



Summary of Public Consultations

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1. Introduction

1.1 Public Consultations

This report consolidates the feedback received by the Colerne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group during the following public consultations:

	Public Consultation	Date	Number attending
1	May Fair - Stall	3 May 2017	40
2	Colerne Village Hall - Workshop	13 May 2017	13
3	Colerne Village Hall – Workshop	3 June 2017	14
4	Thickwood - Workshop	17 June 2017	11
5	Liberal Club - Workshop	21 June 2017	13
6	Armed Forces Day - Stall	24 June 2017	22
7	Young Families – Post-its at several meetings	June 2017	11
8	Clubs and Societies - Workshop	1 July 2017	17

A report has been produced for each of these consultations and they all can be found on the Colerne Neighbourhood Plan website.

These events were attended by a cross section of the parish: young families, the elderly, retired people and people in employment from all parts of the parish. More detail can be found in the individual reports.

The opinions shared, suggestions made and questions raised have been broadly categorised under the six themes in Section 2.1.

Many of the comments, however, span several themes. More general comments and ideas that do not fit neatly under any of these themes, along with a vision for the Parish, are outlined in Sections 2.2 and 2.3.

Some initial thoughts on development of the Airfield can be found in Section 2.4.

Caveats

The perceptions, ideas and opinions of those attending the consultation are not verified facts and figures.

No weightings have been attached to the opinions documented in this report.

2 Summary of Opinions

2.1 Suggestions Grouped by Themes

2.1.1 Housing Needs

Past and present

- Consider the amount of development in the village since WW2
- Village was growing organically but slowed down now – assumption is that many young people have moved out
- Thickwood operates as private estate; homeowners pay an annual charge to maintain communal areas

Future Growth

- No more development
- Do we need to bring new blood into the village? This would increase critical mass of inhabitants to support services (PO, school etc)
- Large scale development inappropriate - no large scale development
 - people would work outside the Parish, not contribute to village life, won't shop here
 - partly because of inadequate access roads, and also congestion especially at peak times
- Small developments, not large-scale development
- Continue growth up to approx 50 houses
- 200 houses would be enough
- Better to locate new-build on the camp side of the main road, eg concrete area in North Colerne
- The biggest challenge will be the proposed development of the nearby hangars – 18,19 and 20. This might form a template for any future development on the airfield/camp and may happen before the Plan is effective

Trends and needs

- A new housing needs survey is needed to update our information about current needs and expectations. The 2011 survey identified a need for two bedroomed accommodation (scarce due to renovation / extension)
- Future trend is for more young people to move back to be closer to grandparents for child-minding – affecting local housing needs.
- Increase in young children (Nationally number of students age 18 will drop nationally until 2020, then rise again) affects housing needs
- Lack of first homes for young adults wanting to become independent but still live locally (some will not want to do so)
- Young people have to move away until they can afford a house in Colerne
- Renting is often not a route to home ownership (rents are almost as high as mortgage payments)
- Three bed homes are prohibitively expensive, so existing young families looking outside the village for larger accommodation

- Lack of affordable housing. Smaller houses now out of reach to new buyers because of a growing number of second homes, and also because of renovation /extension
- Only 2 bed homes affordable are in North Colerne, but are very small
- Second home creep is of concern
- Need to be ready for an aging demographic
- Old listed properties in the parish are difficult to adapt to changes in residents' mobility levels
- There is no social housing in the parish (NB Housing benefit for Colerne is at a higher (Bath) rate because of cost of housing here)
- Rural affordable and community houses can become an isolated poverty trap if transport and services are inadequate
- Wish to contribute to under provision of housing in the UK – provide accommodation not just for own personal/ family needs

Housing

- Affordable housing needed – to buy and to rent
 - At least half of new builds should be affordable
 - Need new housing with designated leases to local people
 - Flats for single people, and houses for families, and the elderly
 - To rent – not for sale under 'right to buy'
 - To buy – If 'affordable' is 80% of the market rate, even that is out of reach of many people where market rates are high as in this parish
 - Older people need affordable housing that is suited to their needs
 - Any affordable housing built for sale or letting should be offered to local residents first, and then sequentially via specified priority (such as connection to parish, work in parish etc) ('Parish Cascade')
- Accommodation for the elderly, with supportive communal area for social and physical support
 - Nursing home
 - Sheltered accommodation
 - Bungalows/maisonettes for elderly
- Provision of housing adapted to older people would free up larger houses (or houses with large gardens which older people struggle to maintain) for younger families
- Opportunity for sharing houses with lodgers / carers where older people are single occupants in large houses
- Co-ownership for the elderly – address social care needs of the elderly by integrating local housing
- Social housing needed – housing association
- Need long-term lets that give some family security
- Encourage self-builds; self-builds provide greater flexibility for building on existing agricultural land
- Rural/land based businesses need living and business facilities together to ensure protection of equipment
- Investigate non-permanent accommodation units eg Ecopods for singles

- Co-ownership and cooperative housing – note that capital investment requires some return
- Enthusiasm for shared/part-ownership schemes for young people/family ownership
- Need to ensure a balance and mix of types of housing (to achieve a representative community across all age groups)
- Community led housing scheme where rents and purchase prices truly reflect the needs of local people
- Community Land Trust to be investigated to support mix of new private / rented / self-build houses
- Some pragmatism that affordable housing may not happen, but must make any developer pay for new infrastructure

Design

- Need to identify design criteria to reflect what we want to see in the parish
- Need guidelines on appearance of new housing –to maintain / augment the community eg traditional stone. Let's use straw bale with lime render
- Density of any new housing developments needs to be specified
- Any new build needs 2 parking spaces (standard of 1.5 cars per house is inadequate particularly in rural areas where public transport is limited)
- Quality of homes important – particularly starter homes
- Sustainability - Zero carbon footprint –minimum standard for new builds - No infrastructure needs be installed if these are designed properly
- A geographical mix of types of houses – not all the nice ones together, and the cheap houses elsewhere, not all the older people together
- Mixed population and mixed style of housing – leads to a 'community'
- Apartments unsuitable for this parish (more suited to towns)
- Good prefabs would be better than small box mass development
- New homes should have good sized family rooms, not mass-built boxes
- New houses that are too big adversely affect the community
- Potential to improve access to facilities, schools and parking if development is done sensibly
- A coordinated approach to the design of street furniture (currently a mix of styles and colours)
- Design of places and landscapes to be considered
- Garden village idea – communal areas (but not twee)

2.1.2 Community Facilities

General

- Value the sense of community principally created by clubs and societies
- The sense of community cohesion is primarily felt by the village dwellers. Outlying areas less connected and can be isolated by lack of facilities
- It is life outside of work and business that creates a sense of community
- Facilities need to make a quantum leap when under pressure from an increased population
- If we want people to use the community facilities, need to enable this through transport
- Need to maintain local services (shops etc) to support the environment of homeworkers (pool services to improve their survival)
- Ageing community needs more local services but there is a growing shortage of volunteers from younger people because of need to work, and from retired people due to childcare responsibilities. Luncheon club operating at full capacity

Shops

- Fewer shops in Colerne than in Marshfield
- Parishioners do not regularly use the Colerne shops unless in central village
- Competing stores – is this sustainable? Existing retail facilities are fragile
- Need to maintain the shops we have. Develop locally produced foodstuffs eg veg and bread (micro business units could assist in production process)
- More variety of shops if easier for residents to get to them
- Shops are part of the social hub – no more space for expansion, so need to include shops in any plans for construction on new land (ie airfield)
- Could set up a community shop, and another café (not to compete with Colerne Café) – Liberal Club has previously been approached

Post Office

- Post Office service available Monday to Saturday is essential, particularly with the increase in online shopping, and with international mailing
- Potential for combining a café and post office
- Need a mobile post office for Thickwood and Pinewood

GP surgeries

- More pressure on busy GP surgeries from an increase in population

School

- Another school would be needed if a large increase in population
- Playschool is exploring moving onto the school site to create a singly managed children's campus. This is a way to provide more round the clock care in the village and cope with the shortage of trained staff. NB Impact for problems at the crossroads
- Some thought of secondary school facility developing here in future although this is countered by need to ensure the village is not too isolated from rest of world

Cafes

- Café in Colerne very popular, and longer opening hours welcomed

Activities

- There is quite a good mix of clubs, societies and social activities
- Recreation field very good.
- Sports clubs in the village are exploring getting together to create a facility that they can all use
- Provide toilets at the Rec – but recognise the biggest problem would be the ongoing cost of vandalism
- Pinewood use MOD play space, and Southwood has its own small play area
- Shortage of activities for teenagers to do, not just facilities within the parish but also public transport to make use of facilities outside (eg Springfield Campus)
 - Choices' set up specifically for the 13-19 age group, doing well, has a Facebook page. Some parents don't know about this
 - Potential for using existing spaces eg Liberal Club (eg pool)
 - Drop-in centre
- More sporting facilities for older children (11-16) needed; and also for the older residents
- Use of Camp facilities (swimming pool, gym etc) – Can they be shared with the village? This may not be consistent with current MOD policy, but NP to recognise the facilities' existence in case of future availability
- Developing a micro-sports complex using the existing infrastructure from the Army would be an asset both for the parish and neighbouring parishes
- Not possible to use sport and leisure facilities at Corsham unless have a car. No public transport for this, particularly for the elderly
- Play area for children with disabilities / special needs is being looked into
- Support for increasing play facilities

2.1.3 Business and Employment Opportunities and Needs

The need

- Business opportunities for the younger generation to earn a living without moving out of the area
- Local employment for potential residents (of future developments)
- More employment in the village, so less need to travel to work
- To cater for more people working from home
- More employment opportunities for mums locally as poor transport makes access to work outside of village impossible without a car. Also allows flexibility around child care
- To create a skill set database – to integrate businesses / business functions

Limitations

- More small industries would require good access from A420
- If new businesses set up, the skills needed might not be available locally thus leading to more commuter traffic
- Micro businesses only so no need for HGVs
- Lower paid jobs imply need for affordable housing – or commute
- Lack of suitable housing and no public transport in the evenings are a deterrent to young people wanting to work here in local businesses
- In general people don't work and shop in the village
- Many businesses (78 in 2012), but most are one-person businesses – can any take on apprentices?

Opportunities

- Well placed for access to Bath, Bristol and Chippenham
- Provide space for small business / light industry growth – perhaps a business park
- Provide affordable, small business units, perhaps as a cooperative (cheap spaces for small enterprises); some with living accommodation above
- Use hangars for industrial / commercial units
- Have studios / small workshops for people to rent, maybe an artisan area for arts and crafts, sustainability, ICT technologies, etc
- Create more employment locally to maintain links with surrounding areas
- Visitor centre – ecological survey outcome, village history, Roman remains, airfield history; teas and momentos . A trail passing mini 'shopping outlets' eg selling honey, art
- Holiday homes can bring employment opportunities (although balance needed – not too many)
- Operating an electric shuttle bus to Batheaston
- Parcel collection point for online shopping
- Local consortia of builders / plumbers etc could work with self-builders
- Create space for larger shop / retail services
- New businesses on airfield would provide more local employment eg for young people living in the parish – **see Airfield below**

2.1.4 Transport and Connectedness

General

- Young people and families need public transport to continue to live here
- Consider transport needs for the elderly need to be considered eg travel to hospital appointments
- Connecting paths – whilst there are circuitous paths through the estates in North Colerne, it takes too long to get to school/playgroup if parents are going to work after. Hence cars. Similarly for Thickwood
- Any expansion of housing it must take into account how people will travel to work, and park
- Increased business activity raises transport issues for people, materials and products
- Provision of social housing must take account of the means by which those who cannot afford cars will travel
- Better integration needed between Colerne and Pinewood and Thickwood
- Potential for splitting the community if large developments built eg on north side of the C151
- Future developments will principally be north of the existing C151. Important to ensure a recentring of the village via facilities to allow good communication between parts
- Easy to commute to Bath and Bristol (by car)
- Expect to have less vehicle use in the future
- Need to facilitate alternative transport and get people out of their cars

Roads

- Tiny lanes unsuitable for access
- Doncombe Lane is a major issue for current and future development
- Investment must be put into the roads
- Moving the C151 north to the line of the original road would create more integrity for the village and reduce traffic dangers for children and families around the school and sports areas
- A wide road from the A420 (viaduct) needed now, and even more critical for any future development within the Parish
- There is a need to improve road access to support travel to work and local business growth without creating rat runs for through traffic
- But do we want an A road anyway?
- More traffic would impact on Batheaston, Ashwicke, The Shoe, Ford.
- Speed limits on C road – 40mph from Thickwood reducing to 30mph before school junction till after Bath Road
- School crossing is so dangerous. Zebra crossing / Pelican lights needed

Parking

- Limited parking in Colerne village
- Need central car park to allow walking unimpeded between shops, school and surgery
- Community car park next to the school in field at end of green play area would improve safety for drop off and provide evening and weekend parking for village

Cycling & Walking

- Create cycle paths from Pinewood and Thickwood to Colerne (a safer community).
- Two lanes – one for walking, one for cycling. Extend to Marshfield
- Well signposted paths and cycleways
- Footbridge across the C151 linking the airfield to Colerne village

Car share

- Need smarter ways in which car travel can be shared: eg website offering lifts in Bath, instant taxi service, car sharing etc
- Perhaps a car club – eg someone's second car if not fully used?
- Community car pool powered sustainably to prevent need for families to run a second car

Electric cars and bikes

- Increase in electric cars and bikes– need charging points (using locally generated energy)
- Sustainability – pool of electric vehicles for the future – self funding - possible community project

Taxi

- Limited experience of using Uber. Taking a Uber taxi from Bath to Colerne seems good, but expensive to call a Uber taxi (3-4 taxis available) to pick up from Colerne

Public Transport – bus

- Limitations of current bus service (recognising that services provided have to be used)
 - restricts independence and can lead to isolation
 - impacts social life of young people in the parish, and others who do not have cars (no buses in evening)
 - unsuitable for commuters
 - not used by families
 - no route to Chippenham, only the school bus (Term time only)
 - expensive (most users have bus passes), although children can travel free in school holidays
 - If Park & Ride in Bath goes ahead, it will kill our bus
- Need buses to be more frequent and cheaper –more people will use them
- Shuttle buses are needed – regular service and into the evenings:
 - Link from Colerne, Thickwood and Pinewood to Batheaston to connect to the wider network
 - Link to Chippenham for the train
 - Funded by the parish to maintain a low price
- An increase in housing would justify more buses - Criteria for future development – developer to contribute to cost of providing bus services -
- Community transport scheme/policy for whole parish - Community bus scheme already operating in other villages. Extending Link scheme into community buses. Volunteers or commercial (eg Wellow runs a bus for school children and community. Only Corsham school bus is free)

2.1.5 Environment / Land Management

See Electricity, and Airfield

Concerns

- Recommend carrying out a survey of bats (flyways and feeding areas), and newts
- More residents, more litter
- Currently no communal space for dog walking eg a park or separate area for dogs
- Protect green spaces and nature areas
- Need to ensure new developments preserve a cohesive environment for good community connectedness
- Problem of light pollution (from existing street lights) and from additional lighting needed for any new development

Usage

- Consider use of land for generating solar or wind power - will increase autonomy / sustainability, lessen carbon footprint and provide income for the parish
- Open spaces – community access
- Develop more green spaces around / within housing developments
- Plant trees as part of any new development, and encourage planting of trees across the parish in general
- Return a percentage of the airfield to natural habitat – incorporating the Roman Villa
- Housing with a low carbon footprint a good idea – but might affect its affordability
- Self-builders to be encouraged to build energy efficient houses
- Lease land for interim use for e.g Ecopods - 4m diameter @£25,000 each
- Community / school car park in the field to the east of school; also for residents to park their cars at night
- Polytunnels
- The weather can be harsh here on the hill. Need covered areas for sport / transport waiting
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty needs protecting for broader enjoyment. Dog walking can clash with this

2.1.6 Energy / Utilities

Water

- Capacity of water tower considered inadequate for new development
- Water pressure issues in Thickwood

Sewerage & drains:

- The ancient sewerage system cannot cope with the current volumes of sewage (Inadequate drains, and bad smells)
- Before any new development is started, the sewerage system must be assessed and replaced/improved
 - (it was noted that cost of providing enhanced utilities affects a developer's willingness to give up a proportion of his scheme for social / affordable housing)
- For any new builds, consider alternative sustainable methods eg reed beds, WET systems

Telecomms

- The internet is not superfast throughout the Parish; beyond the box the copper wires are unreliable and too slow when it rains. Eg Thickwood has problems with broadband speeds
- Importance of a high speed internet for people to work at home (reduces carbon footprint)

Electricity

- See Environment and Airfield
- Micro-generation of energy
 - Solar panels owned by village; feed in tariff no longer attractive. Ties up land better used for housing or other use.
 - Wind turbines – but this area is not that good for wind
 - Electric car battery charging points
- Mixed feelings re solar/windfarms
- Solar panels on roofs of new build housing
- Street lighting - energy needs to be used efficiently, not unnecessarily – powered by solar panels

General

- Bath is modeling itself as a 'clean city' – can we piggy back off this?
- Consider the 'Village Independence' approach, whereby a community purchases utility services on behalf of the whole village. As a bulk purchaser, this gives the village more influence over the supplier for service improvement

2.2 General Opinions

2.2.1 Strengths

- Strength of community – a self-contained village/parish with everyone joining in - enthusiasm
- A real village – with rich mix of buildings and social groups, and long term residents – not just a commuter village full of isolated incomers
- A working village
- A friendly and supportive environment – people keep an eye out for each other
- Tight-knit community
- Three generations (grandparents to help with childcare)
- People love living here
- Evolving community, with people open to change – open-minded
- Mix of military and civilian children – good experience for the children – enriches the village
- Relatively few holiday homes – unlike Biddestone
- Surrounding countryside (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)
- Dark skies
- Quiet at night
- Many activities and interests, culture
- School
- Proximity to cultural centres: Bath, Bristol etc
- A safe environment especially for the young and elderly
- A bypass road that keeps rat-run traffic out of the High Street
- Ease of access to eg Bath / Bristol / Chippenham / London (fast train service) for work, culture

2.2.2 Weaknesses

- In a bubble – could collapse – may have to increase for its own good
- Need more local employment to be more than just a dormitory town
- The needs of the Camp should also be considered, for example it is a challenge for transient families to integrate with the village community
- Perception that there aren't many residents in the 20-30 year age group
- Housing too expensive
- An increase in housing could increase the numbers of commuters – might drive house prices up (for people trying to get onto the housing ladder)
- No affordable public transport
- Any large expansion of the parish will bring increase in crime reducing its sense of safety
- Limited childcare facilities for pre-school children

See other sections

2.3 A Vision for the Future

- No growth, why do we need to expand? Colerne has grown enough now (lots of development in 60s)
- Infill okay, no expansion
- Development north of existing C151, primarily around C151 and Doncombe Lane, with small businesses elsewhere
- Re-route the C151 to old road site
- An evolving Parish - needs to develop and grow for the future through a holistic approach (interconnectedness of all the six themes above)
- Go for organic growth over a period of time (quality affordable homes mixed with self-builds), not a big bang development
- Positive attitude to development, looking beyond personal need
- Good quality design, whatever the build technique
- Projects involving the elderly and children to bring the generations together
- Preserving the village community
- A rural community
- A village of character
- A living village (with measures to control numbers of second homes)
- Compact
- Contiguous
- Sustainable
- Non elite
- Enabling independence for young people, not crushed by cost
- Preservation of remaining natural areas – flowers and wildlife
- A beautiful place to live
- Microsports/leisure facility using camp infrastructure

See other sections

2.4 The Airfield

The Site

- The Airfield is deemed to be a brownfield site.
- A large development on the airfield would effectively be a new village including shops – with an access viaduct to A420 – would lose heritage of Colerne (in the same way that the new development of Poundbury is not considered to be part of Dorchester by many)
- Any large scale housing development on the airfield would become a village in its own right
- Against very large housing development on airfield – eg road access is a major issue The satellite dishes will stay, probably with a no-go area around them
- Pockets of homes, not mass development
- Perhaps the runways will be retained?
- Runway divides the parish
- Need to balance housing with other uses of land
- C151 is natural barrier to joining the village if MOD development goes ahead. New residents will not use existing facilities if new ones are built on MOD land
- Could have strip of land where hangars are as green belt to separate the village and airfield development
- Would MOD give a proportion of the land back to the community in recognition of the support that the Parish has given to the base? Could focus on the environmental benefits

Opportunities

- Need to make a case for the community for the outcome of the sale of the airfield eg the camp at Bicester was sold to a Community Land Trust which gives the community control of the built environment.
- For example:
- The area to the NW of the airfield could be a good site for business development, with infrastructure already in place. Small businesses along the road.
- Business could use the existing underlying infrastructure (ducting, cable runs, cabinets, hard standings, etc) to connect to micro-grid, possibly using pre-existing power infrastructure (UPS generators, etc (assuming that these are in place))
- Renewable Micro-generation of energy may be viable, notably electricity (solar, wind and biomass) – parish would benefit (via microgrid), and it would provide employment, in addition to becoming a viable technology beacon. <https://energy.gov/articles/how-microgrids-work>
 - provided that this would not detract from the beauty of the area
 - No windmills close to the village – noise pollution
 - Not a large scale solar park – sufficient for local community needs
- Rest of site could be nature reserves, conservation areas or adopt organic pasture/grazing management practices to provide further business/revenue/employment opportunities (renting out community pasture) but still accessible for community leisure use.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2017/05/06/restoring-wildflower-meadows-could-bring-new-era-super-organic/>

- A sports training centre
- A leisure centre incorporating the existing gym and swimming pool (heated by energy generated from nearby micro-generation plant) – for use of all the Parish inc. schoolchildren who are currently bused to other facilities, and the elderly for health benefits
- A retirement village
- Open spaces, community access
- Woodland areas, with associated woodland businesses
- Adventure park, activities for teenagers
- Golf course
- Sporting lake eg like the one at Eton
- Vineyard perhaps – understood that a local Wine Company is suggesting this
- Maybe the airstrip could be kept as is
- New businesses eg -mini business estate or industrial estate, mini hangars, potters' mini hangar
- Shops
- Educational needs – school expansion
- Arts Centre / Museum
- Utilities need considering eg
 - Broadband
 - Water pressure
- Any building needs to be sustainable – no infrastructure needs be installed if this is designed properly. (MOD area could be brilliantly designed using biomass fuels and all sustainable energy waste management)
- Employment will created during MOD site development

2.4.1 Addendum - Airfield

After the meeting one representative of the conservation group asked for the following points to be included as he had not felt able to do so at the meeting.

- One solution is to look at the whole site and develop the existing housing into a small village, North Colerne. Add strategic facilities shops, school, surgery etc. Existing admin buildings to be used if possible for any appropriate uses, maybe industry although that could create a need for better a better road structure, which would not help the conservation aspect.
- The runway and hangar areas to be allowed to go back to nature. A certain amount of farming could take place.
- The hangars should be demolished
- If any development were to go ahead this will over time allow the whole area to change into perhaps a “New Town” consequently ruining the whole of the parish.
- This area is predominantly English countryside let's try to preserve it for future generations to enjoy.

Other ex MOD sites

- On the Hullavington site, James Dyson is setting up a Science Park – state of art technology employer
- The site at Corsham, with its extensive underground bunkers has large data centre, - <https://arkdatacentres.co.uk/> and associated Science Park

3. Definitions and Clarifications

The following definitions were used:

- Community Land Trusts are a form of community led housing, where local organisations set up and run by ordinary people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets important to that community, like community enterprises, food growing or workspaces. The CLT's main task is to make sure these homes are genuinely affordable, based on what people actually earn in their area, not just for now but for every future occupier
- 'Affordable housing' - houses that cost a % less than their current market value, and remain so.
- 'Community housing' – rented accommodation.
- Eco-pod – A small eco house typically about 4-6 metres in diameter with an optional smaller pod attached (see <http://tinyhouseblog.com/dome/eco-pod-home/>)
- WET system - Wetland Ecosystem Treatment (WET) Systems. They function by harnessing the innate ability of natural wetland ecosystems to absorb and transform the organic nutrients found in wastewater, converting these into plant biomass and soil, using solar power.

Services within the Parish – The Parish Council can lodge with Wiltshire Council the business services that they do not wish to lose. The PC would then be given a six-month period for the community to look into alternative solutions if the service is to be withdrawn.

Sale of the Airfield – There is no definitive date for this. Any change to the use of land will have a Master Plan developed by the MOD in conjunction with Wiltshire Council and the Parish Council, so a full consultation with the community will take place.