be found in appendix C).

The Steering Group held regular meetings throughout the process to plan for and review the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan. These meetings were advertised and open to the public with the minutes published on the Parish Councils' websites (www.storrington-pc.gov.uk & www.washingtonparish.org.uk).

The themes for five Focus Groups were agreed upon and a public meeting was held on 21st November 2013 to introduce the Neighbourhood Plan Process and recruit volunteers for these groups. This meeting was attended by approximately 120 members of the public and 50 people were recruited to the following Focus Groups:

- Community Facilities
- Economy & Business,
- Environment, Heritage and Local Knowledge
- Planning and Infrastructure
- Traffic and Transport



Attendees at 21st November 2013 Public Meeting

2.2 Neighbourhood Plan Focus Groups

The Focus Groups met regularly and undertook a number of activities to assist with the production of the Neighbourhood Plan. These activities included:

- Collecting Base-line data for inclusion in the State of the Parish Report (para 3.5)
- Taking part in consultations with parishioners to obtain their views of what they valued and wished to retain, how much development might be appropriate and where it should go.
- Contributing sets of questions based on each Focus Group Subject for inclusion in the Parish wide Community Surveys (para 3.4)
- Taking part in Public events and “open day” displays
- Compiling a list of National, Local and influential stakeholders and attending a Planning Policy Workshop
- Contributing to lists of Local Green Spaces for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan
- Suggesting projects for inclusion on the Community Infrastructure Priority List
- Providing information to keep members of the community aware of the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan and any emerging issues.
- Attending an event to review and comment upon the pre-submission documents prior to the Regulation 14 Public Consultation period.

(See appendix D for examples of Focus Group activities)

2.3 Baseline Evidence

The documents reviewed as part of the process to produce the SSW Neighbourhood Plan include the following:

- Storrington & Sullington Parish Housing Needs Survey (2012)
- Storrington & Sullington Community Action Plan 2013 – 2018 (2013)
- Storrington & Sullington Parish Design Statement (2010)
- Washington Housing Needs Survey (2013)
- Washington Parish Plan (2004)
- Heath Common Village Design Statement (1999)

(See appendix E for these reference documents).

2.4 Working with Horsham District Council

Horsham District Council has provided training courses attended by Members of the Steering Groups and meetings have been held with HDC and the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) to discuss the Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (para 3.7). HDC’s Neighbourhood Planning Officer has provided valuable on-going support and advice throughout the process.

2.5 Co-operation with other parishes

The Parishes of Storrington & Sullington and Washington share a boundary with Thakeham Parish who had embarked upon its own Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan (TNP). The TNP Steering Group and the SSWNP Steering Group agreed however to collaborate on the shared area indicated in red on the Designated Area Map (appendix A1). A Memorandum of Understanding was drawn up and signed by representatives from each Parish Council (appendix B3) and a number of meetings were held between the two groups.

An effective working relationship and sharing of good practice has been established with other Parish Councils particularly between the Parish Clerks.

3 Community Engagement

The SSWNP Steering Group has used a variety of methods to keep the community informed and engaged in the process to complete the Neighbourhood Plan. These include:

- Creating a recognisable logo for all communications relating to the SSWNP
- Displaying agendas for Steering Group Meetings on village notice boards and Parish Council websites
- Distribution of a Community Survey Questionnaire to all households for completion
- Publishing minutes from Steering Group meetings
- Monthly articles about in Sussex Local Magazine – delivered to all homes in the parishes
- Periodic Washington Parish Newsletter – delivered to all homes in Washington
- Public meetings and Open events advertised in Local Newspapers and on banners and notice boards throughout the villages.

3.1 Consultation with Parishioners at Public Meetings and Open Days.

Following the decision by the Parish Councils to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan, a public meeting was held at Rydon Community College on 21st November 2013. The aim was to engage the interest of parishioners, explain the purpose and process of producing a Plan and to recruit volunteers to serve on the Focus Groups. The meeting was advertised by means of posters and banners being displayed throughout the villages and by advertisements in the County Times Newspaper and Sussex Local Magazine. Approximately 120 people attended and 50 Focus Group Members were recruited. (See appendix F1 for attendance list).

A number of Focus Group meetings were held between December 2013 and April 2014 and two “Coffee Mornings” were held at Sullington Parish Hall in April 2014 to inform members of the Community and answer any questions regarding the Community Survey. Members of the Steering Group attended the Storrington Village Day in June 2014 and Washington Village Day in July 2014 to publicise the SSWNP and gather views.



Storrington Village Day: 21st June 2014



Washington Village Day 12th July 2014

The results of the Community Survey were presented to the public at Storrington & Sullington’s Annual Parish Meeting on 28th May 2014 (see Appendix F4 for presentation slides).

A Public Meeting was held at Sullington Parish Hall on 22nd January 2015 to present the draft Pre-submission plan and to publicise the six week Public Consultation Period. As a result of this consultation, revisions were made to the Pre-submission documents which necessitated a second consultation period which was publicised at the Annual Meeting of the Parishes on 11th May 2015 and 20 May 2015. Five events took place in Storrington Village and Washington village during this second consultation period to bring the revised documents to the attention of the public and to encourage people to comment.



3.2 Website

A dedicated page for the Neighbourhood Plan was set up on each Parish Council’s website, containing dates and venues of meetings, agendas of meetings, minutes of meetings, copies of documents and Latest news about the process to complete the Plan.

3.3 Written engagement.

Each month, Storrington & Sullington Parish Council published an article in the Sussex Local magazine and Washington Parish Council produced a newsletter. These publications were delivered free to all homes and kept residents up to date with the progress of the Plan and encouraged them to attend events and participate in the process. Separate flyers were delivered encouraging people to comment on the draft Plan during the public consultation period (see appendix F5).

Banners and posters of the Steering Group's agendas, meetings and public events were displayed throughout the villages and on the Parish Councils' websites.



3.4 Surveys

Three surveys were carried out during the process to produce the SSWNP: A Community Survey, a Housing Needs Survey (amongst Washington Parish) and a survey amongst local businesses. (see para 3.5). The questions for the Community Survey were based on those provided by Focus Groups and designed to elicit what parishioners valued and sought to preserve in the Parish, and what changes they would like to see made. The response rate for this Community Survey was disappointing at 11% and so further questionnaires were sent to parents via the local schools and consultation exercises were held at the Storrington Village day on 21st June 2014. The findings enabled the Steering Group to create the Vision, Objectives and Policies detailed in the SSWNP. (See appendix F2) for the Community Survey questionnaire).

3.5 Consultation with businesses operating in the parish

The Economy and Business Focus Group undertook a survey amongst local businesses and the results were used to inform policies, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 11 of the Submission Plan. (see appendix F6 for the survey and response analysis). This Focus Group also engaged with Storrington Business Breakfast Club (BBC), attending meetings of the BBC to inform members of the progress of the plan.

The results from all of the surveys undertaken were also used to prepare State of the Parish Reports which were completed in July 2014 (appendix E7)

3.6 Consultation with stakeholders

Based on suggestions put forward by the Focus Groups, a list of National, Local and Influential stakeholders was compiled (see appendix G1) and letters were sent Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan

to them in February 2014, inviting them to take part in the process (see appendix G2). A Policy Planning Workshop was held for invited stakeholders such as those supplying services to the parish (e.g. utility organisations), groups operating within the parish (e.g. the Board of Governors of Rydon Community College), neighbouring Parish Councils and Horsham District Council in July 2014. A full list of those who attended can be found in appendix G3. This workshop was facilitated by Action in rural Sussex and a summary of the facilitators' notes can be found at appendix G4.

3.7 Consultation on Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment

Following a request for a screening opinion, Horsham District Council advised that it required the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

In September 2014, the SSWNP Steering Group consulted the following Statutory Consultees on the proposed scope of the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Horsham District Council
- West Sussex County Council
- South Downs National Park Authority
- Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Natural England



Following this consultation a draft Sustainability Assessment Appraisal/Strategic Environment Assessment was prepared and formally consulted upon at the same time as the draft Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan.

3.8 Consultation with Landowners

A call for sites was made to landowners or their agents in August 2014 by means of notices on notice boards throughout the villages and on the Parish Councils' websites. The call for sites was also advertised in the West Sussex County Times Newspaper and letters were sent to all local Estate Agents (appendix H1). A total of 40 sites were submitted for consideration.

On the advice of a Planning Consultant engaged by Action in rural Sussex, the Steering Group started by considering each of the 40 sites that came forward from landowners or from parishioners' suggestions. These included sites listed in Horsham District Council's SHLAA. Criteria were developed for assessing the suitability of the sites and each was assessed by the Steering Group using this criteria (see appendix H2 for score sheet and H3 for site scores).

4.0 Choice of potential housing sites.

This assessment process resulted in a short-list of 9 sites which were presented at a public meeting on 22nd January 2015 and displayed in the Parish Hall and at the local Leisure Centre for the duration of the consultation period. Five public events in the Villages of Storrington and Washington were also held where the plan and the sites were displayed for the community to comment upon.

5.0 Pre-submission Consultation (Regulation 14)

The first Public Consultation on the pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan ran between the 3rd February 2015 and 17th March 2015. It was publicised using a range of techniques including posters and banners displayed around the villages, articles in local magazines and in the West Sussex County Times newspaper in order to bring it to the attention of parishioners and those who operate groups and businesses within the Parish.

5.1 Responses to Pre-submission Consultations

A total of 185 responses were received from members of the public. (see appendix I1)

The following statutory consultees also made responses: (see appendix I2)

- West Sussex County Council
- Horsham District Council
- South Downs National Park Authority
- Natural England
- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Thakeham Parish Council
- West Chiltington Parish Council



5.2 Issues and Concerns

Approximately 35% objected to the inclusion of one site for development. Approximately 24% were in outright support of the plan and a further 20% objected to the proposition of a road being built in a field within the South Downs National Park.

5.3 Regulation 14 Summary Report

The Regulation 14 Schedule of Representation and summary resulting report can be found in appendix I3.

This report summarises the main issues and concerns raised by parishioners and other consultees. It describes how these issues and concerns have been considered and where relevant, addressed in the revised pre-submission document.

Homer, MBA, MRTPI (rCOH Ltd) were reviewed and discussed by the Steering Group in March 2015. As a result of this discussion, a number of revisions were agreed, which necessitated a second six week public consultation period.

6 2nd Pre-submission Consultation (Regulation 14)

As a result of the agreed amendments to the Pre-submission documents, the Steering Group was advised that a further public consultation should take place. The second Public Consultation on the revised Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan ran between the 6th May 2015 and 16th June 2015. It was publicised using a range of techniques including posters and banners displayed around the villages, articles in local magazines, on websites and in the West Sussex County Times newspaper. A flyer was delivered to every home in the Neighbourhood Plan Designated area in order to bring it to the attention of parishioners and those who operate groups and businesses within the Parishes.

6.1 Responses to second Pre-submission Consultations

A total of 389 responses were received from members of the public (see appendix I4). The following statutory consultees also made responses: (See appendix I5)

- West Sussex County Council
- Horsham District Council
- South Downs National Park Authority
- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Thakeham Parish Council

6.2 Issues and Concerns

Of the 389 responses from the public, a large majority objected to the inclusion of one site for development – this site was the subject of objections during the first consultation period and had been reduced in size and density as a result of the feedback received. It is possible that the number of objections received during this second consultation was influenced by the delivery of a separate flyer to a large number of homes in the vicinity of the site by the campaign organisers. The number of responses was also weighted by the receipt of 139 preprinted letters signed by individuals.

59 responses were received from members of the public objecting to the proposition of a road being built in a field within the South Downs National Park. It is possible that the number of responses was weighted by the receipt of 38 preprinted letters signed by individuals.

6.3 Second Regulation 14 Summary Report

A Regulation 14 Schedule of Representations and resulting summary reports can be found in appendix I6.

The Regulation 14 Summary report summarises the main issues and concerns raised by parishioners and other consultees. It also describes how these issues and concerns have been considered and where relevant, addressed in the proposed Submission Plan.

The recommendations in this report provided by the Planning Consultant, Neil Homer, MBA, MRTPI (rCOH Ltd) were reviewed, discussed and agreed by the Steering Group in July 2015. All amendments were agreed by Storrington & Sullington Parish Council on 29th July 2015 and by Washington Parish Council on 3rd August 2015. Minutes are available on the Neighbourhood Plan website and Storrington & Sullington and Washington Parish Council websites.

6.4 Horsham District Council's response

Following HDC's response to the consultations, a number of modifications were recommended but significantly, the District Council was fully supportive of the site for development which was the subject of controversy amongst local residents.

6.5 South Downs National Park Authority's response.

Following the SDNPA's response to the consultations, modifications were recommended and these have been agreed by the Steering Group. Significantly, the National Park Authority did not object to the site for development which was the subject of controversy amongst local residents. Certain conditions were requested however, which have been adhered to in the revised Plan.

6.6 Health Check Outcome

With the permission of the SSWNP Steering Group, Horsham District Council arranged for a Health Check to be undertaken by NPIERS on the revised Pre-submission Plan and supporting documents. The Health Check report and Supplemental report can be found in appendices J1 and J2. The report contains a number of suggestions and recommendations which are supported by Horsham District Council.

7. Modifications to the Submission Plan & Draft Sustainability Appraisal

A meeting of the Steering Group took place on 23rd June 2015 to discuss the consultation responses and to agree upon the amendments to be made to the Plan and supporting documents. This meeting was publicised in the regular fashion and was attended by 8 members of the public. The Steering Group agreed to implement the recommendations made in the Health Check report and a number of other minor revisions were finalised.

The Draft Sustainability Appraisal was modified following the first Public

Consultation period to take account of changes suggested by South Downs National Park and Horsham District Council and no further changes were suggested.

The Submission Plan and supporting documents were approved by the Steering Group at its meeting on 21st July 2015 with the recommendation that the Parish Councils resolve that they should be submitted to Horsham District Council. These resolutions were made by Storrington & Sullington Parish Council at its meeting on 29th July 2015 and by Washington Parish Council at its meeting on 3rd August 2015.

8. Summary

The Draft Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan has been revised to take into account, where applicable, representations made by residents and statutory consultees during the periods of public consultation in February to March 2015 and May to June 2015. The Regulation 14 Reports set out the modifications that have been made. The modifications were agreed by the Steering Group of the Neighbourhood Plan on 21st July 2015 and Storrington & Sullington and Washington Parish Councils on 29th July 2015 and 3rd August 2015 respectively.

Further, it was agreed that the Submission Storrington & Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents be submitted to Horsham District Council for consideration.

9. Conclusion

This consultation Statement has been produced to document the consultation and engagement process undertaken. It is considered to comply fully with Part 5, Section 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations, 2012



10 Appendices

Appendix A Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area

- 1 – Map of Designated area
- 2 – HDC / SDNP Joint Decision Notice

Appendix B Agreements between parties

- 1 – Steering Group Terms of Reference
- 2 – Action in rural Sussex Terms of Agreement
- 3 – Memorandum of Understanding with Thakeham Parish Council

Appendix C Finance

- 1 – DCLG Grant Application
- 2 – DCLG Approval of Grant
- 3 – HDC Grant Application
- 4 – HDC Approval of Grant

Appendix D Focus Group Activities

- 1 – Focus Group Membership
- 2 – Notes from Planning Focus Group Meeting
- 3 - Notes from Economy and Business Focus Group Meeting
- 4 – Notes from Community Facilities Focus Group Meeting
- 5 - Notes from Traffic and Transport Focus Group Meeting
- 6 - Notes from Environment, Heritage and Local Knowledge Focus Group Meeting

Appendix E Reference Documents

- 1 – Storrington & Sullington Parish Housing Needs Survey (2013)
- 2 - Storrington & Sullington Community Action Plan 2013 – 2018 (2012)
- 3 - Storrington & Sullington Parish Design Statement (2010)
- 4 – Washington Parish Housing Needs Survey (2013)
- 5 - Washington Parish Plan (2004)
- 6 – Heath Common Village Design Statement (1999)
- 7 - Storrington & Sullington and Washington State of the Parishes Report.

Appendix F Public Engagement

- 1 – Public Meeting Attendance Sheet
- 2 – Community Survey Questionnaire
- 3 - Article for Sussex Local Magazine
- 4 - Presentation Slides for Public Meeting
- 5 - Consultation Flyer
- 6 - Analysis of Survey amongst local businesses

Appendix G Stakeholder Engagement

- 1 – List of National, Local and Influential Stakeholders
- 2 – Invitation to Stakeholders
- 3 – Policy Planning Workshop list of attendees
- 4 – Policy Planning Workshop – Facilitators' notes

Appendix H Call for Sites

- 1 – Call for Sites letter
- 2 – Criteria Score Sheet
- 3 – Site Score Sheet

Appendix I Regulation 14 Consultation

- 1 – Schedule of representations from the Public
- 2 – Schedule of representations from Statutory Consultees
- 3 – Regulation 14 report
- 4 – 2nd Consultation Schedule of representations from the public
- 5 – 2nd Consultation Schedule of representations from Statutory Consultees
- 6 – 2nd Regulation 14 report

Appendix J Health Check

- 1 – Health Check Report
- 2 – Health Check Supplemental Report