

## **Chippenham Without Neighbourhood Plan : Regulation 15 Submission.**

### **Human Rights (European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and Equalities Act 2010 Assessment).**

#### **Statement of Chippenham Without Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, September 2022.**

Knowing that:

The Human Rights Act brings into force the European Convention on Human Rights and contains a number of articles which are potentially relevant to neighbourhood planning such as:

- the right to respect for private and family life
- freedom of expression
- prohibition of discrimination.

In relation to the Chippenham Without Neighbourhood Plan all sections of the community were given the opportunity to get involved in preparing the plan and express their views on it. These views were reflected in the final plan to their benefit. There have been multiple public consultations – substantially more than the minimum required.

The Steering Group confirm that the non-statutory and statutory consultations have been carried out in such a way that all sections of the local community have been given the opportunity to express their views. The Steering Group were constantly mindful of the need to engage all sections of the local community and applied different consultation techniques accordingly. Details of this are given in the accompanying Consultation Statement.

The Steering Group also wish to confirm that the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to represent the views of the whole community, with everyone having a chance to express their views and, crucially, these views being reflected in eventual policy. This is evidenced by the additional rounds of consultation engaged in above and beyond those strictly required by the Regulations.

It is therefore believed that the Chippenham Without Neighbourhood Plan has had appropriate regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act 1998.

#### **Equalities Act 2010**

The Chippenham Without Neighbourhood Plan will be in general conformity with the Wiltshire Core Strategy. An Equality Impact Assessment for the Wiltshire Core Strategy

Submission Document was published on January 2012 and regard has been had to this. The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has had due regard to the provisions of Section 149(1) of the Equalities Act 2010 and the Steering Group is not aware of any discrimination, harassment, victimisation or any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.

The aspirations of the Chippenham Without Neighbourhood Plan are positive for all sections of the community:

- Selecting housing sites of the size and overall capacity in accordance with community wishes and sufficient to meet local needs, including for affordable housing.
- Balancing development with environmental protection (heritage, landscape and wildlife were identified as important issues by the community).
- Supporting new and existing infrastructure including community facilities for recreation, allotments, cycle and footpaths.
- Aiming as far as practical within a rural context and community, to sustain and enhance essential community facilities and services available to residents without the need to travel wherever that is practical, mindful that these are valuable to the elderly and disabled.
- Preservation of local green spaces valued by the community. These include places where people meet and socialise, facilitating community cohesion.

These aims are entirely consistent with the overall aim of the Steering Group which is to serve the needs of all of the local community regardless of race, colour or creed. The Neighbourhood Plan will provide for a diverse society and will help reduce housing inequality. Ongoing monitoring will ensure that housing sites continue to be found to meet local needs, especially for affordable housing.

The plan will have a significant positive overall impact on the community. It will:

- Help improve access for all to a decent and affordable home.
- Encourage local employment opportunities.
- Protect and enhance community facilities and services in the village, reducing the need to travel.
- Protect and enhance sport and recreational facilities for all.
- Encourage and enhance sustainable transport.

- Encourage and enhance opportunities for mixing socially.

The aspirations of the community are at the heart of the Neighbourhood Plan and great efforts have been made to ensure that all have had an opportunity to participate throughout the plan-making process. This meaningful input from the community has continually shaped the plan and the objectives within it. The Consultation Statement shows how input from different sources led directly to policies.

#### Reaching all Groups:

The Chippenham Parish area is a relatively homogenous community. However, efforts were made to engage disparate groups including the young and the elderly. These efforts are set out in the Consultation Statement.

#### Independent, objective research:

Decisions regarding plan policies were based on factual evidence as well as expressed community views. This ensures elimination of any prejudice and concentration on the facts. For example, a Heritage search and Housing Needs report were undertaken to test effects of development at sites in response to queries during consultation.

#### Community Backing:

The process of developing the plan has been open and democratic, with additional rounds of consultation used. Consultations have demonstrated that the community are, in a very substantial majority, supportive of the objectives in the plan. This support will be confirmed at the referendum stage of the Neighbourhood Planning process.

#### Community Cohesion:

The plan process itself creates an opportunity for people to meet and exchange views, forming a basis for a shared identity. Further than this however, the informal community actions contained within the Plan are likely to have a long-term and positive effect on community cohesion by providing a means by which local people can come together to tackle issue of importance to the community as a whole.

#### **Assessment.**

The Chippenham Without Neighbourhood Plan is consistent with the aims of the ECHR and Equalities Act 2010. No discrimination or disadvantage is likely to occur as a result of the plan, which all sections of the community have had the opportunity of

creating. Indeed, it is likely that the impacts of the plan on human rights and equalities is will be positive. Built-in mechanisms of on-going monitoring and community action projects will enable alterations to the plan and present opportunities for widespread participation going forward.

Stephen Eades  
Secretary to the Steering Group.  
September 2022.