

Sway PC public consultation on Church Lane development 30 Jan 2020

Stephen Tarling, Chair of Sway Parish Council

Background: after four years of wide public consultations including an open exhibition and public consultation at Sway Village Hall, the new [NFNPA Local Plan](#) (see page 74, policy SP25 and the map on page 75), includes a major allocated site development of around 40 houses on Church Lane, Sway.

A briefing paper was circulated to local residents (copy below) inviting all Sway residents to an open meeting on 30 Jan 2020 – at which stage no planning application had been received.

Meeting:

Over 70 local residents attended, including half of the parish councillors – particularly those on the Planning and Transport Committee. Additional copies of the briefing paper and the relevant parts of the NFNPA Local Plan were circulated and the Chair of Sway Parish Council gave an outline – emphasising that the scheme was going ahead, but that one of the objectives of this public consultation was to determine priorities in terms of suggestions, conditions and recommendations to any forthcoming planning application. It was emphasised that this was a public meeting for all to speak – it was not being recorded and there would not be formal minutes.

Most residents accepted that after four years, extensive public consultations and a two-week public examination of the NFNPA Local Plan that this proposal was going ahead – although there were still a few who wanted to reverse that. Otherwise there was enthusiasm for getting as much amenity advantage as Sway can from this development, but tempered by dismay over the recent lack of support from NFNPA for the wishes of local residents, and a pragmatic recognition that developers show no regard whatsoever for Sway beyond maximising their profits, and that developers therefore have extensive funds to try to ensure they get what they want.

There were a number of additional suggestions as to concerns and/or possible amenity advantages that could be encouraged, including:

- Improving the flooding and poor roadway at the bottom of Church Lane – at the Meadens end. However it was noted that this is at the furthest end from the development site, so the developers may not feel responsibility down there.
- Sway Cricket Club had concerns over a route round the side of the back field, which is already in the local plan under paragraph 7.33. The Cricket Club would take an opportunity to outline their concerns.
- Could there be an opportunity to add a Tree Protection Order to the Jubilee Oak now there is a large development bringing a lot of heavy construction vehicles nearby?

A couple of residents in Westbeams Close - near the school - feared that traffic congestion there would become worse; and there was widespread support for the suggestion that Church Lane should become one-way. A number of residents supported the suggestion that as Sway is a New Forest Village with a diversity of design in its current housing stock we would not want to see 40 small estate town-houses all the same, with insufficient parking and pathetically small gardens. There were passionate demands for good design at this site.

Energy efficiency should be encouraged – perhaps a local heat-and-power scheme, or an estate ground source heat pump, all houses should include solar PV, no gas supply should go to the development, and electric car recharging points should be part of the infrastructure.

There were concerns over the protection of hedges as well as trees and it was suggested that a local group would volunteer to ensure the hedging on Church Lane was subject to proper hedge-laying (as indeed it used to be). Most people deplored the lack of local infrastructure and the need to improve that to cope with the increased pressure this development would cause, and the Leader of the New Forest District Council particularly emphasised the importance of good drainage at the site. The leader of the Hatch Motors Group (individuals who had put several thousand pounds of their own money into improving the application at that site - for a shop, four town houses and a few flats) noted how the Parish Council had set aside less than their budget to try to influence a major development of about 40 dwellings on a green field site and felt the Parish Council's budget was insufficient.

There was less discussion over the informal greenspace area – but that may well be considered by the separate residents' consultation group concerned with a Sway Environment and Climate Change Charter.

Towards the end of the meeting there was an indicative a show of hands as to the priorities that residents felt were important:

1. Affordable housing for locals was marginally the strongest recommendation, with four others just behind:
2. Maximising environmental and green credentials for dwellings;
3. Better pedestrian and traffic access on Church Lane;
4. Improving utilities and infrastructure in the area (drainage, sewerage etc.); and
5. Support for adherence to the [Sway Village Design Statement](#), a Supplementary Planning Document of the NFNPA.

The open part of the meeting finished at about 8:30pm, with residents with specific questions and interests invited to stay on to discuss with councillors and others – and that continued until about 9pm

This consultation will inform the Sway Parish Council Planning and Transport Committee's approach to any forthcoming planning application and it was suggested that a focus group be formed to anticipate and encourage all of these priorities.

Briefing notes for the Church Lane development consultation v4

Thursday 30th January 2020 19:00 at Sway Jubilee Pavilion

- All Sway residents are most welcome.
- The development is going ahead – there have been four years of consultation and it is approved by the government’s Planning Inspectors. This cannot be reversed.
- The latest policy and guidance specifically on this site is on page 74 and the map on page 75 of the NFNPA Local Plan 2016-2036. Appended below are screen grab copies of those Church Lane specific items. Any development must adhere to Policy SP25.
- It would be most helpful if anyone attending the meeting has read the one side of NFNPA guidance and policy appended below.
- The full NFNPA Local Plan is available as a pdf from <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/app/uploads/2019/09/Local-Plan-2016-2036-finalforweb.pdf> and there is a consultation copy in Sway Parish Office or the NFNPA Reception. All other policies in the Local Plan must also apply.
- The highest bidder for the site is understood to be a national company who may not know details of the New Forest National Park, so Sway Parish Council plans to contact the winning bidder as soon as details are confirmed, to offer our assistance.
- For such a development the first stage is often an ‘Outline Planning Application’ and this is later followed by a full Planning Application.
- As the planning process continues typically a first full planning application may be overly optimistic and be refused – and might go to appeal. At every stage as many Sway residents as possible should send in any comments so as to improve the chances that Sway can influence the planning officer.
- As full planning permission is granted there will be a number of binding conditions attached to the permission and those will be one of the areas that Sway Parish Council will be considering. Sway Parish Council might, for instance, be looking to/for:
 - Ensure design adheres to the Sway Village Design Statement ([available here](#)).
 - Ensure as much affordable housing for **local** people (on the waiting list) as possible.
 - Providing a pedestrian link from Jubilee Field through to opposite Westbeams Road (for easier access to the school).
 - Ensuring the maximum environmental and green credentials for all dwellings.
 - Ensuring gardens with native and forest-friendly planting in all dwellings.
 - Better pedestrian traffic access from and along the Church Lane, during and after works.
 - Sufficient parking space for all dwellings – new and existing.
 - Developing the informal green space as forest-friendly and also welcoming to local children.
 - Preserving as many mature trees and hedgerows as possible, including those covered by Tree Preservation Orders ([TPO map available here](#))
 - Improving utilities in the area for the new housing (such as drainage, sewerage etc.).
- These options above are the sorts of matters that Sway Parish Council will be considering, and we welcome thoughts on that range of items.

NFNPA Local Plan details for Sway: Land south of Church Lane

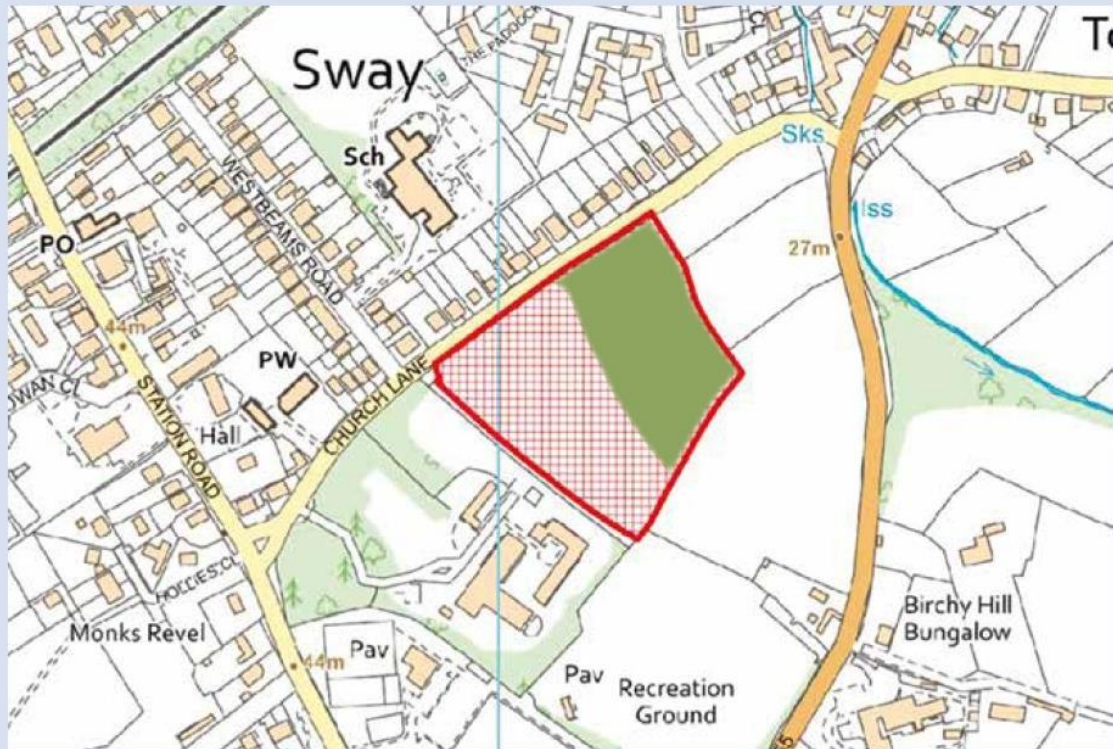
Sway

- 7.31 The village of Sway (population 2,700) includes a station on the main railway line and a modest range of services, local shops, businesses and accommodation. A housing needs survey for the parish in 2013 identifies a significant local housing need for 98 additional dwellings arising from within the local community. Recent windfall site developments in Sway have not provided affordable housing for local people due to their modest size and rural exception sites have not been forthcoming. Therefore, a site allocation through the Local Plan provides the best route for securing affordable housing to meet the identified local community needs.
- 7.32 The Defined Village boundary of Sway was identified in the 1980s and has not been reviewed since. With international nature conservation designations adjoining the village boundaries to the north and the east the only area of potential is to the south and west of the village, which is also located closer to the school, services and transport links in the village centre.
- 7.33 Land to the south of Church Lane in Sway has been identified as suitable to make a significant contribution towards meeting the identified local housing needs arising within the parish. The site is located within a short, level walk of the existing services within the village, including the station, shops and school. The provision of a safe, off-road pedestrian link from the Jubilee Fields Sports Ground to Church Lane though the site will be supported. The site will also provide additional community benefits through the provision of 1 hectare of informal greenspace to complement the more formal recreational facilities available at the adjacent Jubilee Field.

Policy SP25: Land south of Church Lane, Sway

Land to the south of Church Lane, Sway is allocated for the development of around 40 residential dwellings. The site will also provide 1 hectare of informal greenspace provision for the local community. Detailed proposals for the site must meet the following site-specific requirements:

- (a) the provision of on-site affordable housing for local people in housing need in accordance with the target of 50% affordable housing;
- (b) all of the dwellings on the site will be limited to a maximum total internal habitable floor area of 100 square metres;
- (c) the site must be developed in a comprehensive manner;
- (d) residential development on the site will be limited to the part of the site that lies outside the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) 400 metre zone (illustrated in the red shading on the following map);
- (e) measures should be put in place to protect the trees that fringe the site that are protected by Tree Preservation Orders;
- (f) the access to the site off Church Lane must ensure adequate visibility splays and provide safe access to the school and on foot to the village centre;
- (g) the use of the remainder of the site (green shading) that lies within the New Forest SAC and SPA 400 metre zone for informal greenspace will be supported. Proposals should be accompanied by details of the proposed layout and long-term management arrangements for the greenspace provision; and
- (h) development proposals must provide a connection to the nearest point of adequate capacity in the sewerage network, as advised by the service provider.



© Crown Copyright and Database Right 2019. Ordnance Survey 1000114703.

