



Colerne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Background and Terms of Reference
Version 2

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1. Background and Scope of NP

1.1 Background

On 20 September 2016, Colerne Parish Council, as the responsible body under the terms of the Localism Act 2011, approved a recommendation that a Colerne Neighbourhood Plan [NP] should be developed; and it authorised the establishment of a steering group, formed from local residents, to be responsible for the development of the Plan.

The Council called a public meeting, which took place on December 6, 2016, at which this proposal was announced, and the rationale for it presented. The 50 members of the community in attendance participated in a lively discussion of the idea; and the conclusion of the meeting, on a show of hands, showed strong support that a Colerne Neighbourhood Plan should be produced. Participants were then invited to nominate themselves for membership of the Colerne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group [SG].

Some 15 members of the community did so, which, together with the five members of the Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Working Party, provided an initial panel of 20 members. The first meeting of the SG was called for January 19, 2017 with the Parish Council Chair acting pro tem as convener.

1.2 Scope of the NP

The objective of the NP is to set out, in the context of the Wiltshire Core Strategy¹ **how the residents of the parish of Colerne want to see the development of their parish taking place** on a 10 year planning horizon. Subject to approval by the Local Planning Authority [LPA], its defined planning area shall be the parish of Colerne. (For map link, see p.4)

The Plan will focus on **the development of the built-environment**, whether for residential, business, employment or leisure purposes, and on the social and infrastructure support needed for such developments. It will provide specificity on how the community want to see Wiltshire's Local Development Plan implemented in Colerne.

The plan may address at a detailed level aspects of development which might only be covered in general terms in the Core Strategy. These might include: site-development design, place-making, building design and materials, environment management and landscaping, environmental protection, sustainability, community impact, and other aspects of development as deemed appropriate.

¹ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/core-strategy-adoption.pdf>, 2015

With respect to the provision of public services and/or village facilities, the NP will, in formal terms, focus on the consequential effects of the developments envisaged – their impact on, for example, schools, medical services, transport and access. The NP may identify how specific development applications may in due course have to allow for the financing of additional infrastructure.

The NP will not formally be concerned with changes or improvements to the village which fall outside the scope of the Core Strategy, even where community consultation shows a high level of consensus about their desirability. These might be things like (for illustration only): improved elderly-care services, improved retail facilities, better public transport, or the employment of a dog-warden. Where evidence on such matters is weighty the NP may note these aspirations for the record, but they may not be capable of formal adoption in the NP. If outside the scope of the Core Strategy, they would be sidelined at the approvals/Examination stages.

2. COLERNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP: TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.1 Objectives

The task of the Colerne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is **to supervise and manage the development and delivery of the Colerne Neighbourhood Plan** as defined above. This will include the preparation of the draft plan and its presentation for formal approvals and examination and, in due course, to a community Referendum.

The Steering Group will undertake the development of the NP in a democratic, transparent and fair fashion. It will aim to generate high levels of community engagement throughout the plan-making process, providing those who live or work in the parish the opportunity to inform and shape the process through participation in consultations and by ensuring regular feedback by electronic and other media.

The content of the Colerne NP shall be fully evidenced and supported through consultation with the local community.

2.2 Constitution of the SG

The formation of the SG was formally announced on December 6, 2016. Members of the community who had volunteered for SG duty, either on that occasion or subsequently, together with members of the Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Working Party, constitute the members of the SG. All members were invited to the opening meeting on January 19, 2017.

The SG will aim to retain its membership at around 20 people to provide adequate resources for the task and flexibility for occasional absences. Members shall be

residents of the parish of Colerne, or employed within it. Membership shall include members of the Parish Council, subject to their not totalling more than one third of the total membership. Membership of the SG may be adjusted at any time subject to the principle that members should have an interest in the development of a robust NP, or specific personal or professional skills that can assist the process.

New membership after January 19 2017 may be by volunteering or by invitation/cooption. A volunteer for new membership will be invited to attend an SG meeting as an observer. The Chair will review with the volunteer their reasons for interest and their skills/interests profile. Subject to the Chair being satisfied (a) that these align with the aims and needs of the SG, and (b) that total SG membership numbers will not be overextended, membership of the Steering Group will be offered.

All expertise is welcome on the SG as long as (i) any actual or potential commercial interests are declared and (ii) it is understood that at some point an individual might need to step aside from a project – or even resign – if the SG thinks the conflict of interests is impeding progress. Once a conflict of interest has been declared individuals may be asked to be absent or leave the room for discussions pertaining to these interests and may not be able to take part in decisions, depending on the judgement of the other SG members.

The Secretary (see below) shall maintain a list of Steering Group members and their contact details. The SG quorum will be not less than eight members present, to include the Chair or acting Chair.

Within the remit given by the Parish Council (which is the Qualifying Body [QB] in terms of the Localism Act), the SG is responsible for its own affairs. Although initiated by the Parish Council, it is not a “sub-committee”, and the Parish Council does not directly control its process or outcomes. These shall in due course be satisfactory to the Council in order that it can (as the QB) submit drafts to the LPA and for Examination.

2.3 Management and Administration

The SG will select from amongst its members a chairperson. This position should, ideally but not essentially, be held by a non-Councillor, and, ideally but not essentially, be a continuing appointment. In the event of continuity issues, the chairmanship may be rotated at the discretion of the SG.

Frequency of meetings will be as determined from time to time by the SG, and as appropriate to the stage of development of the NP. At least 5 days’ notice of meetings shall be sent to members via email or alternative agreed communication method. Members will be expected to remain adequately familiar with the development processes through the SG’s communication portal, especially if unable to attend meetings regularly.

Decisions made by the Steering Group should normally be by consensus. Where a vote is required each member shall have one vote. A simple majority vote will be required to support any motion. The chairperson shall have one casting vote.

The work of the SG will be supported by a Secretary whose responsibilities shall include arranging meetings, taking and circulating minutes of proceedings, and supporting the Chair in administrative matters. If necessary, a stipend is available to compensate the work of the Secretary.

2.4 Financial Aspects

A preliminary notional budget for a Colerne NP was available at the December 6 public meeting. This covered the years 2016/17 - 2018/19.

An early responsibility of the SG is to prepare a more detailed project budget, identify sources of funding, and prepare submissions for grant support. Grant moneys will be needed in particular to finance the costs of community consultations.

The SG shall not have its own bank account. Colerne Parish Council will be responsible for all fundholding, expenditure, financial monitoring and reporting, and will operate in this respect on the request of the SG. Monies raised specifically for the purposes of NP development shall be ring-fenced and indicated as such within Parish Council financial reporting.

Initial outlays, e.g. Secretary and early office outlays, will be financed by the Colerne Parish Council.

2.5 Procedural Aspects

Records of all SG proceedings, in the form of Minutes, shall be taken. Actions and responsible persons will be identified, and these will be confirmed before the close of each meeting. All Minutes shall be circulated to NPSG members, available to members of the community, and securely stored for future record.

The SG will have special regard to the importance of regular and effective communication with its community, and mechanisms will be in place to inform residents of progress on the NP. Members of the public may attend SG meetings and, by invitation of the Chair, speak.

The SG may set up specific working groups or subcommittees as it sees fit, to undertake defined responsibilities within the overall task.

The SG will produce, monitor and regularly update a project timetable.

The SG shall sustain throughout an effective contact with the LPA, in particular through the allocated Link Officer, and as necessary with other organisations.

As requested, the SG will provide a formal progress-and-decisions report to the Parish Council.

As noted, the objective of the SG is to produce a submission version (Draft) of the NP which, subject to ratification by the Parish Council, can be submitted to the LPA for approval, and thence to Examination by the Planning Inspectorate. The SG shall respond to changes required by either of those bodies. Subject to clearance by the Examiner, the Plan will then be submitted to the community for approval via a Referendum, the organisation of which will be the responsibility of the LPA.

On successful adoption of the NP as a part of the Wiltshire Local Development Plan, the SG may be dissolved (see below), prior to which it will make recommendations to the Parish Council for a review of Plan progress at the five-year point, and for principles by which further neighbourhood planning may be initiated if required towards the end of the current planning period.

2.6 Dissolution of the SG

The Steering Group will be dissolved once its objectives have been attained; and/or when at least two-thirds of its members consider its services are no longer required; and/or should the Parish Council so determine.

On dissolution, the Steering Group will ensure the disposal of any remaining project-funds held by the Parish Council so as to accord with any conditions imposed by the grant funders and in the best interests of Colerne Parish.

2.7 Adoption and Amendment of Terms of Reference

The above terms of reference were provisionally adopted at a meeting of the Colerne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on 16 February 2017, subject to a period until 28 February for any required post-meeting amendments. The ToRs were given final approval on 16.03.17.

Further amendments to these terms of reference may be made at a SG meeting if agreed by a majority of the members present. Such amendments will be notified to the Parish Council and to the Community.

2.8 Abbreviations used:

CNPSG:	Colerne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
NP:	Colerne Neighbourhood Plan
SG:	Colerne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
LPA:	Local Planning Authority, i.e. Wiltshire Unitary Council



- LDP: Local Development Plan, i.e. the combined development plans of the LPA, being principally but not solely the Core Strategy.
- QB: The Qualifying Body authorised by the LPA to initiate and present an NP. In Colerne's case the QB is the Parish Council.

2.9 Colerne Parish map

<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/> Allow use of current location; click on 'Boundary'; select 'Civil Parishes' from drop-down list; click on Colerne to select and enlarge.