

Open Meeting held at The Priory Primary School at 11.00am on Saturday 3 February 2018.

Purpose of the meeting - The meeting was called to

- ❑ Approve nominations for members of the steering committee
- ❑ Approve the draft Constitution for the Neighbourhood Forum
- ❑ Approve the proposed Neighbourhood Area prior to submission to Council

The meeting was part of a drop-in session previously advertised locally to publicise the activities of the Hanford & Trentham Neighbourhood Forum.

Proceedings

Attendance - 17 Members and 4 non-voting residents attended the meeting.

Approved without debate – nominations for the steering committee and draft Constitution without debate.

Proposed Neighbourhood Area – A number of the members queried why the area of greenbelt to the West of the A34 as it approaches Hanford Roundabout had been omitted from the proposed Neighbourhood Area.

Following discussion it was agreed by the meeting that this area should be included as part of the proposed neighbourhood area because

- ❑ This area of land is an integral part of the Hanford & Trentham Ward – to omit it would create (in administrative terms) a “disconnected isthmus” between the A34 and the neighbourhood area registered by Swynnerton Parish Council (3 July 2014).
- ❑ The area is an integral part of the River Trent flood plain and a natural part of the green corridor running North/South through our proposed Neighbourhood Area

It was unanimously agreed that the plan showing the proposed neighbourhood area should be amended to include this area.

Meeting ended at 11.25 am.

P Hayward
Co-ordinator

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012
Hanford and Trentham Neighbourhood area

Supporting notes

The Hanford & Trentham designated area brings together, as far as is reasonably practical, the residents and small businesses within the area bordered by the Sidaway Industrial Estate (to the North of Hanford) Trentham Industrial Estate (to the East of Stanley Matthews Way) and Newstead Industrial Estate (to the South of Longton Road). These residents describe themselves as "**living in the Hanford and Trentham area**". A Neighbourhood Identity Survey carried out within this general area identified

1. That less than 1% of the 260 residents surveyed identified themselves as residing in either "Hanford Village" or "Trentham Village".
2. That residents were not aware of the definitive boundary between Hanford and Trentham.
3. That a significant minority of residents living in Trentham Village were not included in the survey because this part of the village is within Swynnerton Parish Council which is already producing a separate Neighbourhood Plan.
4. That residents living in the Trentham Lakes and Trentham Manor estates unilaterally identify themselves as residents of Trentham. They have Trentham post codes and lie within the catchment area of Ash Green Primary school – one of the two primary schools that presently serves the Trentham Area.

Residents of Barlaston Old Road that live South of the Stoke-on-Trent City boundary are already included in the Neighbourhood Plan being prepared for the Parish of Barlaston.

The land consisting Hem Heath Woods and the adjacent pasture land on the eastern boundary is included in the Neighbourhood Area following discussions with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. This area of ancient woodland forms an integral part of the green corridor surrounding the Trent & Mersey Canal and Stafford / Stoke-on-Trent railway link which runs North/ South through the Hanford and Trentham Neighbourhood area.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

"I would recommend including the western parts of Blurton West and Newstead ward, but excluding the housing areas of Newstead and Blurton. As a minimum, the reserve and the green areas to the east of it that are covered by the green belt hatching on your plan. The railway corridor is the most important large-scale linking corridor for the reserve in terms of species movement north-south, with but regarding links to other semi-natural habitats that help the reserve function within a larger natural 'block', the green areas to the east would be important to preserve and enhance in future, so it would be good to influence these. However it is up to you as to what areas may be practical to include in your area. 'The more the merrier' from our point of view in terms of ecological networks, but as I say, minimum would be that green belt block which covers the closest linked habitats to the reserve."

Kate Dewey Bsc (Hons) MCIEEM
Planning and Conservation Officer
Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

In view of these comments it is proposed to extend the neighbourhood area to the East of Hem Heath Woods to include all greenbelt areas up to the City boundary (running SE towards Barlaston)

The proposed Neighbourhood Area boundary then continues to follow the boundary to the South of the City so as to include the Severn Trent sewage treatment plant. Land South of this boundary is already included in the Barlaston Neighbourhood Area. From this point the proposed Hanford and Trentham Neighbourhood area boundary follows the City/Ward boundary to Hanford roundabout. The majority of this boundary follows the A34. The boundary however departs the Northern section of the A34 to include part of the River Trent flood plane. This area has been included in the Neighbourhood Area because it is an integral part of the Hanford & Trentham Ward – to omit it would create (in administrative terms) a “disconnected isthmus” between the A34 and the neighbourhood area registered by Swynnerton Parish Council, and the area is also an integral part of the River Trent flood plain and a natural part of the green corridor running North/South through our proposed Neighbourhood Area.

The Northern boundary of the Neighbourhood Area has been drawn to exclude the existing large industrial developments – for reasons outlined below (see exclusion of Newstead and Trentham Lakes Industrial estates). The area immediately South of these industrial units has however been included because they are presently green belt and are considered to be an integral part of the North/South green corridor.

The Hanford and Trentham Neighbourhood Forum has decided not to include the Newstead and Trentham Lakes industrial estates after considering the following -

Size matters – business considerations could overwhelm the concerns of residents (estimated at 12,000 people)

These 2 estates are occupied by 157 independent companies, which collectively provide work for 4,604 people. Just 14 of these independent companies account for 4,000 of the total employed workforce

Business Neighbourhood Development Plans

(Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force on 6th April 2013. In addition to the residential neighbourhood planning referendums, these new regulations provide the framework for referendums to take place in designated business neighbourhood areas.

Business Neighbourhood Development Plans are neighbourhood plans for areas that are primarily commercial to ensure that the business community is fully represented and engaged in the plan-making process

The Newstead and Trentham Lakes Industrial Estates are two of a number of industrial estates that share a border with the proposed Hanford and Trentham Neighbourhood Area. These industrial estates could usefully consider forming a designated business neighbourhood.

Sustainability – the threat that an increased ‘business presence’ could limit the growth of social capital

One of the major problems that the planning system continues to face is getting local communities to participate in meaningful and constructive in plan-making and taking decisions. One of the key aims of our Forum, therefore, will be to increase participation in these activities and endeavour to engage a much wider cross-section of our local community in the in-depth and detailed work of creating our Neighbourhood Plan.

It is suggested that the reasons for this 'reluctance to get involved' is due in part to the fact that for many people, the current costs (in terms of time and responsibility) of participating in the planning process outweigh the uncertain future benefits, as seen from the point of view of those community members participating.

Social capital literature suggests that building social capital will help the Forum resolve this collective action problem. The key idea is that by building social capital within our community we will be able to create links between people that may already be inspired with certain key norms. It is these norms that build commitment and encourage people to re-frame their incentive structure so as to participate in an activity that otherwise would fail to attract collective action.

In other words the social capital concept would suggest that, where close bonds exist within a community, the embedding of the notion that control within the local planning system will in future be significantly invested in local communities should improve the incentive structure for participation and lead to significantly more involvement. Much of this success depends on people being convinced of the importance of their role within neighbourhood planning exercises.

The role given to business within neighbourhood planning, the threats from centrally sanctioned infrastructure development, and the presumption in favour of growth (*Amendment) Regulations 2013*) may all result in the incentive structure being diluted and remaining firmly weighted against participation. Importing two industrial estates which collectively increase the involved 'population' by 30% would undoubtedly increase the chances of dilution.

Finally in addition, it should not be overlooked that the work involved in localist planning is quite considerable, certainly more than that involved with the support of previous planning consultation exercises. Thus the impact of the promise of control outlined in the amended regulations should be seen as an incentive to communities to take on the greater burden of participation that localism envisages.

P Hayward 3.2.18 – Coordinator Hanford & Trentham Neighbourhood Form