

Exhibition 2015 Feedback Discussion Notes

6 discussion sessions were held. Notes were taken during the sessions. These have been analysed into themes in the tables below. All the notes are listed at the end.

3 major themes emerged during the discussions – selection of the site, types of home, and the design of the site (site design brief).

The site selection discussions concerned understanding about how the possible sites had been selected. A view expressed was that the central site was on balance the best option.

The site design discussions centred on whether the NDP can direct the design of the site and the features that should be considered for incorporation.

Other subjects raised during the discussions included parking, schools, doctor's surgery, business environment/plans for new businesses, street lighting, biodiversity and involving the community.

These discussions identified a wide range of ideas and considerations that need to be taken forward into the NDP.

Ref No = cross reference to rapporteurs notes
Threads = colour highlights common threads

4th April 2015

Discussion Notes Catalogued into Principle Themes

Answers given during the discussion in *italics*

Ref	Note	Thread
20	Lots of comments about the need for a good mix of dwellings in the village (detached, semi detached, terrace, starter homes, affordable homes, low rise flats, etc)	Types of Homes
21	Existing residents require suitable housing to down size to. A suggested description was – Parking close to the entrance, small garden, decent sized sitting room and kitchen diner and 2 or 3 bedrooms – all in easy reach of the shops and facilities.	
26	If we develop Option 1, then we could lay out design principles in the NDP that apartments / down size / starter homes should be located at the top of the hill closer to the village amenities (to assist older people downsizing) whilst larger family homes are further away from the village centre.	
37	Can we dictate the mix of dwellings (<i>the word houses was used but after a quick discussion of the correct terminology it was pointed out that dwellings covers all forms of housing</i>). - <i>We can and this is in fact one of the things we gain from having a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place. We have a lot of anecdotal evidence for the desired types of dwelling (e.g. smaller dwellings for people who wish to downsize etc.) but there will be a survey going out to properly ascertain what the residents of the village would like to see in terms of types of dwelling. WBC states that there has to be 40% affordable housing in any development of more than 10 houses, however the Parish Council does not believe that this counts in a rural area. It should be noted that there has been a change in the law regarding who can get priority for local affordable housing since we started the putting together the information for the exhibition.</i>	
43	By the end of this discussion session the general consensus was that, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social housing would benefit greatly from being near to the facilities already available in the village anyway and by not using the St John's site to it's fullest potential we would be effectively "shooting ourselves in the foot". • As already mentioned, the biggest problem facing the proposed idea of relocating the schools is funding, • A number of older residents have mentioned that they would like to downsize but stay in the village and most of the anecdotal evidence we have seems to point to this and housing that is affordable for people just starting out on the housing market. 	
45	Will there be a mix of dwelling types ? <i>Yes – depending on results of Housing Needs Survey, a broad mix of flats, terraced, semi-detached, detached and bungalows is envisaged.</i>	
46	Will there be enough open green spaces ? <i>Every attempt will be made to provide open green spaces - but easier on larger sites than smaller. Housing Brief will endeavour to prescribe green areas.</i>	

67	Reference is being made to 110 “houses” – what about other types of dwelling ? <i>Housing Needs Survey will identify great need for all types of dwelling - one-bed flats, 2-bed flats, terraced, semi-detached and detached, as well as bungalows for older people down-sizing.</i>	
5	Preference for developments which don't change the character of the village	Design Brief
19	If we went for localised high density dwellings (EG tasteful, low rise flats), there may be environmental benefits	
20	<i>Lots of comments about the need for a good mix of dwellings in the village (detached, semi detached, terrace, starter homes, affordable homes, low rise flats, etc)</i>	
21	Existing residents require suitable housing to down size to. A suggested description was – Parking close to the entrance, small garden, decent sized sitting room and kitchen diner and 2 or 3 bedrooms – all in easy reach of the shops and facilities.	
26	If we develop Option 1, then we could lay out design principles in the NDP that apartments / down size / starter homes should be located at the top of the hill closer to the village amenities (to assist older people downsizing) whilst larger family homes are further away from the village centre.	
28	The profile of Site 1 (on a slope) would lend itself to installing SUDS, which would have ecological benefits and can be included in the NDP	
29	There may be options for permissive paths to link any development to village amenities (shops, doctors, station, etc)	
37	Can we dictate the mix of dwellings (<i>the word houses was used but after a quick discussion of the correct terminology it was pointed out that dwellings covers all forms of housing</i>). - <i>We can and this is in fact one of the things we gain from having a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place. We have a lot of anecdotal evidence for the desired types of dwelling (e.g. smaller dwellings for people who wish to downsize etc.) but there will be a survey going out to properly ascertain what the residents of the village would like to see in terms of types of dwelling. WBC states that there has to be 40% affordable housing in any development of more than 10 houses, however the Parish Council does not believe that this counts in a rural area. It should be noted that there has been a change in the law regarding who can get priority for local affordable housing since we started the putting together the information for the exhibition.</i>	
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45	Will there be a mix of dwelling types ? <i>Yes – depending on results of Housing Needs Survey, a broad mix of flats, terraced, semi-detached, detached and bungalows is envisaged.</i>	

46	Will there be enough open green spaces ? <i>Every attempt will be made to provide open green spaces - but easier on larger sites than smaller. Housing Brief will endeavour to prescribe green areas.</i>	
56	Parking – many new homes in Mortimer have garages with doors too narrow for cars to enter. Can we avoid this ? <i>Yes - NDP Design Brief would ensure this is not repeated. It should be possible to develop separate parking policy for Mortimer.</i>	
57	Off-street Car Parking – C) shared pedestrian/vehicle space in appropriate situations. <i>Inconclusive discussion ensued but agreed this could be considered in NDP Design Brief</i>	
59	Will there be a post-box strategy ? <i>Could be within infrastructure.</i>	
60	Street lighting – a) could “rural” street lights at roundabout at bottom of The Street be changed ? <i>Possibly yes.</i> b) <i>general view expressed that “traditional” street lighting should not be provided – even on new developments – but rather, some more discreet low-level lighting should be provided.</i>	
75	Street lighting – would we have to have street lighting on new developments ? <i>No, street lighting is only a guideline requirement. NDP could include in Design Brief a policy of no lighting or low level/low light scheme</i>	
91	Can there be covenants placed on smaller/less valuable homes to prevent them being expanded beyond the reach of lower income families ? <i>Yes</i>	Site Selection
2	Was garden infill considered when dispersed sites identified? <i>Back garden development already allowed for in West Berks plan. NDP however did review how much back garden development has occurred over the last 20 years – so the trend line is known.</i>	
4	Why have areas of mixed woodland been identified as suitable for development if the village is interested in biodiversity?	
5	Preference for developments which don’t change the character of the village	
6	Would developers prefer dispersed sites so they can reduce the number of affordable housing they have to build	
7	Who owns the dispersed sites? <i>Mostly Englefield Estate with a couple of other small landowners.</i>	
8	If we went for Option 2 (Dispersed) what would be the benefits to school, surgery, etc. <i>None because we would require the space and cost efficient development to enable these works.</i>	
10	Would it be possible to stretch the edge of village sites, particularly the one at the west end of the village. <i>We run up against the Hampshire border.</i>	
11	Development in the centre of the village would reduce traffic movements around the school as it would be ‘walkable’	
12	why did the field between Avenue and Kiln Lane get removed from West Berks ‘preferred sites’ list? <i>Preference was for sites closer to the village centre. Option 1 (Horse & Groom) and Kiln lane were seen as competing with each other and Option 1 was closer to the village centre.</i>	
15	If we develop around the village outskirts then it will encourage the village to spread out into the surrounding countryside, leaving the potential for future infilling	
17	Building houses at the bottom of the hill would benefit people who commute by train – however it might increase traffic in the village due to shopping, school runs, etc.	
22	If we avoid a big site to satisfy the neighbouring properties, then transferring	

	the development to the other sites will cause disturbance to other residents	
23	Turks lane and West end road area already suffers from very low water pressure. Would the addition of more houses cause a further reduction in water pressure? Or can the water supply to the area be improved as part of any development	
24	Any development which affect an area of woodland is likely to have issues with biodiversity (Bats, wildlife, etc)	
27	Currently the geographical village centre is not at the centre of the village (IE Post Office). By utilising Option 1 we can re-balance the village around the post office area	
28	The profile of Site 1 (on a slope) would lend itself to installing SUDS, which would have ecological benefits and can be included in the NDP	
31	the village feel should be preserved as a priority, and therefore any development which removes woodland should be avoided (feeling round the table)	
32	After 90 minutes discussion the unanimous view around the table (8 people) was that Option 1 (Horse & Groom) is the preferred option provided the NDP influences the design. This included 2 people who had started the discussion preferring a dispersed approach, but had changed their minds during the discussion and the relative advantages and disadvantages had been discussed.	
33	Has there been an analysis of the in-fill growth that has already taken place in the village? - <i>Yes there has</i>	
38	Why is the Kiln Lane site not indicated on any of the maps. - <i>The Steering group has, on the evidence of the suitability studies, decided that the site is not suitable because of the afore mentioned flooding problems and the lack of access, the main access to Kiln Lane being as it is just before a bend at the top of the incline on The Street Option 1 (Horse & Groom) and Kiln Lane were seen as competing with each other and Option 1 was closer to the village centre.</i>	
39	It is known that the owner of the land by the station has talked about selling the land for development. This would allow commuters living in to easy access the station and possibly reduce traffic in the village. <i>However, not only would this extend the residential envelope of the village , there are several other drawbacks that have already been looked at by the Parish Council</i>	
43	By the end of this discussion session the general consensus was that, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> looking at the envelope of the village the one site would make a lot more sense rather than infill and gradually become "one big dormitory for commuters" 	
44	Is Mortimer vulnerable to developers seeking Planning Approval for big residential developments before NDP complete ? <i>No</i>	
49	If Option 1 (St John's site) used and schools & surgery relocated there, would "original" sites be redeveloped as residential ? <i>Yes, probably</i>	
62	How were sites originally selected ? <i>Initially WBC put forward 4 sites for comment by SMPC. SMPC discussed and prioritized site MOR006 as being nearest centre of village and being large enough to accommodate housing requirement. Consultation with community, mainly Fun Day weekend summer 2014, identified wish for alternate smaller, dispersed sites – hence NDP's three options</i>	
65	Would St John's School site be used for housing if school relocated/rebuilt ? <i>Most likely – especially if ongoing research into title for St John's land confirms</i>	

	<i>ownership reverts to Englefield if school no longer on site. Chances of St Johns relocating enhanced by school being high on WBC priority list.</i>	
70	Will Mortimer be vulnerable between now and Referendum to developers getting in quick with application for lots of housing on other sites in Mortimer ? <i>No, WBC have confirmed they would push back on any such applications until our NDP is decided.</i>	
92	If the sites where, for example, the doctors surgery is currently located were vacated they would most likely be used for residential development and that would count towards the 110 dwellings that are required . However, the question was raised of who would pay for a new surgery. Neil and Danusia have talked to Dr. Rock at the surgery, who told them that although the funding come from Central Government via the NHS it is owned by the doctors themselves and any new building would be done at their cost. The only money that would come from the NHS in this regard would be to devolve services from hospitals.	
93	The “St Johns” site (MOR sites 6 and 7 combined), which is about 8 hectares) is big enough to take all the proposed dwellings and the infrastructure. We have arrived at the figure of 110 dwellings as, when this was originally by Central Government about 6-7 years ago, 10,000 homes went to West Berkshire Council (WBC) a large number of which were already being built in and around the Newbury Racecourse development, so 800 were allocated to the East Kennet Valley (an area that comprises Burghfield, Mortimer and Woolhampton). A number of houses have been built since leaving approximately 280 of which 110 have been allocated to Mortimer Parish.	
94	Regarding any infill and so called “windfall” building, Neil recalled that John Morden (former Parish Planner who has since unfortunately passed away) had at one point done a quick calculation that in 10 years around 82 properties had been built within the Parish. Having spoken to other NDPs around the UK, they gave us to believe that these count towards the quota however, WBC say that if we can identify the sites where this development has taken place we can, but they have already included some of these sites in their figures.	
95	St Johns is the preferred site because, before the NDP was started, WBC requested landowners to come forward with possible sites. Some of these were discounted immediately by WBC for various reasons and four of the sites were eventually put forward as possible developments and Mortimer Parish Council were consulted. The Council wanted to keep things central to the Post Office, which they felt was the centre of the village. This went back to WBC and they replied saying that they preferred the St. Johns site and the site at the west end of Mortimer (opposite the Football Ground).	
96	The parish council ultimately proposed the St. Johns site as they felt it had better access and was more central. Both Englefield and T.A. Fisher have been approached, the latter regarding access via the Tower House site. Most people at the Fun day exhibition expressed a preference for smaller, dispersed sites, so other options were also looked at, which is represented by our option 2. We can say for certain that things won't end with the building of the 110 dwellings as the Government may well move the goalposts at any time and we are also looking at the NDP as a long term strategy. There is currently an update of the Parish Plan under way so we can foresee an update to the NDP in 6-7 years.	
97	With regard to the school site, currently neither site could take an amalgamation of the two schools and St John's School can't be enlarged on	

	<p>the current site. WBC would have to fund any new school building but it appears that they are leaning towards this anyway. The steering group are currently trying to find out exactly who the legally owns the site as it is unclear, but it looks like it is most likely owned by the Englefield estate. Whilst the church is more involved in the running of St Mary's, the situation is likely to be similar regarding the land ownership. Any development on these sites if and once the schools were moved would most likely be residential and it is the opinion of the NDP steering group that, depending on the desires of the residents it would be at least 5 years before any building work began on new school(s). This is of course all dependant on what the village residents opt for and it would have to be looked at by planners to see what options there are in terms of the actual development of any structures.</p>	
98	<p>The proposed St John's development is around 8.3 hectares. Several people around the table asked if we know the exact acreage (Neil pointed out that we don't have the figures with us but can provide them) and the if there is a water course running along the bottom of the area (although Neil pointed out that most civil engineers he had spoken to had said that drainage is in fact one of the more easily solved problems in a development).</p>	
104	<p>Figures have been looked at for planning and the 8.3 hectares on the St. Johns site is deemed to be more than big enough for all the housing, but it is also foreseen that some of the smaller, dispersed sites would likely still be developed (e.g. the small site on Kings Street).</p>	
105	<p>All suggestions that are put forward on the cards or in any other way to the NDP will looked at as options to put to the village, one such suggestion has already been looked at as a possibility.</p> <p>One member of the group asked if the fields opposite St. Mary's had been looked at as a possible site for development but Neil said that Wheat's Farm, who own the land, never put them forward as a site when WBC asked for sites.</p>	
106	<p>Several people also put forward the opinion that they would prefer to keep Mortimer as a rural, centralised village and not run the risk of it turning into a ribbon development and also, if you start to build close to the existing envelope of the village, you open up the opportunity for future developments that would push the envelope further into the surrounding countryside. We know that there will be more development in the future (as already mentioned) but we are looking at what is happening with the current development first.</p>	
109	<p>A couple of people in the group asked if, as two of the smaller areas are currently woodland, does this not go against the biodiversity section of our exhibition. Neil pointed out that in all actuality the woodland at Hammond's Heath is not established woodland but in any case, as with Strawberry Fields and several other developments, the larger, more established trees would be left standing. Of course you can also exercise your right to vote against these areas being developed and for that reason the most important thing is to get across to the residents of the village that this is in their interest.</p>	

All Notes

Ref	Note No	Note
1	21 am 1	The background of why we are doing the NDP, how we got to where we are what the next steps are is missing from the exhibition posters. <i>It may be worth sending out a briefing note with the Questionnaire?</i>
2	21 am 2	Was garden infill considered when dispersed sites identified? <i>Back garden development already allowed for in West Berks plan. NDP however did review how much back garden development has occurred over the last 20 years – so the trend line is known.</i>
3	21 am 3	Is it possible to have a bulk planning application for back garden developments?
4	21 am 4	Why have areas of mixed woodland been identified as suitable for development if the village is interested in biodiversity?
5	21 am 5	Preference for developments which don't change the character of the village
6	21 am 6	Would developers prefer dispersed sites so they can reduce the number of affordable housing they have to build
7	21 am 8	Who owns the dispersed sites? <i>Mostly Englefield Estate with a couple of other small landowners.</i>
8	21 am 9	If we went for Option 2 (Dispersed) what would be the benefits to school, surgery, etc. <i>None because we would require the space and cost efficient development to enable these works.</i>
9	21 am 10	Would it be possible to relocate the BT Telephone exchange, and would this help with access to site 1
10	21 am 11	Would it be possible to stretch the edge of village sites, particularly the one at the west end of the village. <i>We run up against the Hampshire border.</i>
11	21 am 12	Development in the centre of the village would reduce traffic movements around the school as it would be 'walkable'
12	21 am 13	why did the field between Avenue and Kiln Lane get removed from West Berks 'preferred sites' list? <i>Preference was for sites closer to the village centre. Option 1 (Horse & Groom) and Kiln lane were seen as competing with each other and Option 1 was closer to the village centre.</i>
13	21 am 14	Have houses already built been removed from the total No of houses required. <i>Yes – these houses have already been accounted for.</i>
14	21 am 15	we will be required to build more houses in the future? – <i>once we've built the allocation currently required, there will be future requirements to build more homes</i>
15	21 am 16	If we develop around the village outskirts then it will encourage the village to spread out into the surrounding countryside, leaving the potential for future infilling
16	21 am 17	How can we improve the schooling facilities? <i>St Johns is near the top of West Berks school replacement plan – if we can provide the land through the NDP then it may speed up St Johns being replaced. Also the additional funding from the developers will enable the Parish council to contribute money back to West Berks to assist in funding.</i>
17	21 am 19	Building houses at the bottom of the hill would benefit people who commute by train – however it might increase traffic in the village due to shopping, school runs, etc.
18	21 am 20	What is the maximum number of houses that can be built on Option 1. <i>That can be defined through the NDP by guiding the dwelling density.</i>
19	21 am	If we went for localised high density dwellings (EG tasteful, low rise flats), there

	21	may be environmental benefits
20	21 am 22	<i>Lots of comments about the need for a good mix of dwellings in the village (detached, semi detached, terrace, starter homes, affordable homes, low rise flats, etc)</i>
21	21 am 23	Existing residents require suitable housing to down size to. A suggested description was – Parking close to the entrance, small garden, decent sized sitting room and kitchen diner and 2 or 3 bedrooms – all in easy reach of the shops and facilities.
22	21 am 24	If we avoid a big site to satisfy the neighbouring properties, then transferring the development to the other sites will cause disturbance to other residents
23	21 am 25	Turks lane and West end road area already suffers from very low water pressure. Would the addition of more houses cause a further reduction in water pressure? Or can the water supply to the area be improved as part of any development
24	21 am 29	Any development which affect an area of woodland is likely to have issues with biodiversity (Bats, wildlife, etc)
26	21 am 30	If we develop Option 1, then we could lay out design principles in the NDP that apartments / down size / starter homes should be located at the top of the hill closer to the village amenities (to assist older people downsizing) whilst larger family homes are further away from the village centre.
27	21 am 31	Currently the geographical village centre is not at the centre of the village (IE Post Office). By utilising Option 1 we can re-balance the village around the post office area
28	21 am 32	The profile of Site 1 (on a slope) would lend itself to installing SUDS, which would have ecological benefits and can be included in the NDP
29	21 am 33	There may be options for permissive paths to link any development to village amenities (shops, doctors, station, etc)
30		Will there be any consultation on how the questionnaire questions will be worded? (comment related to the potential for question wording influencing the responses) <i>No. However the NDP steering group will write the questions and they will then be reviewed by West Berks statistics team to ensure they do not introduce a bias.</i> <i>Additionally the NDP steering group meet in public in the parish council offices (Library) at 10am Friday 2orning on a fortnightly basis. (should this open meeting be better publicised to defend against any suggestion of secrecy?)</i>
31	21 am 34	the village feel should be preserved as a priority, and therefore any development which removes woodland should be avoided (feeling round the table)
32	21 am 35	After 90 minutes discussion the unanimous view around the table (8 people) was that Option 1 (Horse & Groom) is the preferred option provided the NDP influences the design. This included 2 people who had started the discussion preferring a dispersed approach, but had changed their minds during the discussion and the relative advantages and disadvantages had been discussed. It was identified that only through sitting down and discussing the pro's, cons, and knock on effects of each option could the full implications be understood and a considered decision be made. <i>It would probably be a good idea for the steering group to issue a Pro's & Con's document for each option, to be sent out with the questionnaire.</i>
33	21 pm 1	Has there been an analysis of the in-fill growth that has already taken place in the village? - <i>Yes there has</i>

34	21 pm 2	One of the sites in Burghfield is under dispute. Does what happens in Burghfield make any difference to us, particularly in respect to the number of houses we will have to build. - <i>West Berkshire Council (WBC) have told the NDP steering group that the decisions made in Burghfield will not affect Mortimer. It should also be noted that Burghfield do not have an NDP in place so will not benefit from the advantages that we Mortimer will when any development goes ahead.</i>
35	21 pm 3	Do we have to designate specific sites for development? - <i>We don't need to designate but the plan needs to be in place by 2016.</i>
36	21 pm 4	Has there been a site accommodation and suitability study on any of the sites, specifically on the site referred to as the "St. Johns" site (MOR sites 6 and 7 combined)? - <i>There has been a study on the area, with thought given also to the problem of flooding that affects mostly the lower end of the site. Any development would have to incorporate SuDS and be compliant with current WBC planning constraints regarding flooding of course (although as mentioned in the displayed literature we would have the option of going beyond that). The site has also been deemed large enough to incorporate the required number of houses as well as the proposed possible infrastructure benefits (i.e. a new surgery, community/village hall and school(s) along with the playing field space that they currently enjoy at St. Mary's) therefore the one site would be able to satisfy all requirements on the face of things. It should be noted that all of the other proposed sites have had feasibility studies done on them and some (Kiln Lane for example) were much worse in terms of flooding.</i>
37	21 pm 5	Can we dictate the mix of dwellings (the word houses was used but after a quick discussion of the correct terminology it was pointed out that dwellings covers all forms of housing). - <i>We can and this is in fact one of the things we gain from having a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place. We have a lot of anecdotal evidence for the desired types of dwelling (e.g. smaller dwellings for people who wish to downsize etc.) but there will be a survey going out to properly ascertain what the residents of the village would like to see in terms of types of dwelling. WBC states that there has to be 40% affordable housing in any development of more than 10 houses, however the Parish Council does not believe that this counts in a rural area. It should be noted that there has been a change in the law regarding who can get priority for local affordable housing since we started the putting together the information for the exhibition.</i>
38	21 pm 6	Why is the Kiln Lane site not indicated on any of the maps. - <i>The Steering group has, on the evidence of the suitability studies, decided that the site is not suitable because of the afore mentioned flooding problems and the lack of access, the main access to Kiln Lane being as it is just before a bend at the top of the incline on The Street</i>
39	21 pm 7	It is known that the owner of the land by the station has talked about selling the land for development. This would allow commuters living in to easy access the station and possibly reduce traffic in the village. <i>However, not only would this extend the residential envelope of the village , there are several other drawbacks that have already been looked at by the Parish Council</i>
40	21 pm 8	The point was raised that where ever the houses go, a large number of the residents will not in fact be affected by the building of new houses. <i>However the purpose of the questionnaire is not only about where the houses go but covers a number of other things that affect the village. In terms of the use of space, the development on the fruit farm (also known as Strawberry Fields) divided opinion but the space used is about equal to the proposed single site of</i>

		<i>St Johns (MOR 6 & 7) , which shows that we could easily accommodate all the required houses (Strawberry Fields is around 120 houses). Furthermore the overall perceived opinion of the relocation of St. Mary's is positive but the funding for this would have to come from the LEA and it doesn't look likely that they would be able to come up with the funding</i>
41	21 pm 9	<i>Do we need all these extra facilities? - Given the possibilities that the single site offers us, we have the opportunity, as a community, to solve several problems faced by St. Johns school and the doctors surgery, if not some of the other amenities available in the village.</i>
42	21 pm 10	<i>What happens next? - After the discussion sessions there will be some consultations and research which will all then be used to compile the questionnaire which will be delivered to every house in the parish hopefully by the end of March. Once that has come back (which will take around 2-3 weeks) draft policies will be drawn up and will go to a public consultation. All the results will eventually be published as well and then once the policies are ready and have been approved, which will hopefully be by July, if not then at the beginning of September, then they will go to the Parish Council to be ratified and then to WBC to check that there are no conflicts. The whole thing the would then go to an independent adjudicator who then revises it. If it is given the go ahead it will then go to a referendum and if the majority of the voting population are in favour it then becomes a layer of planning that will be binding within the Parish boundary.</i>
43	21 pm 11	<p>By the end of this discussion session the general consensus was that,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looking at the envelope of the village the one site would make a lot more sense rather than infill and gradually become “one big dormitory for commuters” • Social housing would benefit greatly from being near to the facilities already available in the village anyway and by not using the St John's site to it's fullest potential we would be effectively “shooting ourselves in the foot”. • With an NDP in site we have more chance to fix the infrastructure of the village and make sure that we do not get developers and the WBC doing what they will without our input. It should also be pointed out that we would receive more of the CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) with an NDP in place and would have greater freedom to spend it as we see fit, as at present any money gained from development can only be spent on the upkeep of the open spaces that the Parish Council is responsible for. • As already mentioned, the biggest problem facing the proposed idea of relocating the schools is funding, however we would at least have the option to put the land aside for future development of such a site were the funding to become available in future. • A number of older residents have mentioned that they would like to downsize but stay in the village and most of the anecdotal evidence we have seems to point to this and housing that is affordable for people just starting out on the housing market. • Part of what we are able to achieve with an NDP in place is to ask each developer to submit a brief before they can start building and planning permission is granted. We are not quite sure yet though to what level of detail we can specify at this point however.

44	24 pm 1	Is Mortimer vulnerable to developers seeking Planning Approval for big residential developments before NDP complete ? <i>No</i>
45	24 pm 2	Will there be a mix of dwelling types ? <i>Yes – depending on results of Housing Needs Survey, a broad mix of flats, terraced, semi-detached, detached and bungalows is envisaged.</i>
46	24 pm 3	Will there be enough open green spaces ? <i>Every attempt will be made to provide open green spaces - but easier on larger sites than smaller. Housing Brief will endeavour to prescribe green areas.</i>
47	24 pm 4	Who is paying for NDP preparation ? <i>SMPC have budgeted £7-8k for NDP and other funding sources are being sought by Steering Group</i>
48	24 pm 5	How was 110 dwellings figure arrived at ? <i>The West Berks Core Strategy allocated 800 additional dwellings to the East Kennet Valley (Burghfield, Mortimer, Woolhampton, etc) for 2006 to 2026. Of these, 270 remain to be given Planning consent and to be built. Burghfield Common and Mortimer are defined as the two “rural service2” villages of this area, so approx. 110 allocated to Mortimer – proportionate to population.</i>
49	24 pm 6	If Option 1 (St John’s site) used and schools & surgery relocated there, would “original” sites be redeveloped as residential ? <i>Yes, probably</i>
50	24 pm 7	Would WBC support relocation of St John’s and St Mary’s schools ? <i>St John’s is near top of WBC priority list for new school as no space for needed expansion. St Mary’s less so.</i>
51	24 pm 8	Would relocated Doctors Surgery be bigger and improve appointment waiting times ? <i>Surgery likely to be bigger to incorporate other services such as optician, physiotherapy, X-ray, etc. Waiting times unlikely to improve due to relocation as new dwellings in catchment area of Practice would only justify half a full-time doctor.</i>
52	24 pm 9	Can we put new child-care nursery on list of village improvements ? <i>Can go on wish list but private sector funding required to make reality.</i>
53	24 pm 10	Is land being allocated for business use ? <i>Could be if sufficient interest expressed.</i>
54	24 pm 11	Are we consulting with young people ? <i>Yes – NK proposing, via Deputy Head, to meet Willink 6th-Form Mortimer-based pupils and parishioner proposed giving this group copies of Questionnaire</i>
55	24 pm 12	What will new dwellings/developments look like ? <i>Will depend on size, mix and Design Brief – but sympathetic to Mortimer’s rural character.</i>
56	24 pm 13	Parking – many new homes in Mortimer have garages with doors too narrow for cars to enter. Can we avoid this ? <i>Yes - NDP Design Brief would ensure this is not repeated. It should be possible to develop separate parking policy for Mortimer.</i>
57	24 pm 14	Off-street Car Parking – a) Fairground Carpark – should it be enlarged ? <i>Majority view, No. Option 1 would create less need.</i> b) Station Carpark – should it be expanded ? <i>Majority view, Yes. NK outlined previous unsuccessful SMPC Planning Application for additional 100 spaces. PW outlined WBC changing views – expansion would need to be village-side of station, adjacent existing carpark.</i> c) shared pedestrian/vehicle space in appropriate situations. <i>Inconclusive discussion ensued but agreed this could be considered in NDP Design Brief</i>
58	24 pm 15	Biodiversity/Green Infrastructure ? <i>Corridors for animals. Green infrastructure an important consideration on any development. Option 1 probably best for biodiversity and green infrastructure.</i>

59	24 pm 16	Will there be a post-box strategy ? <i>Could be within infrastructure.</i>
60	24 pm 17	Street lighting – a) could “rural” street lights at roundabout at bottom of The Street be changed ? <i>Possibly yes.</i> b) <i>general view expressed that “traditional” street lighting should not be provided – even on new developments – but rather, some more discreet low-level lighting should be provided.</i>
61	24 pm 18	General discussions about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>planting wild flowers wherever possible,</i> • <i>needing to manage development landscaping contracts carefully and</i> • <i>ensuring all Developer obligations properly implemented on time.</i>
62	26 pm 1	How were sites originally selected ? <i>Initially WBC put forward 4 sites for comment by SMPC. SMPC discussed and prioritized site MOR006 as being nearest centre of village and being large enough to accommodate housing requirement. Consultation with community, mainly Fun Day weekend summer 2014, identified wish for alternate smaller, dispersed sites – hence NDP’s three options</i>
63	26 pm 2	Has infrastructure , eg schooling, surgery, parking, etc been considered ? <i>Option 1 provides opportunity for relocating schools and surgery with improved parking.</i>
64	26 pm 3	Do houses currently being built count within our 110 requirement ? <i>No, they already had Planning Consent before the 110 was set.</i>
65	26 pm 4	Would St John’s School site be used for housing if school relocated/rebuilt ? <i>Most likely – especially if ongoing research into title for St John’s land confirms ownership reverts to Englefield if school no longer on site. Chances of St Johns relocating enhanced by school being high on WBC priority list.</i>
66	26 pm 5	What about St Mary’s School ? <i>More difficult – Church controlled, relocation probably not fundable by WBC as expansion possible on existing site. Title to land also being investigated.</i>
67	26 pm 6	Reference is being made to 110 “houses” – what about other types of dwelling ? <i>Housing Needs Survey will identify great need for all types of dwelling - one-bed flats, 2-bed flats, terraced, semi-detached and detached, as well as bungalows for older people down-sizing.</i>
68	26 pm 7	What are the rules about Affordable Housing ? <i>Current West Berks policy on greenfield sites is :</i> a) <i>sites of 15 dwellings or more – requirement for 40% affordable</i> b) <i>smaller sites of 10 – 14 dwellings – 30% affordable</i> c) <i>sites of 5 – 9 dwellings – 20% affordable</i> d) <i>sites of less than 5 dwellings – no requirement for affordable.</i> <i>We understand, though, that Secretary of State for Planning moved these goalposts in Nov 2014 to free up smaller sites, with edict that sites of 10 or less dwellings should have no requirement for affordable housing.</i>
69	26 pm 8	Why relocate Doctors Surgery if waiting lists won’t improve ? <i>Benefits would include :</i> a) <i>opportunity to provide additional treatment/consultancy rooms for additional services eg physiotherapy, X-ray, optician, etc and other services out-placed from hospitals in line with Government plans</i> b) <i>better parking</i> c) <i>more central location</i> d) <i>space for future expansion of population.</i>

70	26 pm 9	Will Mortimer be vulnerable between now and Referendum to developers getting in quick with application for lots of housing on other sites in Mortimer ? <i>No, WBC have confirmed they would push back on any such applications until our NDP is decided.</i>
71	26 pm 10	Who would pay for relocating/rebuilding St John's School ? <i>Funding of construction of State schools is by Local Authorities ie West Berks. St John's is high on WBC priority list</i>
72	26 pm 11	Are there any plans for new business sites/employment opportunities ? <i>If interest shown by community within these consultations consideration could be given for such provision. NK is proposing to speak to members of Mortimer farming community to identify possible existing agricultural buildings which could used for/converted to business use</i>
73	26 pm 12	Can we have a Village Hall ? <i>If and when Mortimer community identify need for new Village Hall and source of funding, efforts could be made to find a suitable site.</i>
74	26 pm 13	Is it true Mortimer would get more CIL money if we have an NDP ? <i>Yes SMPC will normally get 15% of CIL money – but 25% with NDP. This could help fund community projects such as new village hall. Note Section 106 money could only be spent by Parish Council on leisure/recreation projects</i>
75	26 pm 14	Street lighting – would we have to have street lighting on new developments ? <i>No, street lighting is only a guideline requirement. NDP could include in Design Brief a policy of no lighting or low level/low light scheme</i>
76	26 pm 15	Could existing street lighting in Strawberry Fields be removed, turned off at mid-night or changed to low level.? <i>Yes , if funding found.</i>
77	28 am 1	Biodiversity Opportunity Area 13 – who identified this area ? <i>Berkshire Local Nature Partnership</i>
78	28 am 2	Employment opportunities – we've seen in other areas farms being converted in to large industrial sites – is this likely to happen in Mortimer ? <i>Mortimer community will need to decide our thoughts and wishes for this. Farm owners would need to submit proposals. NDP steering group has looked for brownfield sites.</i>
79	28 am 3	Have Steering Group spoken to local farmers ? <i>Meeting planned with farming community to glean their views.</i>
80	28 am 4	Could the doctors' surgery site be developed as small offices ? <i>This would be up to Practice Partners, the land owners, to decide and would be driven by business needs and viability.</i>
81	28 am 5	[View] I think parking in Mortimer is an important issue, particularly around surgery and at Mortimer station
82	28 am 6	What is status of station carpark expansion plan ? <i>SMPC had Planning Application for a 100-spaces additional carpark on the Basingstoke platform side refused by WBC a few years ago. Recent discussions between SMPC and WBC indicate a fresh application might now be more favourably considered</i>
83	28 am 7	Will West Berks fund relocation/redevelopment of St John's School ? <i>Funding of new school would be by West Berks and St John's is high on their priority list due to pupil numbers and no space to expand.</i>
84	28 am 8	Can we have more parking for schools or drop-off/pick-up points ? <i>Parking and drop-off/pick-up points could be provided if schools relocated to MOR006 site (behind St John's) under Option 1.</i>
85	28 am 9	Is the Referendum a "yes or no" question ? <i>Yes. Very few, if any previous NDP Referenda have failed. Before Referendum the Plan would have to be approved by SMPC, WBC and independent auditor/inspector.</i>

86	28 am 10	How do Steering Group plan to reach out to everyone in Mortimer ? <i>Questionnaires will be delivered to every household in Mortimer. Parishioners will have option to complete on-line or manually. Assistance will be offered to those requesting.</i>
87	28 am 11	Have other NDPs been successful ? <i>Yes – of 400 odd successful NDPs , a small handful have been rejected by District Council or Auditor for failing to consult the community enough.</i>
88	28 am 12	Are our District Councillors involved in Mortimer NDP ? <i>Not directly. Steering Group members deal directly with specialist WBC officers on Planning, Education, Highways, etc . WBC officers have been very helpful. We have also met with Sovereign Housing Association</i>
89	28 am 13	If total relocation of doctors surgery not feasible, could we compromise by building satellite surgery/additional treatment rooms on Option 1 site ? <i>Quite possibly but would be up to Practice Partners to decide</i>
90	28 am 14	Will our electricity and sewer infrastructure be able to cope ? <i>Infrastructure is constantly being upgraded - no problems with electricity supply or waste disposal are anticipated</i>
91	28 am 15	Can there be covenants placed on smaller/less valuable homes to prevent them being expanded beyond the reach of lower income families ? <i>Yes</i>
92	1 Mar 15	If the sites where, for example, the doctors surgery is currently located were vacated they would most likely be used for residential development and that would count towards the 110 dwellings that are required . However, the question was raised of who would pay for a new surgery. Neil and Danusia have talked to Dr. Rock at the surgery, who told them that although the funding come from Central Government via the NHS it is owned by the doctors themselves and any new building would be done at their cost. The only money that would come from the NHS in this regard would be to devolve services from hospitals.
93	1 Mar 15	The “St Johns” site (MOR sites 6 and 7 combined), which is about 8 hectares) is big enough to take all the proposed dwellings and the infrastructure. We have arrived at the figure of 110 dwellings as, when this was originally by Central Government about 6-7 years ago, 10,000 homes went to West Berkshire Council (WBC) a large number of which were already being built in and around the Newbury Racecourse development, so 800 were allocated to the East Kennet Valley (an area that comprises Burghfield, Mortimer and Woolhampton). A number of houses have been built since leaving approximately 280 of which 110 have been allocated to Mortimer Parish.
94	1 Mar 15	Regarding any infill and so called “windfall” building, Neil recalled that John Morden (former Parish Planner who has since unfortunately passed away) had at one point done a quick calculation that in 10 years around 82 properties had been built within the Parish. Having spoken to other NDPs around the UK, they gave us to believe that these count towards the quota however, WBC say that if we can identify the sites where this development has taken place we can, but they have already included some of these sites in their figures.
95	1 Mar 15	St Johns is the preferred site because, before the NDP was started, WBC requested landowners to come forward with possible sites. Some of these were discounted immediately by WBC for various reasons and four of the sites were eventually put forward as possible developments and Mortimer Parish Council were consulted. The Council wanted to keep things central to the Post Office, which they felt was the centre of the village. This went back to WBC and they replied saying that they preferred the St. Johns site and the site at the west end

		of Mortimer (opposite the Football Ground).
96	1 Mar 15	The parish council ultimately proposed the St. Johns site as they felt it had better access and was more central. Both Englefield and T.A. Fisher have been approached, the latter regarding access via the Tower House site. Most people at the Fun day exhibition expressed a preference for smaller, dispersed sites, so other options were also looked at, which is represented by our option 2. We can say for certain that things won't end with the building of the 110 dwellings as the Government may well move the goalposts at any time and we are also looking at the NDP as a long term strategy. There is currently an update of the Parish Plan under way so we can foresee an update to the NDP in 6-7 years.
97	1 Mar 15	With regard to the school site, currently neither site could take an amalgamation of the two schools and St John's School can't be enlarged on the current site. WBC would have to fund any new school building but it appears that they are leaning towards this anyway. The steering group are currently trying to find out exactly who the legally owns the site as it is unclear, but it looks like it is most likely owned by the Englefield estate. Whilst the church is more involved in the running of St Mary's, the situation is likely to be similar regarding the land ownership. Any development on these sites if and once the schools were moved would most likely be residential and it is the opinion of the NDP steering group that, depending on the desires of the residents it would be at least 5 years before any building work began on new school(s). This is of course all dependant on what the village residents opt for and it would have to be looked at by planners to see what options there are in terms of the actual development of any structures.
98	1 Mar 15	The proposed St John's development is around 8.3 hectares. Several people around the table asked if we know the exact acreage (Neil pointed out that we don't have the figures with us but can provide them) and the if there is a water course running along the bottom of the area (although Neil pointed out that most civil engineers he had spoken to had said that drainage is in fact one of the more easily solved problems in a development). It is still the case that both schools are overcrowded , St. Johns especially, so something needs to be done about the situation fairly soon and it makes little sense to have 2 separate schools. At this point the Governess of St. Mary's, who was present, told us that the two schools do indeed talk to each other and that at the moment there are just under 240 children attending the junior school and this is nearly capacity for them but they do have land that they can expand on, unlike the infants. The biggest problem is funding and that is done based on priority, St Johns being the biggest priority at them moment.
99	1 Mar 15	On the subject of parking for the schools, whilst some people didn't feel this was a great problem, one lady pointed out that more and more children are being picked up and dropped off at the school and when there are events on after school hours this can cause a problem, but it was pointed out that that was the same for many rural schools, so it is not seen as a priority besides which the NDP can only put forward options, we cannot enforce anything. However, bringing the schools closer to the centre of the village would alleviate this problem greatly as most if not all of the children attending would live in the village and be more likely to leave within easy reach of the school and we have the option to set aside part of the area proposed for development and so that the land is there for the schools to merge at a later date. Several people at this point reminded all at the table that it should not be underestimated how many

		new children a development the size of the one being asked for may bring to the village and, therefore, to the schools as at the time of building Strawberry Fields it was estimated only a very few children would and the reality turned out to be very much otherwise.
100	1 Mar 15	Neil voiced the fact that the biggest problem regarding the moving of the schools will be funding, however this again is not something that the NDP can solve and problems of this nature need to be directed either directly to WBC or to them via the SMPC.
101	1 Mar 15	There will be a housing needs survey coming round soon so that we can get an idea of what mix of housing is needed and requested by the residents of the village. The Steering group believe that there is a need for more flats and low cost housing for young couples and many have expressed the wish to see more houses for older residents (bungalows etc.). WBC legislation on larger sites is that 40% should be affordable housing of which 70% is given over to social housing and the rest is shared ownership Members of the steering group have spoken to WBC about this and whilst they recognise that our needs may be different they are unlikely to bend the rules on this point. Social housing does mean that we are likely to have people coming in from problem areas of the Reading area and many around the table (and many that we have spoken to) feel very strongly that priority should be given to local people, the families of local people and/or people who work in the Parish (teachers etc.). Having spoken to Sovereign housing Neil said that they have put forward the view that if it can be shown that there are local people waiting to move in to the housing then it may be possible to steer things in their direction, however both the Government and WBC have social housing lists on which are listed people that would have to take priority.
102	1 Mar 15	On the subject of whether the size of the development has an effect on the amount of dwellings that have to be given over to social housing, Neil told the group that this had been any group of 10 or more houses, but as this was putting many landowners off turning larger areas of land over to development so the council put this up to 15 in November. This can then go all the way up to 50+ where all the houses may be social housing, however the Government can change this at any moment. The NDP who however be another layer of planning control so that even on dispersed sites we would have some say over the mix and style of housing.
104	1 Mar 15	Figures have been looked at for planning and the 8.3 hectares on the St. Johns site is deemed to be more than big enough for all the housing, but it is also foreseen that some of the smaller, dispersed sites would likely still be developed (e.g. the small site on Kings Street).
105	1 Mar 15	All suggestions that are put forward on the cards or in any other way to the NDP will be looked at as options to put to the village, one such suggestion has already been looked at as a possibility. One member of the group asked if the fields opposite St. Mary's had been looked at as a possible site for development but Neil said that Wheat's Farm, who own the land, never put them forward as a site when WBC asked for sites.
106	1 Mar 15	Several people also put forward the opinion that they would prefer to keep Mortimer as a rural, centralised village and not run the risk of it turning into a ribbon development and also, if you start to build close to the existing envelope of the village, you open up the opportunity for future developments that would push the envelope further into the surrounding countryside. We know that there will be more development in the future (as already mentioned) but we

		are looking at what is happening with the current development first.
107	1 Mar 15	What will happens next is that, after the discussion sessions there will be some consultations and research which will all then be used to compile the questionnaire which will be delivered to every house in the parish hopefully by the end of March. Once that has come back (which will take around 2-3 weeks) draft policies will be drawn up and will go to a public consultation.
108	1 Mar 15	All the results will eventually be published as well and then once the policies are ready and have been approved, which will hopefully be by July, if not then at the beginning of September, then they will go to the Parish Council to be ratified and then to WBC to check that there are no conflicts. The whole thing the would then go to an independent adjudicator who then revises it. If it is given the go ahead it will then go to a referendum and if the majority of the voting population (as with any referendum this has to be 50% + 1 of all the people that turn out to vote) are in favour it then becomes a layer of planning that will be binding within the Parish boundary. We have to be able to show that in all of this we have consulted the community as much as possible but so far of over 400 NDP schemes that have been put into practice around the country, all have been approved but 1 or 2 of them had to go back to be revised at a late stage.
109	1 Mar 15	A couple of people in the group asked if, as two of the smaller areas are currently woodland, does this not go against the biodiversity section of our exhibition. Neil pointed out that in all actuality the woodland at Hammond's Heath is not established woodland but in any case, as with Strawberry Fields and several other developments, the larger, more established trees would be be left standing. Of course you can also exercise your right to vote against these areas being developed and for that reason the most important thing is to get across to the residents of the village that this is in their interest.
120	1 Mar 15	Finally several people gave a vote of thanks to the NDP steering group and volunteers for their time and efforts