

FORMAL PUBLIC CONSULTATION COMMENTS		
NAME	EMAIL	COMMENT
Sue Wingrove	suewingrove123@gmail.com	Only comment is that the definition of "infill" in section 3 as 'not more then a few' is absolutely meaningless. What is "a few"? This really needs to have a number i.e. "not more the two" for example. Or it needs to relate to the size of the plot e.g. no more then one dwelling per x acre of ground.
Janice Richards	LS PC	Given that the traffic lights on the A36 have been removed, could a 30mph limit be put in it's place to facilitate a safe crossing of the A36 between Midford Lane and Church Lane?
Graham Jenkinson	grahamjenkinson@tiscali.co	I am concerned that the off road parking proposal at the bottom of the Tyning has been excluded. This was a longer term planning proposal to alleviate the increased parking demands for the shop, new Hall, surgery and for residents and visitors who are unable t park close to their houses. There may be planning problems related to this but, we should still aim to achieve this.
Sheila Wyatt		There are an extensive number of 'gateway' locations. Surely only the main entrances need something?
John Ellis	jellis@rac.co.uk	Section 3: Definition of infill site: The phrase "not mor then a few" is nowhere exactly defined and could be widely interpreted. How many is a few?
Lucilla Shirley	lucillashirley@aol.com	Concern re: parking around the school is not only by parents. This affects local residents, and there is a recent tendency for more parents t use the Tyning Road as a car park and then drive back down the road to the War Memorial and back and turn around. I cannot understand why lack of parking for the school and village hub has not been addressed in the plan. If the road between the school and the village hall were widened, using the lower section of the Tyning and excluding the cemetery, to give enough room for cas to park at right angles to the road, this would be an immense improvement. With sympathetic treatment, to include trees and seats other planting, this could soon become a pleasant part of the landscape. The proposed footpath could lead between the green area of the Tyning and the parking are. Come on Neighbourhood Plan compilers PLEASE look at this suggestion and agree with its merits! AND ANOTHER THING!! RE: Flood controls - please look at getting B&NES to create an extra culvert under the road between 'Lower Galleries' and the 'Old Paronage' to take overflow water from Galleries field etc. without bringing it into the stream which borders our garden and creating a flood risk around the school, surgery and nearby houses.
John Jenkins	johnpijenkins@hotmail.co.uk	In my view current plans to restrict traffic speed, while welcome are not sufficient in themselves unless accompanied by a clear indication that pedestrians and cyclists either share space or have precedence over motorised transport.
John Adler	FF PC	9.5 LS Exchange does NOT have fibre optic cables.
Lucilla Shirley	lucillashirley@aol.com	The functin of the Link Car Scheme Service could be more clearly defined and described in more 'politically correct' language. Please contact the chairman Adran Kennedy to discuss.
Ray Benfield	raybenfield@hotmail.com	The Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan appears to make no mention that the Parish boundaries with Hinton Charterhouse can impact on the success of the plan. Specifically the boundary along Pipehouse Lane, Park Corner and Rosemary Lane. This is a road/lane and many of its properties, and land exist in one or other of the two Parishes, or in some cases both. All of the objectives/policies in the Neighbourhood plan are relevant to this area. If they are not implemented here, this will impact on the Villages and Villagers of Fresh ford and Limpley Stoke. I suggest that the plan should mention that all its aims are relevant to "this area" of the Parish boundary. Also that there is a requirement/ policy to work with Hinton Parish to pursue the implementation of the objectives. Therefore Banes will be obliged to recognise this policy. note that although the Plan makes little reference to this aspect, it does choose to raise several comments on Brown's field and the need to work with Hinton Parish to cover our interests!! E.g. paras 6.16, 8.08, 8.18. Note. I mentioned the above to Nick Stevens at the "open day" on the 18th January. He advised that Hinton had been approached to merge themselves into the Neighbourhood Plan (albeit they they will do their own). May be they recognise the above aspect!

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Philip Haile	philip.haile@hotmail.com	<p>3.3 You may want to change the wording associated with 'Code for Sustainable Homes', DCLG are attempting to get rid of it under pressure from the large builders, B&NES has changed their wording (http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Core-Strategy/ProposedChanges/core_strategy_newspaper_november_2013.pdf) to "Sustainable construction will be required, with all new homes meeting Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5, or its successor from 2014....."</p> <p>4.04 (pink Box) I am not sure on a viability basis you could enforce "at least half of which should be affordable" – generally viability studies in this area suggest 35% is the max developers will fund given their other obligations, and I think it is unlikely a generous benefactor is likely to give the land away. So I think the wording in the pink box needs to be reconsidered as developers might just say its unreasonable and ignore it – I suggest getting advice on this from the B&NES planning department.</p> <p>4.23 Could an 'affordable homes' requirement be added to the Rentokil and Freshford Mill (additional homes) sites? This would ensure some of the Freshford allocation is covered by these sites. At Freshford Mill the developer might try to argue from a 'viability' perspective that they can't afford to build an affordable home given the other work they are doing on the site – e.g. flood mitigation but I would argue they have probably factored most of this into the discounted purchase price for the land & existing half-built homes and that for any additional homes they are looking to maximise their profit. To be clear they are not making a loss when they build an affordable home as they are typically sold to a housing association at a 50% to 80% discount to market price which is significantly above build costs (£65K to £100K). As an aside does the parish council know whether the previous developer of the site paid their s106/CIL contributions to B&NES before they went bust? 5.26</p> <p>Mentions the 'hydro turbine' at Ilford, but not the one at Freshford Mill, is this deliberate? 7.17 Refers to 'Diagram D' which doesn't exist? 8.3 Table 2 Rose & Crown ownership = "n/a", is owned by Enterprise Inns Appendix 10 Comments Received.... I can't read past page 38 of the 380 pages, there appears to be a formatting problem, all text goes blank after page 38.....It appears from the few comments that can be read that the HDB is a contentious issue, something which I think should be discussed at an open meeting at the village hall.</p>
Hugh Delap		<p>P4: reference to 'core strategies'. No mention previously as to what the Core Strategies are. First referred to on p5</p> <p>P5: Working groups referred to in the present. Most haven't met as a group for over a year.</p> <p>P8, 3.01: include Midford Lane as one of the hamlets. It is referred to in the same context on p22</p> <p>P12: "only one new house has been built". Is this meant to be something we're proud of worried about? Is that the 'Tesco' house? And do complete rebuilds such as Orchard House and Chilwood (?) on Church Lane not count?</p> <p>P13, 4.09: planning permission for 21 houses on Mill site was granted earlier than 2009 - Surrey & Counties (Southern) Ltd received it four years before in Dec 2005</p> <p>P14, 4.23: why refer to Mill and Rentokil sites in the context of Rural Exception sites for affordable housing? Rural Exception sites can be green fields where only affordable houses can be built.</p> <p>P15, 4.26: we should give more detail on how affordable housing is allocated. 'In accordance with local authority policy' won't be sufficient to put the minds of many at ease. Spell out the NPPF requirements.</p> <p>P19, 5.26: be generous and mention the hydroelectric scheme just upstream of the mill also</p> <p>P22: be braver about referring openly to 'shared space'. 7.06 says that road signage is confusing and cluttered. Why not go on to say that by application of sheared space ideas much signage could be removed?</p> <p>P23, 7.15: the bus and train timetables are published on the website and in the Bulletin</p> <p>P34, affordable housing policy: "Rural exceptions policy will only be invoked when building win the settlements is impossible". This is at odds with the route we have been following until now and would exclude our most favoured site: opposite the shop and alongside The Glebe.</p>
Linton & Ann Ross	lintonross1@gmail.com	<p>P35, why not refer to the Freshford play park as the Queen Elizabeth Park? It has been earlier and would sit comfortably alongside the King George V park.</p> <p>Revised Draft Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan response – Linton and Ann Ross - Bell Cottage, Pipehouse, BA2 7UJ</p> <p>Village Settlements and settlements - The introduction of the Village Settlements designation has not necessarily clarified items nor has it been clearly applied - even though it is defined in the glossary. The term 'settlements' is also used but has not been defined. There are unclear and potentially confused references made to Village Settlements and settlements.</p>

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		<p>The Freshford half of Pipehouse containing the Rentokil site and the Freshford Mill site are notably not included within the Village Settlements. The boundary scope of the Neighbourhood Plan includes both of these but it is not clear how its terms therefore apply to Pipehouse.</p> <p>There is still no reference to fact that half of Pipehouse is within Hinton Charterhouse nor of there having been any consultation with Hinton Charterhouse PC.</p> <p>The non inclusion of both Rentokil and Freshford Mill sites in Village Settlements and the emphasis of these as being brownfield looks like a convenient distancing of these potentially difficult and controversial sites from the scope and responsibility of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Housing numbers - Section 4.0 is unclear. The housing need items contain contradictory figures and conclusions. The figures are apparently applied to the whole area and not just the Village Settlements, so in these clauses Rentokil and Freshford Mill are therefore included.</p> <p>Explanatory note to section 4.0 states... - <i>"How many houses - Annual development rate...both villages...over the next 5 years implies 5 new houses, at least half of which should be affordable"</i>. - Is that the Neighbourhood Plan position...?</p> <p>Section 10 Policy Area 2: Housing Policies notes... - <i>"Preferred option for development of 6-8 affordable homes...by brownfield sites in Neighbourhood Plan Area or infill in Village Settlements..."</i> – which appears to be at odds with the extract statement above.</p> <p>4.23 states... - <i>"Discussion with local developer suggests Pipehouse Nursery site (referred to as Rentokil elsewhere?) could accommodate 6-8 houses and Freshford Mill site...a further 4-6 homes..."</i> - I dispute the accuracy and validity off this statement with reference to Rentokil having carried out a design exercise on the site myself. As it happens we believe the developer for this site proposes significantly above these figures which we have said we will oppose, a view which, despite the Rural Exceptions Policy, we would expect the PC to endorse, preferably with support from the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Also, subject to clarification of the above queries, it appears that all of Limpley Stoke and Freshford's new housing need is conveniently being identified to be provided on the Rentokil site which, as noted above is also effectively excluded from the terms of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>New 1-2 bed houses - 4.02 and associated clauses continues to expound the notion that elderly residents will vacate larger properties in favour of new 1-2 bed houses if available. As stated previously I find this notion fanciful.</p>

Stuart Campbell

THE EFFECTS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN ON THE FRESHFORD MILL DEVELOPMENT

1. Background.

The current, not yet completed , development of 21 residences at Freshford Mill was permitted by the Local Authority following five years of repeated, opposed and gradually reducing applications for what became mainly residential development. This was opposed strongly by the Parish Council , The Freshford Mill Association and the great majority of interested residents. It was permitted also in spite of The Local Authority Highways department's major concerns re increased traffic on the very poor access routes - particularly Rosemary Lane.

The 21 residences were allowed, within the footprint of the then existing offices and factory buildings, following a referral by the Parish Council to the Deputy Prime Minister's Office with a request for call-in, (Which was not allowed as the development was not considered of sufficient importance at National level to justify call-in) the 21 residences were approved.

In December 2012 the Parish Council were reminded of the access problem and each councillor present at that meeting was provided with a copy of the B&NES Highway's comments . The PC were requested to place this matter on their agenda as a specific item. This request has not yet been implemented, presumably due to the cessation of work on the site following its being placed in Administration, and a view that this matter could be addressed later.

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		<p>Without providing a reason, the draft Neighbourhood Plan excludes the Mill from being in a "Settlement" and in these terms the full weight of Green Belt legislation and its effect on openness will continue to apply to this site. This means that the only development which could, after reasonable balancing of all the considerations, be permitted there would be</p> <p>(a) to provide affordable homes, by conversion of some of the currently approved residences or new build on the curtilage .</p> <p>(b) market housing on the footprint of the comparatively small section covered by the large factory shed , which is (Incidentally) the only part of the site outside the currently defined flood plain.</p> <p>It needs therefore to be borne in mind that the exclusion of the site from being a settlement in its own right or part of the proposed Southern Settlement does not exclude the possibility of permission being given for further build on the site. On the other hand, while "Brownfield" sites are given priority for development, this does not mean that they are necessarily suitable for new build. The classification of the Mill as "Brownfield" does not mean that further</p> <p>2</p> <p>planning permission will necessarily be given for the site. The Parish Council at no stage withdrew from its hard fought multi-faceted arguments that the site was inappropriate for residential development, but had reluctantly to accept the decision of the Local Authority to permit and the PC therefore embarked on damage limitation by regular consultation with the developers.</p> <p>The permission given for the 21 residences would presumably not be allowed now within an R3 settlement subject to the Local Plan and forthcoming Core Strategy.</p> <p>(2) Problems.</p> <p>(a) <u>General</u> .</p> <p>Problems arise from the effects of the projected increase in population and its generated vehicular movements along rural lanes in this sensitive and beautiful part of the CAONB countryside. The 21 residences comprise, even without the proposed Neighbourhood Plan project, the largest , single site originated, increase in living memory or more in Freshford Parish and will amount to over 10% increase in parish population, all concentrated on the site, and approaching up to 15% if the Neighbourhood Plan local developer's opinion statement re space for more housing is given weight.</p> <p>This is a single site matter for the Parish Council and B&NES to address, and their options should not be curtailed by the proposed Neighbourhood Plan "Project", which is ill defined when it goes beyond support for completion of the approved development. The reflection of discussions by, presumably, the Management Group, with local developers should not be included in the Plan.</p> <p><u>Recommendation.</u></p> <p>All references to development, beyond that currently approved for the site, be excluded from the Plan.</p> <p><u>Rationale.</u></p> <p>To make it clear that the benefits of further build on the site are more than offset by disadvantages amounting to unsustainability when such new build is related to the many restraining material considerations that apply. Should the Settlement policy be adopted alternative sites for affordable homes will exist as they come on the market, and the Mill site will not then be subject to "availability priority/brownfield" considerations which the draft NP implies by reversing longterm Parish Council policy and not taking adequately into account the downside of current, and particularly further, build on this sensitive site.</p> <p>3</p> <p>(b) <u>Access</u> .</p> <p>Unaddressed access problems <u>already</u> exist on the whole length of the narrow single track Rosemary Lane which has no publicly owned passing places. Crabtree Lane is too narrow for vehicles passing one another and only informal passing places exist.</p> <p><u>Recommendation.</u></p> <p>That the Plan states that the resolving of access problems should be addressed by pre-planning and not left until the problem of increased traffic is encountered, particularly as road safety has already been established as a factor by B&NES Highways Department.</p> <p><u>Rationale.</u></p> <p>In the interest of road safety and to improve air quality in Rosemary Lane (Please refer Page 4 re vehicle produced air pollution).</p>

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(c) Traffic – Post 21 Residences Application Approval.
The highly critical Highway's report on the 21 residences planning application was made before recent increases in traffic (caused to some extent by SatNav's) using Rosemary Lane.
The Mill site is remote from village services and once it becomes occupied will generate site/ village service/site car journeys as well as those out of and into the parish towards and from the A36 and Westwood/Trowbridge.
It is obvious that the population growth percentage reduces substantially when related to the one community aspect of the Neighbourhood Plan, highlighting the view which argues that the Plan should not influence directly the future of specific sites by commenting on them as "Projects", without first establishing the views of the residents most affected and those of their elected representative bodies i.e. the parish councils and their district councillors.

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(d) The Traffic Consequences of Further Residential Build.
The draft Neighbourhood Plan is apparently influenced by unspecified local developers by including their view of a possible increase in build on the site, postulating the number of residences that could be added to the 21 approved, and also signals the possibility of a further planning application. This would presumably have to be for affordable homes, or market homes on already established footprints. This arises from the site being within the Green Belt and subject to its restrictions. This was understood to be a factor in consideration by the Local Authority Planning Committee in permitting the 21 within the then existing buildings' footprints.
A problem which can be anticipated, but will only arise once the 21 residences are occupied, is that there will be demand for improved access from the site to the Trowbridge/Westwood/Freshford/A36 road. Such pressures could include widening of Crabtree lane and the provision of lighting – these could damage the rural character of the area which the draft Neighbourhood Plan commits to preserve.
The greatest problem is the generation of traffic and its overall effect on the infrastructure , (including the narrowness of the two approach lanes), caused by the 21, and worsened by any further residential build if approved. The Highways report, in objecting to the application for the 21 residences, quantifies the then anticipated increase in traffic, and makes particular reference to Rosemary Lane as narrow, steep and tortuous. It specifies some of the dangers generated by traffic on this lane, and the considerable reversing problems. It fails to comment on the fact that most of the properties along the South West side of the lane have windows or doors situated just over a metre from vehicle exhausts generating diesel and petrol fumes and already , before the 21 or more are occupied, causes all ground floor windows and doors on the road side of the properties to be kept shut to exclude the fumes. This problem is not only due to the proximity of the engines producing the fumes, but also to the high walls inhibiting their immediate dispersal.
It is not unreasonable for families with children in particular also to be concerned at the immediate access of their front doors accessing onto the narrow lane with passing , and reversing, vehicles already causing problems – how much more so unless action is taken to mitigate the effects of an occupied Mill.
By far the most inadequate route to/from the A36 from the site is Rosemary Lane north of the site entrance up to its junction with Abbey lane.

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The other route to Freshford village via Crabtree lane would need the creation of passing places. Beyond that the route to the A36 or towards Westwood is adequate, although far from ideal, and allows for passing on most stretches and for the 94 bus route. No route is really satisfactory and Rosemary Lane is clearly inadequate as the shortest highway link between the site and the A 36.
Various proposals have been made to allow for continuation of through traffic passing along Rosemary Lane, whilst avoiding any increase generated by the Mill. None meet the reasonable need to ensure that there is no mill generated increase in traffic on Rosemary lane northwards from the Mill entrance and southwards to the Mill from the junction of Rosemary Lane with Abbey lane.

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Even the most restrictive suggestion which proposes an angled approach from within the site to its entrance with the possibility of bollards and a chicane on the public highway , would not stop cars from the Mill reversing at the junction of Rosemary and Crabtree lanes, thereby enabling them to pass northwards , or to come down Rosemary southwards and reverse at the corner to enable them to return to the site entrance. The Gateway proposed at the Mill entrance would not stop traffic proceeding up Rosemary Lane. As stated in the Plan the Gateways' laudable objective is to slow traffic and render the lanes safer for users other than those in motorised vehicles. Combined with a chicane and an angled entrance it might ensure that vehicles leaving the site would need to turn right, but they could then reverse as described above. The reverse applies for traffic coming down Rosemary from the Northwest and wishing to turn into the Mill.

(3) Possible Solutions : Road Access and Traffic.

A one way system on Rosemary Lane would reduce substantially traffic flow, but the argument against this is that it would tend to increase speeds on the tortuous , narrow and steep lane.

The most effective proposal is one which has been examined by B&NES, and which is to provide a turning circle at the northern end of the Rosemary lane river bridge and to reduce the use of the bridge to non vehicular access except in cases of specific need .

Hinged bollards and a key retention scheme would allow for exceptional rare need of access by vehicles under three tons (The current bridge weight limit) – this covers exceptions such as are rarely but necessarily needed for sewage

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tank clearance of those properties which are not on the mains sewage (Four properties Dunkirk Mill and Walnut Grove). Access down Rosemary is inappropriate for HGVs and this is evidenced by vehicles which have become jammed at the narrowest sections after ignoring warning signs and have caused damage to laneside properties.

This proposal would allow "access only" to lower Rosemary Lane properties, below the junction with Sharpstone Lane, render the lane a quiet and pleasant route for walkers, riders and cyclists , eliminate the traffic safety and pollution problems arising from the Mill development. The sole downside is that current residents of the lower part of Rosemary would need to access Trowbridge/Westwood via Freshford village.

Recommendation.

That the NP acknowledges the access/increased traffic problems described above. thus providing the basis for these to be addressed and resolved by the Local Authority.

Rationale.

To provide the basis for these matters to be addressed and resolved by the Parish Council and the Local Authority.

(4) The Visual Consequences of any Build on the Site beyond that already Approved.

The current approval for the 21 residences determines that the large unsightly shed be demolished . This action will improve the rural character of the views specified in the Conservation Character Appraisal and will enhance the openness of the Green Belt . The Mill is included in the Conservation Area and the view across it from Sharpstone is noted as "Fabulous " in the Appraisal. This improvement in openness will be valuable and should obviate any arguments that the footage of the shed could permit replacement build .

Recommendation.

That the NP states that the current approved development of 21 residences should be completed as per paragraphs one and two of Section 4.11 (Para. 3 should be omitted) and that, in view of the visual and CAONB consequences no further new build be permitted at this site. All reference to unsubstantiated comment by developers should be omitted.

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Rationale.

Para.3 of Section 4.11 should be omitted as it is tentative and inappropriate comment in a Planning Policy document. Omit Freshford Mill from Section 4.23. and any reference to the opinions of local developers.

The 21 residences are approved by the L.A.. The foregoing points on access, traffic, openness of the Green Belt, the AONB, the Conservation views, and the overall weight of material considerations which militate against further New Build on the site, point to a policy that states that this site may be brownfield, but that it is inappropriate for further build.

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I hope that this paper will be helpful to the NP in this last consultation stage before going to scrutiny by the Inspector. I regret that it is rather heavy and where necessary slightly repetitive in varying considerations but I am motivated by ensuring that all members of the Management Committee are aware of the background and current influences that pertain to the Mill.

Please ignore those of the points made hereunder where and if you have already undertaken risk analyses covering these and resolved any issues following the publication of the current draft, but if not then changes may be desirable. The following paragraphs sum up areas of risk or of possible confusion as I see them which could work against a robust Neighbourhood Plan. They do of course vary considerably in weight. They refer to the Green Belt and the NPPF. These points are made in the hope that the strengths of any forthcoming challenges, either before or subsequent to adoption, can be addressed.

For clarity I have divided this paper into 7 sections viz. :

- 1. Definition of "Village". (Page 1)
- 2. Conflicting Assumptions. (Risks and "Infill"). (Page 2)
- 3. Use of Expression "Built". (Page 4)
- 4. Omission of Words - Brownfield sites. (Page 5)
- 5. Avoidance of Development on Valley Sides and a contours Map. (Page 5)
- 6. Clarity of Definitions. (Page 5)
- 7. The Extension of Land Appropriate for Development. (Page 6)

The following comments do not apply to affordable homes as to all practical intents and purposes these are not subject to Green Belt considerations. As far as Freshford Mill is concerned, a separate paper will be with you before consultation closure. I hope that this and the Mill paper will prove helpful.

(1) Definition of "Village".

The NPPF permits, within Green Belts, limited infilling in villages. (p.21 /Section 89). Much depends here on the definition of "Village" and whilst the hamlets (Sharpstone, Staples Hill, Park Corner, Pipehouse and Midford Lane) are within parish council boundaries, it could be maintained that these hamlets are not in the villages of Freshford or Limpley Stoke. They are in the parishes, but parish does not necessarily equate with "Village". Some parts are named as distinct entities distinguishing them from the Village (Park Corner and Sharpstone are good examples of this). A fine point, but it needs resolution, as the concept of the three settlements depends to a great degree on the acceptance of the hamlets as being in villages.

Proposal : that professional interpretation be obtained.

Rationale : to obtain clarity of definition.

(2) Conflicting Assumptions.

On Page 9 of the proposed Plan there is a statement that any proposed development will have to comply with, (inter alia), Green Belt restrictions, and in referring to infill development, section 3.22 claims that proposals for limited infill will be subject to the usual controls and restrictions of Green Belt planning policy. (Why "usual" ? These are applied – so what are the unusual circumstances and are they relevant to the NP ?)

Green Belt legislation has historically allowed for Housing Development Boundaries to be defined, weakening constraints within these boundaries as, (subject to tight infill rules), housing may be permitted unlimited by the key consideration of the "Openness of the Green Belt". Applications made for Housing build within these boundaries are therefore not subject to the restrictions of the Green Belt in this major respect.

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		<p>So 3.22 is misleading as the “usual” Green Belt controls and restrictions will not apply fully in the proposed three settlements. Green Belt land within the “Settlements” is proposed to be appropriate for development as opposed to land outside the proposed settlement boundaries, which is not. Surely the extension of appropriateness to the newly defined settlements infers the same or very similar approaches to appropriateness as apply within the current Freshford HDB.</p> <p>By defining the three (map 2) settlement areas as appropriate for housing development within the Green Belt, there is a risk, possibly a grave one, that at appeal level applications for market housing could be approved against local authority objections on R3/small village grounds or against emphasis placed in The Plan on numerical restrictions such as the 0.2% rate or the very vague NPPolicy (2b) “A limited number of new market housing” (Presumably this means houses or a limited amount of housing). It is notable that there is no apparent mechanism suggested for cut off once restrictive target levels</p> <p>3</p> <p>have been reached nor any way of rendering the remaining land in the settlements as no longer appropriate for development once these targets have been achieved .</p> <p>It seems possible , even probable, that at appeal the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development , allied to political pressure re housing, could prevail over R3 or “Small village” considerations particularly if the Plan and Local Authority infill interpretations differ.</p> <p>This of course assumes that the R3 categorization will still apply in the B&NES/ Freshford area after the Neighbourhood Plan inspector has looked critically at Freshford’s hard fought and so far successful claim to R3 status and Limpley Stoke’s status as a small village. These of course are included in the relevant Core Strategies. It seems that this will fall within his/her brief in view of so much more land (Approx 4 times) being proposed to be designated as appropriate for development in the Neighbourhood Plan than is currently the case with the sole HDB.</p> <p><u>Proposals</u> : these risks cannot be eliminated, but can be mitigated by -</p> <p>(a) The strengthening of the definition of “Infill” (For ease of reference please see below for the two definitions and a proposed third). This strengthening is, in my opinion, most important.</p> <p><u>Rationale</u> : to avoid clashing interpretations in both pre and post adoption circumstances. A stronger definition will preclude build on land within the settlements which is clearly not suitable for infill. Areas of these would be eliminated from housing or other development by the infill interpretation, but leaving more than sufficient of the land classified as appropriate to meet quantified and evidence based needs for market housing (And affordable) in both parishes.</p> <p>(b) Including a description of the mechanism to be applied up to and once restrictive housing targets have been reached over specified periods of the Plan or of the totality of the Plan’s application, and how appropriateness is to be defined for the remaining areas of the settlements .</p> <p><u>Rationale</u> : to explain how control will be achieved over applications for development for the remainder of the land once the restrictive numerical targets have been met.</p> <p>For ease of reference I give below the infill definitions referred to (a) above ;</p> <p>(i) Bath and N.E. Somerset Core Strategy definition :</p> <p>4</p> <p>“The filling of small gaps within existing development e.g. the building of one or two houses on a small vacant plot IN AN OTHERWISE EXTENSIVELY BUILT UP FRONTAGE. THE PLOT WILL GENERALLY BE SURROUNDED ON THREE SIDES BY DEVELOPED SITES OR ROADS.</p> <p>(ii) Definition Proposed for consideration.</p>

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		<p>"The filling of small gaps within existing development limited to the building of one or two houses on a small vacant plot in an otherwise extensively built up frontage. The plot will be surrounded on three sides by developed sites or roads". (The omission of "E.G." and "Generally" improves clarification),</p> <p>(iii) The Neighbourhood Plan Version as Currently Proposed.</p> <p>"The filling of a small gap within the village settlements that is large enough for not more than a few dwellings (What is a few? This is very weak) and generally (a broad word –weak- what is generally?) only one dwelling. It must be consistent with the goals of the Neighbourhood Plan and must be in line with the approach set out in Planning Policy Guidance 2 on the Green Belt which maintains a presumption against inappropriate development.</p> <p>Please note : Planning Policy Guidance 2 , has , with all the PPG's and PPS's, been made redundant by the NPPF. Without the B&NES statement in capitals above, the current draft Plan's version allows for such developments as, for example, building along the currently undeveloped gardens along Freshford High St.. This would constitute arguably "A few dwellings" or in the many curtilages that could not reasonably be described as "Infill".</p> <p>I urge you to adopt either (1) or preferably, (2).</p> <p>(3) Use of the Expression "Built".</p> <p>"Built areas (Page 9)" could be confused with Planning interpretations of "built up" areas. A built area may, as implied by the Plan, include considerable stretches of strip development along one or both sides of the lanes with depth of only one property , but this is scarcely "Built up". Examples Sharpstone , Midford and Freshford lanes, Staples Hill and parts of Crow Hill.</p> <p><u>Proposal</u>: remove any reference to "Built", or define it in the Glossary to avoid confusion with "Built up".</p> <p><u>Rationale</u> : to avoid misinterpretation and/or confusion with "Built up".</p> <p>5</p> <p>(4) Omission of words in "What is Meant by "Village Settlement."</p> <p>There is no certainty that further development will be allowed in the brownfield sites. To make this clear I propose that the statement should read "This does not mean the guarantee of planning permission within the settlements or the brownfield sites</p> <p>Proposal : amend text accordingly.</p> <p>Rationale : avoiding misinterpretation.</p> <p>(5) Avoidance of Development on visible Valley Sides. Item 3.03, page 8.</p> <p>Is the Frome valley not deserving of the same treatment ? Valley sides visible from where ? What is visible from one point will not be the same from another.</p> <p><u>Proposal</u> : The Plan to improve upon the CAONB statement by reading : "This Neighbourhood Plan maintains that in the enclosed Limpley Stoke and Frome valleys, new development should be avoided on the valley sides visible from any of the points marked on Map*". (*A Map indicating contours – an important missing factor in the draft Plan only marginally mitigated by the steep topography indicators on Map 2).</p> <p>(6) Clarity of Definitions.</p>

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		<p>I am sure you will agree that definitions should be clear, unambiguous and understood by residents, not to mention planning officials. This is particularly relevant as the NPPF states that "The Government attaches great importance to the Green Belts" but metaphorically in the same breath removed the clear guidance on how to interpret the relevant Act by annulling the guidance of PPG2.</p> <p>Most residents will no doubt have responded to the questionnaire in ignorance of definitions current within B&NES and Wiltshire, and obviously with those now included in the Plan. Amendments to this last locally consulted version of the Plan can hopefully overcome this problem. For example, by adopting the strongest (B&NES core strategy) definition, the dubious robustness and possible inadvertent bias of the result of question A3 (New Housing) in the questionnaire due to no definition of Infill having been provided, might be overcome.</p> <p>8. The Extension of Land Appropriate for Development.</p> <p>The Mapped areas (The Settlements) increase radically the amount of land deemed appropriate for development, "Could be permitted" well beyond the need for housing expressed in the draft Plan. No evidence in support of this hefty extension has been provided. (More than doubling it in Freshford beyond the current HDB and from nil to a very large area in Limpley Stoke).</p> <p>No indication has been given as to why all the land in these areas should be newly defined as appropriate for development and the current curtilages within the "Settlements" subjected to division. Nor has any comment been made to limit the scope of this appropriateness. (I suggest that the argument that much of the land is already built upon is not relevant to its being appropriate or not).</p> <p>I suggest also that comments that there are other material considerations which might limit development on this land are also not relevant to initial, policy, consideration of appropriateness of the use of land in the Green Belt. At Development Control stage it is decided what considerations are germane when addressing a planning application and these, such as AONB intents, the Conservation Area and the proposed valley side visibility statement in this Plan and usually many more, are weighed to arrive at a decision.</p> <p>Proposal : add to 3.22 a statement that the definition of land as being within a settlement shall not infer that the land is necessarily appropriate for development.</p> <p>Rationale : to clarify the point and to strengthen resistance to challenge against restriction.</p>
Chris & Roland Birchby	chrisbirchby@hotmail.com	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to again comment on the neighbourhood plan, we are pleased to note the footpath across church fields been rethought.</p> <p>However, we are still VERY concerned over any additional dwellings at Freshford mill for reasons initially noted (traffic, noise light pollution and visual impact) There is already concern over the impact of the 21 new dwellings which alone will increase the population by a significant number, please do not allow any more. We also continue to have concerns over the village settlements. Thank you for including a definition of infill, however, we still feel this definition could be interpreted too widely and would like to see something more specific, we note BANES definition states "The filling of small gaps within existing development e.g. the building of one or two houses on a small vacant plot in an otherwise extensively built up frontage. The plot will generally be surrounded on at least three sides by developed sites or roads 'and would ask that this is adopted to be followed by 'it must be consistent.....' as in your definition.</p> <p>We completely support the need for affordable housing and note the plan to build 2 bedroom houses. However, how can you ensure these do not become extended over time as has been the case with other smaller properties in the village (or become holiday lets) or stop a developer building larger and more expensive properties.</p> <p>We note the plan states a maximum of 5 houses, at least half being affordable, being built over the two villages on infill land over 5 years. This sounds very reasonable but what about over the next 20 years? We need to safeguard our small village status, and reasons people choose to live here, for future generations. As already mentioned the 21 build at Freshford mill means the village population will already rise significantly and includes a mixture of dwellings.</p>

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Sue Davis	sue@davis10.com	<p>Once again thank you for the effort that has gone into producing the plan. Roland and Chris Birchby, Myrtle Cottage, Sharpstone, Freshford</p> <p>With regard to point 4.23 of the Neighbourhood Plan, the proposed plan for development of the Rentokil site which was presented to residents by the developer on 13th February contains 10 households in 7 buildings. Four of these would be affordable housing (two 2-bed and two 1-bed, all in one block facing the lane).</p>
Matthew Fletcher	matthewandchloe.fletcher@gmail.com	<p>Incidentally, there was a representative of Hinton Charterhouse parish council present at the meeting at Rentokil. Their council would like to know the views of Pipehouse residents on development here (so they can consider our views when they are asked to comment on the prospective planning application). Surprise was expressed that no inter-parish consultation has taken place on the Neighbourhood Plan (considering that Pipehouse lies in both parishes).</p> <p>Clause 4.23 - I am concerned to see the revised plan suggests that the Freshford Mill site could accommodate a further 4-6 houses, presumably in addition to the 21 for which planning permission has been granted. Residents of Sharpstone have consistently argued for fewer houses due to the very poor access. In addition the current floods demonstrate the folly of building housing on flood plains. I would prefer to see that sentence removed and preferably replaced with - "Whilst planning permission for 21 houses has already been granted, that is already more than the access and site warrant and any further expansion of that site should be resisted".</p> <p>As a general point I do not agree that there is a shortage of small housing units in the villages. There are plenty of 1/2 bed cottages. What is lacking is family-sized 4 bed homes, hence the excessive cost of such homes in comparison to the more plentiful smaller cottages. I am pleased to see the restriction on extending houses has been removed.</p> <p>I consider in-filling to be potentially very damaging to the character of Freshford. For example, the wooded grounds to Abbotsleigh are important for the character of Sharpstone and in-fill development in such locations would be to the detriment of the conservation area. As an alternative I propose development be localised to a single site outside the existing envelopes and attach a "Reasonable Alternative" to the current plan for inclusion in a Sustainability Appraisal.</p> <p>A "Reasonable Alternative" to the Proposed Neighbourhood Plan to be considered for sustainability in the Sustainability Appraisal</p> <p>A single site <u>outside</u> the current village envelopes designated for a number of housing units to be developed gradually, e.g. 3 units every 2 years, over the next 20 years.</p> <p>Key features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Plots designated for a mix of housing, e.g. retirement bungalow, 2 bed "starter" home and 4 bed family homes with garden (the category most lacking and most overpriced due to demand). · Plots available individually, e.g. enabling self-build. · Site to be at a location with good transport links, reducing impact of development on village lanes. <p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Single site provides a lower overall environmental impact than multiple developments e.g. single access road required, communal facilities. · Economy of scale makes sustainability features more economically viable. e.g. communal soak away or heat pump, solar/wind power generation more feasible on a larger scale. · Character of existing villages largely unchanged, just expanded · Small green spaces, gardens, spacious rural nature of villages maintained without the need for intrusive and character-changing in-filling. · Flexibility to adapt plot allocation to changing village needs over time, e.g. increase or decrease proportion of retirement bungalow/family homes to respond to changing dynamics. <p>A suggested site for such a designated development site is the field opposite the end of Abbey Lane behind Upper Mount Pleasant.</p>

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		<p>Rationale for that site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · An unobtrusive location neither particularly overlooked by or overlooking existing housing (other than Old Chapel). · Good access to A36 without generating traffic through the villages thus having a low impact on the community as a whole. · New development connected to the community, being in easy walking distance from amenities and without having to cross a barrier such as the A36 or a river. · Can include a residents parking area for Upper Mount Pleasant and Rosemary Lane cottages thus improving the local environment and facilities for local residents. · The site is outside the conservation area. <p>Whilst radical, it is suggested such an approach would be less detrimental to the existing villages and their character than in-filling.</p>
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Julie Seward	julieseward@btinternet.com	
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Here are our revised comments for the latest version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

We have been living in Pipehouse (at Farfields for 21 years and then Turnip Wood for 10 years) for a total of 31 years.

It is reassuring to see that the plan recognises the “unique rural character” of the hamlets including Pipehouse that surround the villages of Freshford and Limpley Stoke.

It is also noted that they are “separated by green fields and woodlands” and included in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

In view of this it is disappointing that the Rentokil Brownfield Site has been identified by the Parish Council (without any consultation with the residents of Pipehouse to our knowledge) as a feasible site for new housing possibly including affordable housing. It is interesting to note that the Parish Council has not identified any feasible site within the villages of Freshford or Limpley Stoke? We note for instance that the relocation of the doctors surgery would free up space which might be used for the expansion of Freshford School. Why does the school have to expand? Surely many of the problems the village is suffering with excess traffic and congestion is caused by those that use the school. Many of whom do not reside in either Village! Wouldn't it be better to use the site for housing for elderly residents or indeed affordable housing. It is a prime site right in the centre of the village and should be ideal for this purpose.

We would like to register our interest and concern at this stage, and respectfully request that any further developments relating specifically to the development of the Rentokil site should involve full consultation with the residents of Pipehouse. It seems to us that the Neighbourhood Plan then goes on to identify several factors deemed a necessity for future and present Residents that would make the Rentokil site wholly unsuitable for development. However, we note that “proposals for new development must take proper account of relevant planning considerations raised by immediate neighbours or by the community through their Parish Councils through comprehensive local engagement”. We also note that “any housing development will need to be justified in terms of its positive benefits to the character of, and community benefit to, the villages”. It would be interesting to see how the Parish Council thinks that development of the Rentokil site will benefit the local community of Pipehouse in a positive way. As there is now a proposal to develop the site including the provision of affordable housing we would expect the Parish Council to be mindful of preserving the unique identity of Pipehouse and its historical and important lane in line with the objectives outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The A36 trunk road is mentioned in 7.05 “which divides the community and acts as a barrier for residents in Pipehouse to access key services”. With respect, it is exactly this road that separates our hamlet and makes it unique. I am sure that residents of Pipehouse value this divide and whilst we can only speak for ourselves we have never seen the road as a barrier to using local services. We have used all the local services available for over 30 years and cannot recall an occasion when we were prevented from doing so by the A36. With the possible exception of bad weather but that is to be expected when one lives in a rural community. In that time there have not been any serious accidents to our knowledge. Therefore we do not feel that our safety needs to be improved by any of the measures mentioned in 7.24.

Indeed it is interesting that if these views prevail then the Parish Council is happy to inflict the “barrier” of the A36 on to future residents!

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NAME	EMAIL	COMMENT
Richard Stephenson	richard.stephenson@gmail.com	I am writing in relation to the public consultation on the Freshford & Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan. My wife and I are residents of Rosemary Lane and have received a copy of a response to the Plan entitled 'The effects of the Neighbourhood Plan on the Freshford Mill development'. This email is to show our support for the recommendations put forward in this document and to express our concerns over the proposed additional residences. In particular we are concerned about the danger to our young family posed by additional traffic on this very narrow lane.
Malcolm & Elizabeth Ch	chatwinfreshford@aol.com	<p>We are writing concerning a matter of accuracy in relation to a map in the Neighbourhood Plan which suggests that only half of our garden here at Abbotsleigh is indeed part of our property and therefore defined as Settlement.</p> <p>We attach a scanned copy of a map of Abbotsleigh. This shows correctly that our garden is cut in two by a public footpath but nevertheless the whole property is ours and hence should be designated as Settlement. I think you will find that this is shown incorrectly in the plan with just the land to the West of the footpath being shown as Settlement. The woodland to the East of the footpath is also a part of our garden and should therefore also be defined as Settlement.</p>
Jan de Kleuver	dekleuver@btinternet.com	<p>We have previously mentioned this to Nick Stevens but we are not certain that the relevant map in the Neighbourhood Plan has been corrected accordingly. Please find below our comments and suggestions on the Plan:</p> <p>1. Freshford Mill</p> <p>We consider development of residential homes in a flood plane as highly irresponsible. We are therefore against any extension of the planning permission for this side (which should never have been given in the first place).</p> <p>2. Rosemary Lane</p> <p>Measures to restrict traffic to access traffic only or alternatively to reduce traffic volume should be actively considered. Possible effective solutions are:</p> <p>(a) blocking off the bridge for car traffic; or</p> <p>(b) introducing one-way traffic (uphill only) with no turn allowed into Sharpstone Lane.</p> <p>3. Parking in the village</p> <p>There is still a lot of irresponsible parking going on, with cars parked on narrow roads such as Sharpstone Lane, often leaving insufficient space for essential access of emergency services and other general services.</p> <p>It might also help to create additional parking space in some fields in the village, where spaces can be screened off by existing stone walls or newly planted hedges.</p>
Brad & Sandy Abrahams	sandya600@gmail.com	<p>Re: The Effects of the Freshford Mill Development</p> <p>We are greatly affected by the above plan, living in Sharpstone and looking down onto this site. Issues that concern us most:</p> <p>Further building on the site after the large shed is removed, would affect openness of Green Belt and Conservation area, views up the valley, extra street lighting and noise.</p> <p>Not enough consideration has been made for the increase in traffic on Rosemary Lane due to further housing.</p> <p>Please consider our views.</p>
Peter Wight	Peter.Wight@marks-and-spencer.com	<p>I would like to voice my concerns about the proposed village.</p> <p>I am particularly concerned about further development of the Freshford Mill site. Can the Parish council look into the associated traffic issues for Rosemary Lane? As you will know, it can be very difficult to reverse uphill (for considerable distances) if faced with oncoming traffic. Can we therefore look to either close the Freshford Mill Bridge – or make the lower part of Rosemary lane a one-way system?</p>

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NAME	EMAIL	COMMENT
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I would also wish to discourage further development of the site (traffic issues aside) given the further pressure this would add on the nature of our village and its infrastructure. - And finally, I would like to object to any further 'infill' within Sharpstone...we have seen a considerable increase in recent times within our vicinity, and this should be actively discouraged by the village plan to maintain the local character.

Julie & Paddy Fitzgerald Paddy@paddyfitzgerald.co.uk

The document States that the plan has been prepared for and by the community and is locally specific. Reading the plan there is one dimension relating to sharing resources such as the Hall and Shop, where there is clearly a joint interest in outcomes as well as an understanding that neither village on their own can maintain these. There are also issues such as planning that reflect the different identities of the two villages where localism represents a key difference.

For in some ways the two villages are very different, with Freshford being composed of a number of hamlets separated by green spaces while Limpley Stoke has a central core where most of its dwellings are sited.

This distinction is important. For instance the Tynning purchase will require funding and it is clearly wrong that residents of Limpley Stoke could sway decisions over this when they have no financial commitment. Similarly it would be wrong for Freshford residents to have a major voice in whether the Limpley Stoke central green space was developed: how would the 70% of Limpley Stoke residents who wish to keep a green space feel if their 70% 'voice' was reduced to below 50% by Freshford voters ?

Our understanding is that in some way a management committee was formed by the two parishes separately, composed of unelected people as a task specific group which by implication reported to these councils. Most will assume that this group was essentially advisory, providing inputs to the respective Parish Councils and would be dissolved once the plan was launched. It would certainly be a different meaning of democracy if they continued to make and implement decisions in their non-elected form.

Since the ability to raise money is vested in the Parish Councils, it is they who have to shoulder responsibility, and each can only cover matters within their own jurisdiction. In this context the Freshford Parish Council does not seem to have discussed the plan or expressed its opinion of it. Since it is with their authority that the management committee was formed and tasked, one would expect their view to be part of the feedback to the Freshford population.

The Clerk to the Management Committee states that no minutes were taken of management committee meetings. Since there are issues over the operation of the working groups this is a serious omission. It is amazing to find that the committee had a nominated Clerk, but that she was not required to make notes and produce minutes: this means that there is no record of what was agreed nor of what required further discussion. This is not what would be expected from a quasi public body.

With regard to the working groups there are inputs (such as the report on the Tynning provided by the Environmental Group) which seem to have vanished without formal comment (because there is no record of them having been tabled) while many ideas and inputs apparently from the planning group do not reflect the discussions in this group.

There are inconsistencies in the report. For instance in section 4.02 the case for more 1-2 bedroom houses is based on the assertion that more younger families are needed to support the school and shop.

As far as the shop is concerned it has been profitable and has contributed valuable funds towards projects in both villages during its early years. Following expansion and a doubling of the employee cost it is now making a loss. This change is not due to any collapse in young or old living in the villages but it is true there is no direct evidence as to which age group makes the largest contribution. Certainly observation shows that older people both spend in the shop but also are the dominant age group in the volunteers manning the shop. Any collapse in older supporters or shift in demography may well be the most serious blow to profitability.

The school has a waiting list despite the present levels of Freshford housing: indeed in 8.13 when discussing the future of the present surgery building it is suggested this could be made into additional classroom space - hardly necessary if the school needs more younger families for its survival.

The argument that more homes for younger families are required thus does not stand up. The School seems a vibrant enterprise doing a good job, and the shop could return to its previous profitability with effective management.

In addition the latest comments on the revised draft state that the suggested new footpath from St Mary's church down to the shop has also been dropped, though 7.17 is somewhat equivocal and it is important that this matter is resolved before any vote is taken. Representations to the Environment Group, which included a paper from a group of younger mothers who indicated they did not need such a footpath can be summarised as "buggy friendly" footpaths being an example of creeping urbanisation – and this stands against the NP statement that the rural nature of the village should be protected..

5.Demography

A supporting paper for the plan has been produced by Rural Housing Enablers (RHE). Points arising from this are as follows:

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Between 2009 and 2026 the number of people aged 65 and over in Freshford is set to grow by 62%: this is much higher than the general figure of 40% for the country. No expected growth is reported for younger people in this time interval. So over the 17 years covered by the plan there is no foreseeable change in the number of residents below the age of 65, but a significant increase of 62% in the over 65s. Against this the NP is proposing an increase in habitations for younger adults but only a fraction for older resident of 6-8 affordable houses: the remaining elderly demand will be covered by the care village in Winsley. The NP has addressed a problem which does not exist while ignoring a much bigger one addressed a problem which does not exist while ignoring a much bigger one that does.

- i. The last allocation of one of the 9 present social housing buildings in Freshford was in October 2007. Based on what has happened to social housing in the past it is to be expected that in time some residents from social or affordable housing will purchase the properties allocated to them and the resulting number of homes under these categories that are available will reduce in number. This can be expected to occur within the period of the plan – so how will future generations of applicants for affordable housing be dealt with ?
- ii. In the assessment of need carried out by RHE, no elderly requests FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING was reported. There is therefore a distinction to be made between elderly people who are disadvantaged economically and need affordable housing and elderly people wishing to remain in their community who have the funds (perhaps through selling their larger properties) to buy at open market rates.

The implications from this are as follows:

- There is no evidence of a need for more younger residents in order to safeguard School enrolment figures or shop income.
- Lack of appropriate housing suggests there will be continuing problems housing those who are inclined to move to smaller properties but wish to remain near their friends and/or relations in the village. A pre-requisite to them releasing larger houses for younger residents is the availability of a suitable number of smaller houses.
- The demand for elderly provision is thus not for affordable housing but for high quality homes attractive to people with the finance (from selling their larger homes) to afford these.
- Changing the emphasis to new elderly provision helps to maintain or even increase the number of houses for younger families. An opportunity has been missed to consider a brown field site for development of extracare housing – or something like this – for extending the opportunities for elderly residents in the village. Somerset Care is one organisation that could advise on this.

Failing to address the issue of elderly provision risks increasing the number of richer elderly singles or couples in competition with younger families.....and this may lead to prices for smaller properties escalating beyond the means of more and more younger people.

6.Housing

The statement in Section 4 reflected In Policy NP1 suggests building 1 house/year (with 50% of these affordable) ACROSS BOTH PARISHES for each of the next 5 years. Seen in the context of 1 new house in Freshford within the last 10 years, 2.5 homes over 5 years is a significant but probably manageable increase. Unfortunately this modest increase is not the sum of the NPs proposals for additional buildings.

In Freshford there is in addition to these the completion of AT LEAST 21 homes on the Peradins site, a further 8 houses on the Rentokill brownfield site, limited infill sites and any affordable homes built under the rural exceptions site policy. An estimate of the total is thus for about 35 new homes – and this only covers the first 5 years of the plan - which is a very different case. It is poor that in a plan covering some 20 or so years only the next 5 have been addressed since the problems of availability need to be considered. What happens over affordable homes when the number now being discussed have residents who cannot or do not wish to leave in residence and there are no longer any such homes available for the next generation of demand.

Of even more concern is the creation of new settlements which extend the original Housing Development Boundary into 2 new areas in Freshford. This only makes sense in the context of an ongoing building programme which will threaten the environment we now enjoy.

It would also seem prudent to seek professional advice over whether a proposal to build could be rejected because one house had already been approved by the Parish Council in the year in question. Would the rejected application be defensible on appeal if the sole grounds for rejection were based on an arbitrary quota issue.

There is a sound evidence base that the community has expressed its wish for matters to stay as they have been, or if essential to allow minimum new builds. In the 2008 plan which included a very comprehensive survey of Freshford residents, a question was asked over what the number of new dwellings should be. Of 154 respondents 31% wanted to keep the village untouched and 68% wanted "marginal expansion for some elderly provision OR affordable housing". Bearing this in mind it has no doubt been an objective of the NP to reflect the community's wishes, one would expect a proposal limited to the minimum number of homes compatible with Government legal requirements.

In past dealings between Freshford and B&NES it has seemed that the Local Authority has not pursued additional development within the village. Indeed in approving the Peradin's 21 new homes project they specifically released the developers from the need to have any number of affordable homes on this site. It maybe that B&NES is more in tune with the Freshford community than the management committee.

7.Affordable Housing

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NAME	EMAIL	COMMENT
		<p>In the same 2008 survey 58% of 185 respondents wanted “affordable housing tied to provision of services in the village”, while 98% of respondents believed that the green spaces in and around Freshford were vital to the character of the village. It is clear that green spaces were important to more residents than affordable homes and most would prefer the former to the latter.</p> <p>After over 4 years of effort the Parish Council have not been able to identify a site for affordable homes: owners of possible sites do not wish to sell or give their land. But neither do residents wish to see green field land used to this end despite the default locations under the rural exceptions site policy being such land. There has been no survey asking whether residents wish to see affordable housing if this means using land from the green belt which is otherwise protected.</p> <p>Social housing provides evidence to another factor in Freshford. The last allocation of social housing was in October 2007 (RHE) indicating that turnover in such properties is very low. The NP in their section on affordable housing only considers those with an economic casefor instance one parent families. But are such applicants likely to so improve their finances that they can move into unsubsidised housing ? What happens to the ‘family’ that remains dependant on subsidised housing ? Will they have to be evicted in order for new families to move in ?</p> <p>The demand appears to be that which exists today, but tomorrow there will be new applicants but full affordable homes. How will demand be met once there are sitting owner/tenants ? Will the present 5 year horizon be extended by further tranches of building ?</p> <p>In the NP working party which considered affordable homes there was support as long as a local Housing Association could be formed to administer the scheme. The “Making Progress” survey floated a Community Housing Trust but did not evaluate making this a pre-requisite to affordable homes, and the idea has not been pursued meaningfully in the NP.</p> <p>In summary the proposals for affordable housing are only superficially thought through and certainly do not offer a 20 year perspective. If there is a hidden demand for such housing where and how is this demand currently met, for many younger people need to go to where there are jobs and where life is affordable....as generations have done in the past.</p> <p>8.The Tyning</p> <p>The broad principle of the PC owning the Tyning might well receive general support, but the issues of most interest to parishioners are not covered. For instance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What price for the land would change the desirability of purchase ? - Is the present price one which RESIDENTS feel is justified ? - How (in detail) will the cost be recovered and over what timespan ? - What is the situation over the original many ‘owners’ and their interest. Many residents have relied on the sense of a varied group of “co-owners” to keep the Tyning sacrosanct. How can the future of the Tyning be secured so that no unwanted changes to its use are introduced by any party ? - Many residents approve of the use of the Tyning for cattle. Is this compatible with a village green ? - What are the financial repercussions relating to maintenance ? If cattle are no longer to be allowed what is the expected cost for maintaining the space ? - What are the proposals relating to shortage of playspace for the school, and in particular what is the implication for the Tyning ? <p>Over the period of 2 plans and 6 years the issues over parking have become a prime concern to many who live in Freshford: for many this is the most pressing and difficult issue of living in Freshford. Why are these matters not addressed in this plan ?</p> <p>Issues relating to flow of motor vehicles are not nearly as serious as the problems of parking, yet while traffic flows have been considered in depth , parking has not. Parking extends round blind corners, on pavements and twice a day round the School/Surgery junction. Parking is also destroying the verge of the Tyning. Emergency vehicles simply cannot get through some of the parking situations that exist.</p> <p>Why is not consideration given to making the parking bays on the left of the road from school to hall into allocated bus parking ? Double yellow lines could then be applied to the boundary of the School so improving safety of children, and these might be extended towards the School.</p> <p>Note that the visibility of children crossing the road from school side to Hall side is probably best close to the school. Were the footpath currently in use widened and kept at its designated width, the footpath would probably serve as it is. The idea to divert this path round the back of the shop is a good one.</p> <p>Lastly there are 1.7 vehicles per household in Freshford. One can return to the original comments on new housing and reflect that retired people and families usually manage on fewer and smaller cars than younger families. If the press is on parking the same number of houses will involve fewer cars in older families and the opposite is true: a building programme aimed at more younger families is a recipe for greater parking problems.</p> <p>10.Organisation</p> <p>There is a difficulty in how a common development pathway for all the matters in the plan can be actioned by two parish councils, each relating to a different Local Authority. There are tensions in that even if the plan is approved and the responsibility for action (and accountability for money) rests with the separate parish councils.</p>

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Kerry Greenhaugh	kerry.greenhalgh@me.com	<p data-bbox="645 256 1960 300">Arguably any future election of parish councillors would free such councils from decisions previously taken: a new council may not agree with plan proposals and might argue that their later election provided them with a new mandate which allowed them to diverge from the previously agreed joint village plan.</p> <p data-bbox="645 317 1960 432">The natural path would be to coalesce the two parish councils into one. But many would consider this highly undesirable and an unwished for reversal of localism thinking, As stated above the two villages have some joint interests and similarities but also very clear differences that underpin their identities. In hindsight it might have been better to have stuck with more modest objectives. Just integrating the interests relating to shared resources would have been challenge enough, with most of such resources controlled by separate trusts who do not interact regularly. Keeping the present parish councils then re-inforces the feeling of local accountability.</p> <p data-bbox="645 435 1391 451">Please could you pass on our following comments in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan:</p> <p data-bbox="645 485 898 501">Development at Freshford Mill</p> <p data-bbox="645 534 1960 603">We would like to express concerns over the potential number of residences or other building at the Freshford Mill Site purely in response to the impact that this further development would have on local infrastructure and the potential detriment to the rural environment (classified as an AONB). However, if the actions could be undertaken which would remove the impact on these two issues we would be happy to support further development.</p> <p data-bbox="645 636 1872 652">Actions should be undertaken to ensure that there is no further traffic on the narrow lanes of Rosemary Lane and Sharpstone Lane/Tyning due to:</p> <ul data-bbox="645 655 1834 802" style="list-style-type: none">- the gradient of Rosemary Lane (and the resulting noise and pollution impact)- the size of both Lanes, where few public owned passing places exist- the lack of pedestrian path (or even 'refuge' places)- the proximity of dwellings to the roads (i.e. many doors open direct on to the roads)- the historic character of the neighbourhood (currently classified as a conservation area)- the recreational value of the lanes (i.e. both routes are popular with walkers, cyclists, horse riders as well as doorstep play for local children) <p data-bbox="645 836 1960 876">Any further development at the mill site should be done in consideration to existing local character of Sharpstone (i.e. there should not be a suburban 'feel' to the site layout or the design of the dwellings themselves) and it should respect the immediate landscape and the area's classification as an AONB.</p> <p data-bbox="645 909 792 925">Infill of Properties</p> <p data-bbox="645 959 1899 999">Sharpstone should not be classed as a Settlement to ensure that no infill development is allowed. Infill development within Sharpstone would have a dramatic and detrimental impact on the character of the area.</p> <p data-bbox="645 1032 1603 1048">The historic nature of Sharpstone Lane/Tyning and Rosemary Lane needs to be preserved for future generations.</p> <p data-bbox="645 1082 1722 1098">In addition to the historic value, both routes bring walkers to the area, which in turn supports the local pub and village shop/cafe.</p> <p data-bbox="645 1131 1968 1171">To date local residents that have made any improvements to their properties have done this in respect of the unique and historic character of Sharpstone (i.e. have refrained from PVC windows etc.) - this commitment to preserving the character of area should be echoed by the Parish Council.</p> <p data-bbox="645 1204 853 1220">The Future of the Tyning</p> <p data-bbox="645 1254 1610 1270">The Tyning should remain as pastoral land that enables there to be distinction between Freshford and Sharpstone.</p>

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		<p>However, the possibility of purchasing the top corner (i.e. immediately above the school, that includes an oak (?) tree) should be considered as it could enable a path down to the school, removing the need for children from Sharpstone/or parents who park along the Tynning to cross the road. Due to the existing nature of the road layout children are currently required to cross a road twice at 'unsafe' places (i.e. on a corner, amongst parked cars, at a cross roads). If this option was considered, the lowered cost of purchase and maintenance (in comparison to the whole field) maybe welcomed by local residents. Also, this would reduce the likelihood of problems associated with public spaces (i.e. removal of travellers, etc). It would also increase the public space available and tie into the existing land across the road. Keeping this small space would also have limited impact of the landscape value of this area.</p> <p>Many thanks for your time. If you would like to discuss any of the concerns or opportunities that we have identified above, please do not hesitate to contact us.</p>
Bill Hutchison	bill@billhutchison.com	<p>I think this may be the last day for responses to the consultation on the parish plan, so I hope I have got in under the wire. These are our comments.</p> <p>Overview: We are in favour of the preservation of the rural character of Freshford. This objective should override any aim to provide affordable housing or to improve the amenities of the School.</p> <p>Availability of survey results. We have not been able to locate the results of surveys on the Neighbourhood Plan and I would like to be able to access this information.</p> <p>Affordable housing: We are only in favour of the construction of affordable housing in Freshford and surrounds if built on brownfield land or as infill inside the designated built-on zones shown in the plan. We are strongly opposed to the construction of affordable or any other housing on greenfield land outside the zones. For the avoidance of doubt, we are opposed to this construction on the sloping field opposite the village shop (continuation of the Glebe) and opposed to construction on the field immediately below Park Corner. We urge the Parish Council to take steps to secure the latter as green zone land that will benefit from greater protection.</p> <p>We are concerned that the draft plan as it stands places too much emphasis on the need for affordable housing. We are concerned that in the future developers will use the statements in the plan to justify applications for the construction of housing on greenfield land. We feel that the correct question to have asked residents on this subject would have been: "Do you support the construction of affordable housing on greenfield sites?" We believe that the answer to this question would overwhelmingly be "No."</p> <p>The Tynning: We are strongly opposed to the suburbanisation of the Tynning, and we are in favour of the retention of its existing character as agricultural land. We are therefore opposed to all of the following: creation of a lay-by or bus stop; creation of paths, construction of any kind of sports facility including goalposts; construction of footpaths. We understand from the wording of Parish Council statements on the purchase of the Tynning that the PC is in favour of this development, and if this is the case, we are opposed to the purchase. We are in favour of a ballot on this subject.</p> <p>We would like to thank you and your colleagues for the dedicated work that you have devoted to the plan and to other parish council matters.</p>
Roger Purcell	freshfordVMH@purcell.org.uk	Enhancements to the FVMH section of the NP

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		<p>8.12 An initiative is under way to modernise Freshford Village Memorial Hall, to meet the future needs of the local community, as the present building is at the end of its economical life, has insufficient modern facilities, and to address its unacceptably large carbon footprint. A feasibility study (viewed here: tinyurl.com/njkwsfr) has been undertaken which has identified the potential for a [...] main hall, with stage and servery from the adjacent kitchen, and supporting green room, toilets, storage etc. An upper floor at the recreational field end would include a small hall with external terrace. Separated from these by an airy atrium would be a range containing a self-contained annex for pre-school and similar usage, a committee room, and a youth space, plus potentially a relocated doctors' surgery. Additional income could be generated by a small-business hub and gymnasium. With the vision of a "community wellness centre", space would also be available for treatment rooms for use by visiting practitioners. The package would meet modern building and sustainability standards, to provide low running costs, low maintenance requirements, and some on-site energy generation. Parking would be available for cycles and 32 cars and shared with the Galleries community shop, as at present. Improvement to the footpath from Middle Stoke, and the new footpath from the school, locally relocating the public right of way away from the car park, will enhance the safety and attractiveness of pedestrian access to the Hall.</p> <p>Beckington primary care medical practice and the village pre-school, would welcome the expanded, accessible, purpose built and dedicated modern facilities available in the new Hall, the former moving their Freshford branch from its present antiquated building which is prone to flooding. The main hall would continue to provide the space necessary for Physical Education, drama, and larger events for Freshford Primary School. Full factual evidence of the need for the new facilities is being obtained to support the planning application.</p> <p>The project would accord with the Bath & North East Somerset's Sustainable Community Strategy, and the future Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The replacement hall would be constructed substantially on the existing footprint, and would not be materially larger than the existing building. Its compact design, sympathetic materials, and unique position, nestled in the hillside and partly masked by trees, will ensure that the new Hall does not impinge on the sense of openness of the Green Belt.</p> <p>COMMENTS ON THE REVISED DRAFT (dated January 2014) OF THE FRESHFORD AND LIMPLEY STOKE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN</p>

Rowena Wood

rowena@randrwood.co.uk

Rowena Wood 21 February 2014.

I commented at length on the initial draft of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP), principally on planning and development, as, in my opinion, it is this aspect of the NP which will have the greatest impact on the future of the village of Freshford.

My major concern was that the new settlement areas which were proposed could easily be seen by developers as opening up major areas of possible open market housing development in the village. I am pleased to see in the revised draft that the settlement areas in Freshford have now been made slightly smaller but still believe that what is being proposed could have the consequence of many more homes being built in the village than have been envisaged in the broad terms outlined in the revised draft.

I reiterate the basis of my comments, as stated in my earlier remarks of 11 August 2013 - *The Freshford and Hinton Charterhouse parish boundary dissects our home and although we are classed technically as Hinton residents, as the larger part of our property is in Hinton, my husband and I have totally identified with Freshford as our village since we moved here in 1980. I served as a parish councillor in Freshford for 20 years and was Chairman for over 4 years. So my comments below are based on both my identification with this special place, as well as knowledge built up over my years as parish councillor.*

The following are the points I wish to raise on the revised draft:

1. To date, there is no formalization of the B&NES Core Strategy; a further tranche of Examination Hearings commences on 25 March. There is therefore a strong possibility that the NP could be presented for the referendum without the Core Strategy being in place. As stated in the NP (3.04), Freshford is classed, at present, as a R3 'small rural settlement' but there is no guarantee that this classification will pertain in the new Core Strategy. With the very large increase in settlement areas proposed in the NP compared to the current Housing Development Boundary (HDB), together with the current approach of developers putting forward planning proposals for housing development within the Green Belt in B&NES in the hiatus before the Core Strategy is adopted, I believe there is a danger of developer proposals being made, and even accepted, for open market housing in Freshford.

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		<p>2. Whilst the settlement areas have been reduced slightly from the draft NP, I would still urge the Management Group to limit the boundaries to the gardens of properties and not include the adjoining paddock areas and open grassland areas which adjoin and are owned by the householders. Within the existing HDB, the only paddock areas are those with steep inclines or they abut listed properties. Any housing applications on these sites over the last 20 years have been refused by B&NES planners with sound planning arguments, taking into account the impact they would have on the surrounding properties, the conservation area, AONB and the Green Belt. Planning applications for new development outside of the HDB have been consistently refused for reasons of Green Belt, AONB and other sound planning reasons.</p> <p>3. Paddock land adjacent to properties within the new settlement areas outlined in the NP can not be seen as conforming to 'infill land'. The definition of 'infill land' in the definition on page 9 is 'filling in a small gap within the village settlements'. Paddock land which is bordered by the open fields which are classed as the buffer zones between the villages in no way can be described as 'filling a small gap'. I refer specifically to the paddock adjacent to Broadfields on the A36, Rosemary House at the junction of the A36 and Church Lane and Greshford House in Church Lane. Similarly the large areas of open grassland of Woodwyck adjoining Ashes Lane and the open grassland of Abbosleigh in Sharpstone, adjacent to Rosemary Lane should be removed from the settlement boundaries. Infill should surely apply to plots which have road frontage, are bounded on either side by other properties and not adjacent to the open buffer zones. With this definition, by virtue of the size of the plots, the smaller 2 and 3 bedroomed properties, specified in the NP as being the properties required in the village will fit in well to the roadscape and the village generally.</p> <p>4. Already Freshford has the 21 part finished houses at Freshford Mill, which will add significantly to the housing stock of the village and the NP proposes that another 4 to 6 homes could be included on the site. The NP puts forward that the brownfield Rentokill site in Pipehouse could provide 6 to 8 homes but already a proposal has been put forward by Belgravia Land for 11 houses on the site. So taking these figures at their most conservative, we could see 25 houses at Freshford Mill and a further 6 at Pipehouse, adding 31 homes to the housing stock of Freshford. This coupled with the affordable housing provision, which comes outside of settlement requirements, means that the housing stock in Freshford will already increase substantially over the next 5 years. The population increase in the village, even allowing for just two residents in each of the 31 homes will be over 10%. So this leads to the question of the large increase in available settlement areas specified in the NP.</p> <p>5. I fully endorse the policy proposal 4.22. Over the last twenty years, a large proportion of the smaller cottage homes in Freshford have been extended and enlarged, as have medium sized family homes, so there are now few two and three bedroomed homes. Freshford has traditionally been a very popular village for family life but with the very limited supply of smaller family houses now available, it is difficult for families to move in unless they can afford the very high prices being achieved for the larger family properties. However, there has been a steady stream of families moving to the larger family homes in the village from London and other metropolitan areas.</p> <p>6. The need having been established that it is smaller two and three bedroomed homes which should be provided in any open market housing (4.22), I question why NP Policy (2b) – Market Housing Policy - states that '<i>preference</i> will be given to the provision of 1-2 bedroom housing'. I believe the policy should very clearly state that open market housing in the settlement areas should be restricted to properties with three or less bedrooms. Given the popularity of Freshford, with all its amenities, it will be just so easy for any developer to argue for the provision of larger family homes. From a developer's perspective, larger family homes would be seen as giving a most attractive return in Freshford and could easily be afforded by families moving in from outside the area. As stated in my comments for the draft NP, one only has to take a look at the Fortesque Fields development in Norton St Philip to see that from a developer's perspective, smaller starter and family homes are not what they would see gives the best return.</p> <p>7. Overriding all these points is the fear that once new settlement areas are established with the presumption in favour of development, even though the NP is stating that there is a preference for 1-2 bedroomed properties and the provision of one new property a year, any developer, with clever planning counsel can argue the case for the provision of larger properties. Similarly, with the opportunity of developing a paddock or open grassland area, the opportunities for maximum return are very evident.</p> <p>So I would urge the Management Group to again relook at the boundaries of the settlement areas in Freshford and also be more robust in their Policy Statements relating to any future development.</p>

I also make the following points:

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1. On going management of the NP should come under the direct responsibility of each Parish Council. Whilst the Management Group and Committees have been set up to very capably formulate the proposals for the NP, on going decisions must be made by the individual PCs, who have elected responsibility.

2. Section 7 – Walking, cycling and safer roads. Although Abbey Lane lies in the adjoining parish of Hinton Charterhouse and therefore outside the scope of the NP, it is a major feed road to Freshford. Brown's Field, which is detailed in the NP as being a site for development for local community use (8.18) already has the tennis and football clubs to which residents, particularly children, of Freshford and Limpley Stoke walk. Children at Freshford School also use the parking area for assembling to subsequently walk to school in the summer months. I would therefore ask that consideration is given to a painted road strip to designate pedestrian use from Park Corner to Brown's Field.

Philip Challinor	challinor@dmp-architects.co	<p>Deborahchallinor@circusview.co.uk 22 February 2014 Page 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have other properties become available in the village to reduce the demand <input type="checkbox"/> What other solutions are available, eg the Mill or further subdivision of larger houses eg the former Dr Veyseys house on the Hill. <p>Settlement boundaries</p> <p>What is the reasoning behind the changes to the naming of what was called Housing Development Boundaries in the original Village Plan? We understand that Limpley Stoke did not have such boundaries, but surely some common classification could have been created based on the original nomenclature and definition</p> <p>The danger of trying to redefine such an important boundary is that the original intention to present a strong delineation separating an area that can be further developed from one that cannot, becomes diluted and less effective. With the uncertainties surrounding the B&NES Core Strategy likely to result in more pressure on Green Belt development, everything possible should be being done to reinforce the villages exposed edge to the surrounding open countryside.</p> <p>The Tyning</p> <p>With ownership of The Grove, comes the responsibilities of being a covenant holder of the Tyning. We were told at a public meeting that covenant holders rights had been superseded by the Commons Act 2006. We do not believe that this is the case and are therefore concerned that our duties continue and therefore need to ensure that we comment on behalf of the community.</p> <p>The costs being proposed of £35,000 for the purchase, plus the costs of presumably removing fencing and future maintenance, plus interest, insurance, etc will probably make the sum considerably more than 'moderate increase to our rates'. Accurate figures need to be known before the decision is taken to proceed with the purchase of the Tyning.</p> <p>Our concerns are that if the village needs to buy amenity land that this does not represent value for money. There are other areas which could provide wider benefits than the Tyning for instance adjacent to the river where flood mitigation as well as visual and recreational benefits could accrue. The Tyning's present owners should simply be obliged to carry out the removal of the fencing in accordance with the Commons Act and thereafter accept the responsibilities of a land owner.</p> <p>Flood Mitigation Responsibilities</p> <p>The recent floods have highlighted the need to consider flood mitigation responsibilities within our plans. We are not convinced that the NDP makes sufficient provision as a responsible riverside community.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>The vast majority of the draft NDP is excellent. There are however a number of weaknesses that</p>
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David & Sue Lucas	edmondsdavid@outlook.com	<p>need to be addressed in order to secure support at the referendum stage and to ensure that the Independent Examiner is satisfied with its robustness. We look forward to the above comments being reflected in the final version of the document in order to be able to fully support it.</p> <p>We live in the Hamlet of Pipehouse and would like to comment on the neighbourhood plan and especially its affect on the Hamlet.</p> <p>Our neighbours Peter and Sue Davis have, we believe, made a very comprehensive reply regarding some of the wording and terms in the Plan especially regarding Settlements. They have also commented on the brownfield site in Pipehouse and we concur with their views.</p> <p>In terms of the future housing needs of the community, we would question the statement <i>“More 1-2 bedroomed houses are needed to encourage an increased number of younger and older residents to remain within the community”</i> and <i>“Elderly residents would however benefit from more 1-2 bedroom houses in the housing mix and their relocation to smaller and more manageable housing would free up larger housing for growing families”</i>. Yes maybe 1-2 bed roomed houses are needed to encourage younger residents to remain, but there is little or no local work for youngsters in the area. Also older people usually decide to remain in their larger family homes until they reach the point in their lives where they need housing on a single level or a care home, rather than a smaller house. The steep roads and lanes of Freshford do not easily lend themselves to elderly people being able to get around without the use of a car. Walking the steep Lane to the community shop in Freshford and the crossing of the A36 from Pipehouse are both prohibitive.</p> <p>We understand from a meeting last week with the single developer for the Pipehouse Nursery site that they are proposing to accommodate 10 to 11 houses. Pipehouse Lane is an ancient thoroughfare which, prior to the construction of the A36, linked Trowbridge with Bristol, There is something quite special about the nature of this ancient winding lane to Pipehouse and the tranquillity of Pipehouse. We believe that great care should be exercised to preserve it. The proposal for 10 or 11 new houses would mean another 30 or so cars using the lane, and this simply wouldn't be sustainable without widening and realigning it, which we as residents would bitterly oppose. 10 or 11 new houses would almost double the number of houses in the Hamlet so we believe that the Neighbourhood Plan should therefore state how important it is to restrict the size of the development, and either should not be specific in the numbers of houses stated or state no more than 4-5 houses.</p> <p>Increasing the volume of traffic accessing Pipehouse with new development, and crossing the A36 either on foot or by car will only become more difficult and dangerous. Turning right into Pipehouse from Bath is at present very hazardous as the following traffic has to stop and wait for the junction to be cleared before proceeding. We are in constant fear of having a car or lorry plough into the back of our car whilst we wait to make our turn into the Lane. Perhaps to improve the safety of residents crossing the A36, and the access to Pipehouse, the speed limit in Limpley Stoke of 40mph should be extended up to and possibly beyond Branch Road.</p> <p>Lastly, the lane to Pipehouse, once past the houses, becomes a byway and is not navigable by motor vehicles. We would propose that a “no through road” sign be set up on the junction with the A36 as many lorries, vans and cars follow their satnavs only to have to turn around in Pipehouse, which is difficult at the best of times, to return to the A36. This matter has been recently highlighted with the closure of the road through Midford and vehicles being stuck in the queues on the A36 trying to find alternatives ways to Bath.</p>
John Adler	adlerj@nildram.co.uk	<p>Comments on the draft NP.</p> <p>OO Overview</p> <p>There is a lot of detail in the draft NP, and also much excellent detail.</p> <p>The hard work that has been required to reach this stage is very much appreciated.</p> <p>The length of these comments should be seen to detract from the huge number of positives contained within the draft Plan.</p> <p>These comments naturally focus on perceived problem areas to try to help to arrive at a Plan that stands up in meeting the defined objectives, which are sound and widely approved.</p> <p>Considering the low number of issues that these comments relate to, actually underlines the large amount of agreement that exists.</p> <p>The problem lies in that the Referendum is basically a single issue question, and the Settlement Boundaries and responsibilities are key to achieving a successful vote.</p> <p>1.1 Definition of Plan</p>

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		<p>The Definition of the Plan refers to a Neighbourhood Plan Area – I assume that this is actually the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>1.2Why Develop the Plan</p> <p>The reason for the NP project is recorded in the Freshford PC minutes (12 March 2012) as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · It was agreed that the key focus of the plan was the redevelopment of the Village Hall, although the PC understood that the Neighbourhood Plan was not going to be single issue document and would involve many other elements that needed consideration. <p>It would be useful to identify the creation of a Village Hub (as it is now known) as being a key need for the development of the Plan – especially as this is the project that began the whole community engagement process.</p> <p>1.4Management Structure</p> <p>The PCs agreed to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan, and the PC Chairs defined the structure.</p> <p>Whilst the Freshford PC discussed the governance structure required to develop the plan, it was not a matter that was voted on and was not formalised. The statement that ‘This group will work with the respective Parish Councils on the implementation and regular 5-year reviews of the Neighbourhood Plan’ should not be a statement within the plan.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan should provide a clear definition of the detail of the plan, i.e. the development policies, strategy and supporting information, and matters of Governance should be managed separately to the detail of the plan.</p> <p>If this detail of governance is to be included, then there are many other areas that also need to be addressed – and also questions arise, not least about roles, responsibilities and accountability.</p> <p>I would suggest that an Options Paper outlining the options for the Governance of the NP moving forwards is created and put to the PC for discussion and PC Approval of a specific option.</p> <p>1.4Management Structure (Working Groups)</p> <p>It should be noted that the Facilities Group has not met since 23 October 2012.</p> <p>There has been no involvement of professional planning or design consultants with the facilities group – although there may have been with other groups. More concerning, is that there have been significant movements in planning considerations that have potentially significant impact on Facilities.</p> <p>Whilst there may well have been detailed consideration of these impacts on the facilities in the detail of the plan, these considerations have not been undertaken by the Facilities Working Party.</p> <p>3.1Projects (Development Plan)</p> <p>The need for a Village Design Statement (VDS) has been identified, that ‘will be policed by the Freshford and Limpley Stoke parish councils’.</p> <p>This needs significant clarification in terms of definition of meaning and process.</p> <p>In 3.3 it is stated that a Working Group will be set up to develop a comprehensive VDS.</p> <p>There is already a Working Group dealing with Planning & Development, which has previously started to create a VDS.</p> <p>If the NP structure is not being used to take the VDS forwards, then it should be the role of the Plan to identify the need and the role of the PC to take forwards.</p> <p>If the PC is not leading on these key matters – where does the accountability reside?</p> <p>3.2Village Settlements</p> <p>The plan clearly defines what the Village Settlements are, but is a little short on outlining the need.</p> <p>The current Freshford HDB is stated, but needs to be clearly shown on a map to enable people to understand the degree of change.</p> <p>The reason for this degree of change needs to be clearly defined.</p> <p>The current position is that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Wiltshire Core Strategy defines Limpley Stoke as a Small Village, meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Only limited infill allowed to reflect very limited jobs and services available o Remove any Settlement Boundaries o The removal of settlement boundaries at small villages should allow those communities to decide where and when development comes forward without artificially imposed boundaries · Freshford contains a very small Housing Development Boundary in the centre of the village <p>The NP states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 3.22 Proposals for limited infill development within the Village Settlements will be subject to the usual controls and restrictions of Green Belt Planning Policy. Furthermore the extra restrictions which apply to Conservation Areas within the Village Settlements will also need to be met.

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		<p>Reference is made to the NPPF, which is being reinforced by the NPPG (planning guidance) that will come into force later in 2014. The guidance is designed to simplify the interpretation of the NPPF and provide looser controls.</p> <p>The NPPG guidance on Green Belt provides the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building; o the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces; o limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; o limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development. <p>There are some other exceptions as well.</p> <p>It should also be noted that online access to the NPG (the old policy) is now archived and not available online.</p> <p>The NP is stated as being a plan for the next 20, or so, years.</p> <p>If that this to be the case, then the NPPG should be considered alongside the NPPF.</p> <p>A further point to note is advice notes/guidance notes on Settlement Boundaries all state that these boundaries define an area that has advantages and disadvantages.</p> <p>There is in general, a presumption in favour of development within a settlement boundary.</p> <p>The settlement boundary does protect against encroachment into the countryside.</p> <p>However, given that our countryside is already protected by being Green Belt, and an AONB, it would imply that the Settlement Boundary adds no additional protection on encroachment into the green fields.</p> <p>It would seem that the Settlement Boundaries have been created to protect the Local Green Spaces.</p> <p>A side effect is that the areas within the settlement boundaries are being proposed to be areas where there is a presumption in favour of development, which is far beyond the limited infill that is available under current rules.</p> <p>This creates an ambiguity that developers could utilise to their benefit.</p> <p>Once the Settlement Boundaries are in place, there will be no ability to 'go back'. Much can happen in 20 years, and this needs careful consideration.</p> <p>Especially with growing pressure on local councils to find available land for new housing – and the situation where a NP goes far beyond the Core Strategies does provide a clear message. Whilst individuals now may have an understanding, the detail of that understanding gets lost in time, and the plan needs to be robust for a generation.</p> <p>It is difficult in the current climate of changing planning rules to understand the full impact if proposals.</p> <p>Once the NP is in place, the only mechanism of changing things will be through following the same process again, and having another referendum.</p> <p>The full advantages and disadvantages of the Settlement Boundaries, the degree of change and potential implications have not been put either to the community or Freshford Parish Council. Only 'Outcomes' have been presented with scant reasoning. When the plan was presented to the PCs in a joint PC meeting, we were told that Village Envelopes were the only way to protect the village. Reasoning was not provided to support that view.</p> <p>It is difficult to support findings without understanding how those findings have been arrived at.</p> <p>My concerns arise from 'smart' developers finding weaknesses in the new structures and getting their way through Appeal. There are countless examples of Appeals going against local wishes – and a significant expansion of the boundary defining the area within which there is a 'presumption of development' can easily have unforeseen consequences.</p> <p>It would be extremely prudent to undertake an external review of the NP before Submission to ensure that goals and objectives will be met and that there will not be unforeseen consequences.</p> <p>New strategies are usually tested prior to implementation – especially where there is no ability to reverse out of a situation.</p> <p>4.0Facts</p> <p>It would be more meaningful comparing local statistics to areas of similar demographics as opposed to national statistics.</p> <p>The majority of the UK population live in city and urban environments. Freshford and Limpley Stoke are small rural communities and therefore have, and always have had, different profiles.</p>

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		<p>When the head of the school, Anne Forrest, met with the Facilities Group, she outlined that the school was over-subscribed, and children of families moving to the village were unable to have places at the school due to the long waiting list. The school was already including more children than should have been attending.</p> <p>It was our experience, when moving to the village some 19 years ago, that the school was very popular then. This has not changed.</p> <p>With a significant amount of new housing being planned for Freshford Mill and the Rentokil site, there seems little to support the assertion that: 'Longer term, the lack of younger families will threaten the viability of key local services such as the Freshford Primary School and community shop'.</p> <p>4.1 Projects</p> <p>The proposal is to engage with potential developers to encourage the appropriate completion of the Freshford Mill development</p> <p>Clarity is needed on who undertakes these suggested projects, and what the required outcomes are.</p> <p>Is it proposed that the Mgt. Committee undertakes this project as opposed to the PCs? Presumably this would impact Freshford PC rather than Limpley Stoke.</p> <p>9.0 Business and Technology</p> <p>I am not aware that the Limpley Stoke telephone has been upgraded with a fibre optic connection. The exchange was upgraded to ADSL 2+, which provides a theoretical maximum connection speed of 24mp/sec.</p> <p>The BT site states that the Limpley Stoke exchange is 'Under Consideration' – which is the agreed status with the regional authority.</p> <p>Other sites, including the Connecting Devon & Cornwall scheme which Somerset & BANES have joined, show that there are no plans for upgrading the LS exchange.</p> <p>I would strongly suggest that there is a project defined in the plan to provide Fibre Optic connection to the exchange. That will enable further projects, including the ones outlined in the NP, to be undertaken.</p> <p>10.0 Draft Policies</p> <p>NP Policy 1</p> <p>In addition to previous comments on Settlement Boundaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The statement is that Infill Development is to be restricted to within the Settlement Boundaries o What restrictions are there on other development? o If the NPPG will allow Infill Development within Green Belt – and this is national planning policy – where does that leave the NP statement as the NP needs to exist within national policy and Local Plans? o Infill definition is looser than the BANES definition. Which definition holds sway? Could this be a point used should an Appeal be lodged by a developer? · The Settlement Boundary includes land officially designated as Agricultural Land – i.e. Stoke Hill Mine. · There seems to be no planning rationale for Pipehouse to be excluded from the Settlement Boundary definition, whereas Midford Lane is included. The Rentokil site is in Pipehouse, there is little opportunity to develop in Midford Lane. <p>There must be a way of using National Policies to safeguard the Green Spaces, which the Plan can reinforce. This would be simpler overall, keep with the Core Strategies and avoid the complexities of the Settlement Boundaries with associated unforeseen consequences.</p> <p>Both the NPPF and NPPG note 'safeguarded land'.</p> <p>The statement that development needs to accord with the guidance set out in the VDS – this raises several questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The draft NP does not include the detail of the VDS o How can the NP be fully understood without this detail? o What is the process for its definition, acceptance and inclusion? Setting up a Working Party may create the words, but not the Acceptance. <p>NP Policy (2c)</p> <p>The policy is stated as:</p> <p>All planning applicants within the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be requested by the Parish Councils to complete a questionnaire confirming they have read and considered the VDS (when drafted) and explain how their application conforms to it.</p> <p>What is the process by which the Parish Council can request applicants to complete a form?</p> <p>Given that the government is looking to remove Design & Access Statements from small major applications – i.e. the building of up to 10 houses – will the request for an additional Supplementary Document be acceptable? Will BANES be able and willing to take this on in the Pre-Application and Application Validation processes?</p> <p>I note that this has been downgraded from 'required' to 'requested'.</p>

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		<p>Financials</p> <p>It is unclear on how the plan is to be taken forwards in terms of what each PC is responsible for, how CIL payments are to be made and to whom. In general CIL payments are to be received by the Parish Council in support of maintaining the Community Infrastructure. As this is a joint NP, the Community Hub, the School, the Pre-School, the Surgery and the station are all located in Freshford, how should CIL payments be allocated? It would be good to have some details of how the NP is to be implemented and also of the consequences defined to enable a wider understanding. There were clearly legal questions when setting up a cross-border neighbourhood plan (i.e. the Wiltshire delays), and the financial aspects must have been raised. This detail should be documented and published to enable a clear understanding in the community.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>There is much excellent detail and excellent objectives contained in the plan.</p> <p>Key questions arise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Management Structure (governance) needs consideration · Settlement Boundaries rationale seems light – possibly counter-productive · The detail of the VDS needs to be defined in order to understand its effectiveness · Overall ownership is unclear – taking into account updates given to the Freshford PC · Financials – financial implications are unclear (linked to ownership) <p>Clearly there are elements that will impact the Parish Council(s). I cannot speak for Limpley Stoke, but Freshford PC has not formally reviewed the plan, which should be allowed – especially as the Plan is directing the PC with certain activities and the PC will be impacted by some of the Projects.</p>

Stuart Campbell

This paper is provided to start open discussion that there is a representation problem arising from the local interpretation of the Localities Act. This is highlighted by the creation of the Joint Neighbourhood Plan.

THE LOCALITIES ACT AND ITS EFFECT ON REPRESENTATION IN
FRESHFORD AND LIMPLEY STOKE PARISHES

The Aim of this Paper.

To query with the Bodies involved the degree of damage to democratic representation allowed by interpretation of the Localities Act as related to the Development of the Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan.

The residents of the parishes of Limpley Stoke (Wiltshire) and Freshford (Bath & N.E. Somerset) have been involved in the creation of a Joint Neighbourhood Plan.

The interpretation of the Localities Act by the Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan Management Committee and the processes arising from this interpretation raise concerns which should be addressed. This paper states those concerns in respect of problems of representation, rather than the processes which have been created by the Committee, which are arguably worthy of a discrete paper.

There is apparently damage to representation if the Plan becomes adopted and I am not aware of any proposals to eliminate or mitigate this. I suggest this negative needs to be weighed against the considerable value of many of the considerations of the draft Plan currently under consultation.

(2) Background to the Joint Neighbourhood Plan

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Three representatives from each parish council were appointed by their individual parish councils to form the Management Committee with the object of creating a Joint Neighbourhood Plan. Their brief from the two councils was and is to create a joint cross county border Neighbourhood Plan on the understanding that the two parishes concerned represented one "Community". Until this time the communities of Freshford and Limpley Stoke had co-operated effectively on a number of local initiative service and entertainment projects (A shop, an annual Villages Fete and a Link transport service). There exist also a Freshford based school, a doctors' surgery and local societies with membership including many residents of both parishes. None of these inferred a need for a full Planning oriented Joint Neighbourhood Plan with its downside effect on democratic representation. The rationale was that the two parishes served a notional single community which would benefit from a joint Plan. In terms of Planning this is not . The package would meet modern building and sustainability standards, to provide low running costs, low maintenance requirements, and some on-site energy generation. Parking would be available for cycles and 32 cars and shared with the Galleries community shop, as at present. Improvem

(3) Alternatives to the Joint Plan

Two individual Neighbourhood plans could have been envisaged with the desirable references to areas of co-operation between the parishes and their citizens. This approach would have avoided the possible pitfalls of a joint plan covering projects relating to individual parish specific projects and developments, and the consequences of creating a democratic deficit for the residents of both parishes as described below. (Paras. 4 & 5).

(4) Public Bodies involved in the Process.

The public Bodies involved in the process of Plan creation are the two Local Authorities, including the individual District Councillors , the two Parish Councils and the Management Committee. The District Councillors and the Parish Councils are elected and have authority arising from a democratic base. The Management Committee is appointed by the Parish Councils and this body has rights of consultation in order to manage the creation of the Joint Plan but presumably has no rights or powers of representation due to its unelected character, nor have its deliberations been made public – the end results of these have been exposed in very well presented surgeries and beyond; with emphasis on their acceptability, but no revelation of any downsides. However, this is a matter of process, not representation.

The Management Committee was appointed by the two parish councils to manage a Joint Neighbourhood Plan through to adoption by the Local Authorities following an accept/reject referendum which will not distinguish in any respect between the votes of the individual electorates of the Parish Councils or the District Councillors. In spite of its democratic limitations, the Management Committee is proposed in the Plan to be a permanent body to continue to exist after assumed adoption of the Plan by the local authorities. It claims to have a remit to work with (Not for) the respective Parish Councils on the implementation of the Plan and a proposed five year review. It is evidently not robust enough therefore for its policies to stand for the whole period of the Plan.

(5) Reduced Rights of Representation.

Assuming acceptance, the Neighbourhood Plan's extent of scope means that it becomes a material consideration for any planning application tendered from its neighbourhood to one of the two Local Authorities. Taken in the Plan's own right, it will not be possible for the relevant Parish Council to challenge its provisions (Even when they relate to a project which is purely a single parish matter, and the same problem will arise for the District Councillors , neither of whom will be able to distinguish whether or not the Plan represents the majority (Or any level) of opinion of their constituents).

It is worth mentioning here that the present understanding is that there is no referendum ballot threshold and approval is down to 50% of the residents who vote. This low threshold works against continuation of the present level of influence of the democratically elected bodies . However, this understanding may be incorrect .

It seems unlikely that it was the intention of the Localities Act to diminish democratic representation.

Ideas may exist to mitigate or overcome this reduction in rights of representation, this paper is to explain the downside of the current local result of the Act . It may or may not be that the reductions in representation described above are legal (Due to the Act), but they are certainly undesirable.

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		I.S.Campbell) 21th. February 2014.
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