



A REVIEW OF KEEVIL VILLAGE DESIGN OPTIONS & COMMUNICATION OF PLANNING MATTERS

Research conducted March-April 2018

Report compiled May 2018 by village residents:

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BACKGROUND

At the March 2018 meeting of the Keevil Parish Council (KPC), some residents made the following points during the public consultation session:

1. Village Design Statement (VDS) / Neighbourhood Plan (NP) options for Keevil

The VDS was adopted by Wiltshire Council (WC) in 2003 as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The recent Church Farm planning application exposed some vulnerabilities in the influence it may have on planning matters, as it is no longer aligned with current Core Policies contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (*see Appendix 5*). Given that KPC reported at its previous meeting that there are reserves held for the updating of the VDS, we were concerned that this had not happened and asked KPC to support a 'Task & Finish steering group' to look at VDS and Neighbourhood/Local Planning in the current climate, and present options/advice back to the council. KPC did support this in spirit and asked for an outline project brief (*see Appendix 4*).

2. Communication of Planning matters

Recent events also exposed a lack of visibility of Planning applications and decisions to villagers in a meaningful way. We no longer have the 'eyes and ears' of the Keevil Society to bring things to our attention as they once did, and planning is rarely if ever touched on in KPC meetings. This lack of visibility is echoed in the Parish News, despite the magazine being the stated preferred method of receiving such information (albeit often after the event). We asked if it could be reinstated as a Standing Item on Council Meeting agendas, and for the Council to support a wider review of the way we communicate this and other council matters to the community. KPC did support this in spirit and suggested we include our thoughts in the above project.

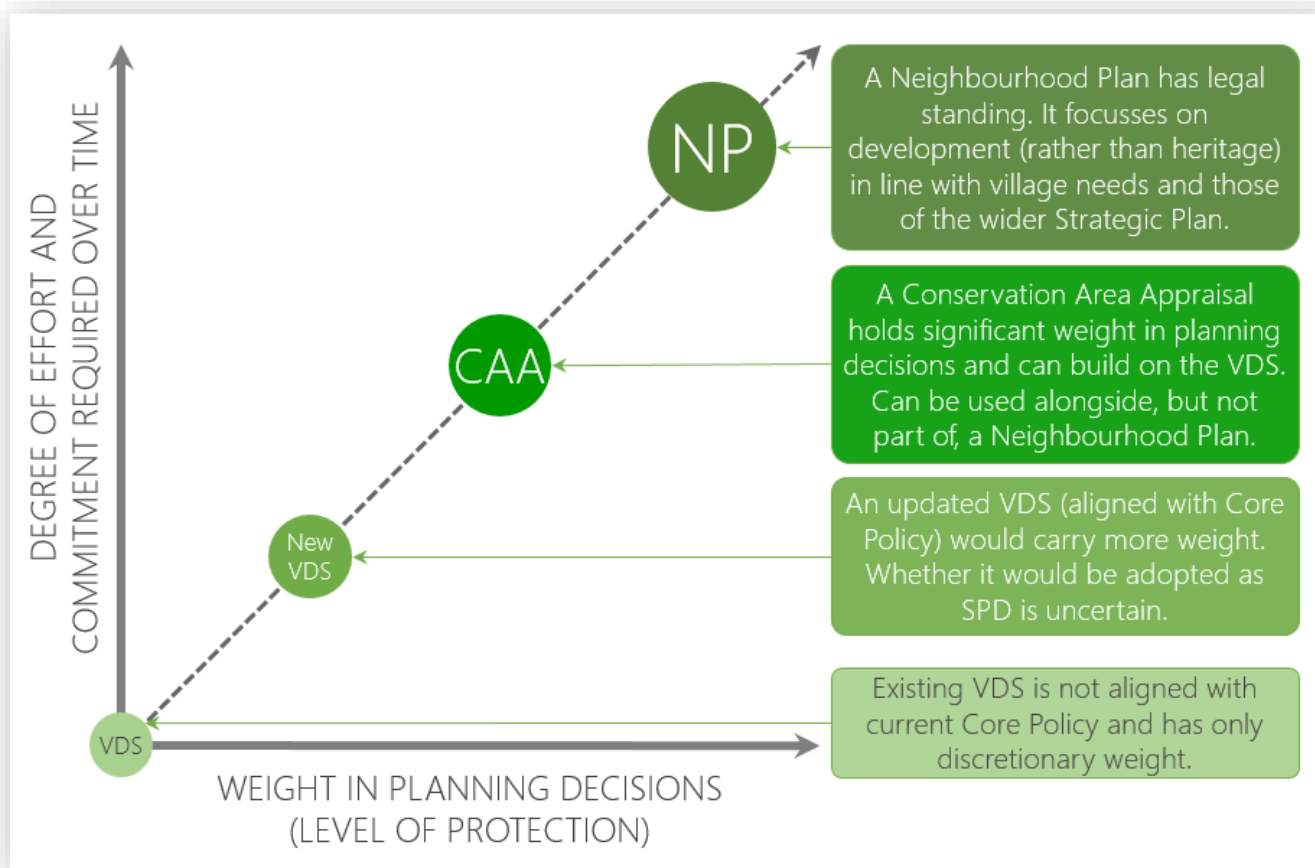
Methods

Throughout we have liaised closely with and taken advice from Victoria Burvill in the Wiltshire Council Spatial Planning Office, with whom we have a good working relationship; and Geoff West, the then Chair of the Parish Council (PC). It is through his guidance, respect and support that we have been able to work as quickly as we have.

Victoria provided a meaningful outline of the ground that ultimately needs to be covered, as well as suggestions for villages to talk to who were using various approaches. This formed the outline of the brief we provided to the PC, though we quickly realised we must prioritise 'discovery conversations' (*see Appendix 1, 2 & 3*) around the VDS/CAA/NP, recognising that wider future needs and considerations for Keevil could and should be part of consultation with village residents after the May PC meeting. We therefore focussed on exploring:

1. The weight an updated VDS would hold in planning decisions.
2. Whether a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAA/MP) would be a useful option.
3. Whether a NP may be a worthwhile approach for the long term.

CONCLUSIONS



VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT:

THE UPSIDE	THE DOWNSIDE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We already have a VDS document which could be updated in line with current Core Policy; Can be prepared by any village group; Can be adopted* as Supplementary Planning Guidance, which carries material weight in planning decisions; Must be used as reference guidance by planners even if not adopted as SPD; Can be cross-referenced with any future CAA or NP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without SPD status it is only advisory; Cannot prevent development taking place; Cannot determine development sites; Must be reviewed every 5 years as Wiltshire policy is updated.
Timescale: About a year	
<p>While this approach has only advisory status with planners (unless adopted as SPD), it is the only way for the village community to represent how it would like new development to be designed (including how it should complement the dominant settlement characteristics of our conservation area), that can be done in a relatively short time frame. It would also provide a building block in support of any future CAA or NP project. Most of the guidance in Keevil's existing VDS is still relevant and would need a minimum of change.</p>	

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL** and MANAGEMENT PLAN:

** A CAA is an objective analysis of elements, both physical and ephemeral, which together define the special architectural or historic interest of an area. The appraisal describes and maps these elements to inform everyone involved in the planning process, including those currently neutral or detrimental to the special character of the conservation area.

THE UPSIDE	THE DOWNSIDE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WC confirms CAA/MP holds significant weight as material consideration in planning decisions; • Would support and build on the existing VDS; • Takes into consideration spaces, views and uses as well as physical elements of area; • Normally reviewed every 10 years; • Prepared and kept up to date by WC in consultation with local community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require close working between all groups, including KPC, led by Wiltshire Council - although the process can be initiated by a local group, who can undertake much of the preliminary survey work and help the local authority develop a full appraisal in draft form. • May need to engage a good consultant to assist (grant-funded).
Timescale: probably 1-2 years	
<p>Although Keevil's Conservation area was designated in 1973, we have no CAA/MP, so it would certainly be in Keevil's interest to look into this in more depth as a longer term project. A comprehensive CAA would also provide the opportunity to review the existing Conservation Area since we no longer have a Village Policy Limit or Area of Minimum Change. Any work done would complement the VDS and any future NP.</p>	

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

THE UPSIDE	THE DOWNSIDE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has legal standing; • Allows the selection of sites for development; • Can involve willing and committed villagers; • Common denominators for success seem to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engage a GOOD consultant ○ Build a committed team with the right skills ○ Lead from the front with a dedicated and proactive PC member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led by KPC, it would require considerable commitment over several years; • Focuses on areas for development, not Heritage; • Cannot include a CAA/MP, which would still need to be done separately; • Must still be updated every 5 years in line with changes in WC Core Policy; • Would need to engage a good consultant to assist (grant-funded).
Timescale: Around 2-3 years on average from the point of registration (which comes after scoping consultation and the identification of future needs for the village).	
<p>A Parish or Neighbourhood Plan tends to be a more appropriate route if there are wider issues than the impacts on heritage assets. However, the 13 key areas of consideration are beyond the needs of most small rural villages with little in the way of employment or public amenity, and risk tying up limited resources in stasis for years with no protection from inappropriate development in the meantime.</p>	

COMMUNICATION OF PLANNING MATTERS TO VILLAGERS:

In 2015 shortly before it closed, the Keevil Society (see Appendix 5) Interim Committee reported "*a strong feeling that, whilst the members wished to be advised of planning applications, they could gain that information from Parish Council Notes printed in the Parish Magazine. The perceived wisdom was that views from village residents would carry more weight if passed to the Parish Council and conveyed by individual letters sent directly to the County Council Planning Committee*".

But over time, Planning matters have disappeared from regular Council Meetings and it has become increasingly difficult for villagers to know what, if any, planning matters may be of interest to them. This has contributed to a perception that KPC does not consult very well with villagers on planning matters, or represent the spirit and letter of the principles in the VDS.

The village website now carries planning information in much more detail, including direct links to the relevant application, comment and decision sections on WC's Portal and its reach is gradually increasing.

However, for most villagers, the Parish News is still the main source of information. Yet the lead time on deadlines means this cannot be relied upon for **TIMELY** information since planning consultation has set timeframes. So it makes sense to develop keevilvillage.com/parish-council/planning (and a subscriber list) **ALONGSIDE** much greater visibility of planning matters in all council meetings and notes.

AVAILABILITY OF PLANNING INFORMATION TO KEEVIL VILLAGERS VIA LOCAL CHANNELS

BEFORE

Notice placed referencing application#, date & place of a meeting of parish councillors, usually within a week

Planning no longer formed part of the regular agenda at Parish Council Meetings. Outcomes of Planning Meetings only available via WC

Weekly lists of applications/decisions from Wiltshire Council circulated via Clerk to a list of 18. This list is not Planning-specific

VILLAGE NOTICEBOARD

KEEVIL PARISH COUNCIL

CLERKS EMAIL LIST

KEEVIL PARISH NEWS

KEEVIL VILLAGE .COM

NOW

The notice now includes the nature of the planning application and aims to hold the meeting two weeks away

Planning matters should be a Standing Item on the agenda of Parish Council Meetings.

As an agenda item, any planning matters that arise will be discussed and therefore reported in the Parish Magazine. The Magazine should also carry a standing article referencing planning information on the village website

The village website now carries a dedicated Planning Matters page which is currently updated with all planning applications requiring a meeting of councillors. It could also develop an opt-in subscriber base to replace the Clerk's email list

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Church Farm planning application in January 2018 exposed several flaws in the way planning matters are communicated to villagers, as well as some vulnerability in the degree to which Keevil's VDS can protect the village from inappropriate development – though it also showed how the village can rally around an issue.

Most communities considering Local Plans of any kind are mostly concerned about development issues.

As a small village, Keevil is not expected to take significant volumes of housing - in fact, no further developments are required to meet current Core Strategy according to the latest data issued by WC up to April 2017. Core policy 15 Indicative requirement between 2006 and 2026 in Melksham CA remainder is for 130 new houses, actual number built or committed 362. These numbers are across 5 large and 8 small villages, including Keevil.

The aims of Neighbourhood Planning are primarily to decide where and what type of development should happen in a local area and to promote *more* development than is set out in the Core Strategy. This, together with the time, huge commitment and cost (albeit covered by Grant funding) of producing a Neighbourhood Plan should point us in the direction of updating/renewing the VDS.

In the interim we would like KPC to continue to visibly reference the extant VDS as a guide in their deliberations of planning decisions to support or not any forthcoming planning application.

Therefore we respectfully propose the Parish Council considers the following:

1	<p>The support of a period of Consultation with villagers that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shares the findings of this report, and discusses views on short, medium and long term needs of the village;• Explores preferred channels of communication for planning and other village matters;
2	<p>The support of a new village Project group consisting of, though not necessarily limited to, those involved with this report, with clear Terms of Reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oversee the updating of the VDS in line with current Core Policy and in consultation with the village community;• Pursue its adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document;• Provide guidance to KPC and the wider village vis-à-vis the development of a Conservation Area Appraisal in the medium term;• Support and cross-fertilise with KPC activity in any other scoping activity.
3	<p>We have already written to the KPC Clerk to ask of WC Planning Office: "Can a new or updated Village Design Statement, made in line with the correct Core Policies, be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document?"</p> <p>We propose the question is also put formally before our elected representative Jonathan Seed, so that the response has to be a matter of public record;</p>
4	<p>We would like to see Planning as a standing item on all KPC Meeting agendas, and recommend the appointment of a Councillor to hold a 'planning portfolio'.</p>
5	<p>We would like to see the Council's Standing Orders made public, on the Transparency section of the village website and elsewhere, so it is clear to villagers the terms of reference by which KPC is run, and what they can expect;</p>
6	<p>If it does not have one, we propose KPC develop and publish a clear Communication Strategy and/or a Statement of Community Engagement, in consultation with villagers;</p>

APPENDIX:

1. SUMMARY OF MEETINGS

CHIRTON & CONOCK: pop 407 | dwellings 171 | Small Village | David Harmes PC & NP chair

Chirton & Conock began their NP process in September 2016. They started with a public meeting (13 member of the public and the Parish Council) and decided to go down the NP route because of a proposed development by Future Farms, the closure of the pub and a replacement for the village hall. They employed a consultant at an early stage and have now reached the Regulation 14 consultation period and hope to have a completed NP by the end of this year.

David Harmes was very positive about the whole process and urged us to follow suit. However he was unable to tell us exactly what the NP would achieve - perhaps to stimulate a community spirit within the villages? They have not designated sites for development. Should we go down the NP route their process would possibly provide a good template for us to follow. They do have a VDS but decided to go for NP. Many similarities with Keevil so we can access some very useful information.

OAKSEY: pop 530 | dwellings 220 | Large Village | Richard Moody PC & NP Chair

Although designated a Large Village (it has a shop and pub) Oaksey is very similar in size and shape to Keevil. Relatively elongated it has open countryside around, a network of public footpaths, and several minor dead-end lanes. The Conservation Area, designated in 1975, covers most but not all of the village, and characterised by attractive Listed Buildings as well as traditional stone built buildings. There has been limited modern infill or backland development.

In June 2012 Oaksey first explored the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. Between 2012 and 2016 several questionnaires regarding housing needs and other village issues were delivered to all households. Oaksey is designated a 'Large Village' in the Wiltshire Core Strategy and as such is identified as being suitable for some growth and the outcome of the consultation demonstrated support for the provision of affordable housing in the Parish. A steering group was formed and they registered as an NP area in Feb 2016. They are currently in Neighbourhood Plan Statutory Consultation (Regulation 14) which ends May 12th 2018.

Part of their work, and it appears the driving force behind the NP, related to the redevelopment and increase in the number of houses in a social housing area within the village thus meeting their growth requirement.

Richard Moody was very helpful and obviously experienced. He offered his assistance should we choose the NP route, and highly recommended the consultant they used, [Andrew Northcote](#). (West Lavington are apparently also using him). All of their costs were covered by two grants, one for £5.5k for the NP, and another for £2.5k to cover the Heritage Appraisal.

Interestingly the final section of their NP includes a list of non-land use planning issues that the community felt important. As the NP is a statutory planning document it cannot include non-land use planning issues however this section is included to demonstrate to the community that all their concerns have been taken into account and will be addressed by the PC outside of the NP process.

Alongside their NP work, Oaksey have used a draft Conservation Area Appraisal based on their original VDS because they wanted criteria of their own to argue for the design of developments. There is generic guidance available but it's not tailored. An NP cannot also be a Conservation Area appraisal, but these appraisals carry some weight in planning decisions.

SEEND pop 1132 | Georgina A'bear PC & NP Chair

Their NP progress follows similar pattern to Worton. Started June 2015 as result of controversial development proposals. Progress slow and with hindsight has gone down blind alleys (selecting potential development sites at the outset). Very disillusioned with their progress. Recently decided to go with a consultant, David King of

Planning Street. New timetable another two years at least. Wished they had engaged him much earlier. They still hope to include preferred sites for development within their plan. They did not consider a VDS route and have never had one.

STEEPLE ASHTON pop 935 | Francesca Buffery-King, SAPC Chair

Fran has kept NP on her radar for the last couple of years but remains sceptical of its benefits and the lack of clarity that surrounds it. From the workshops she has attended and conversations with Jonathan Seed and Georgina A'bear at Seend, she sees no guarantees that any work done would not be overridden by further central government policy changes.

Like us they have a VDS which has not been updated. She has concerns over the future of the airfield and some elements of the village within the Conservation area. She was interested to hear of the Oaksey approach in terms of Conservation Appraisal and will look at the work Oaksey have done for herself. She understands how much work an NP involves, and is wary they (SA) do not have the people with the time or commitment to drive a project of that size through. As it stands, they have not/do not have a problem with any inappropriate developments, and take a pragmatic approach engaging with planners on a case by case basis.

That said, she is very open-minded and was interested to hear what we have learned so far. We also agree that no matter what anyone does, it will always need updating because Core Policies will always change at some point, in line with new Core Strategy or central government directives. They were considering a Housing needs survey and/or Village Survey but have no plans to take things further at the moment.

STEEPLE LANGFORD pop 515 | dwellings 234 | small village

Steeple Langford Parish Council examined the case for and against producing a Neighbourhood Plan and decided against it because of the potential cost, the production time and the designation of the parish as a "small village". Their VDS was issued on 01 Mar 2016 and approved as a material planning consideration by the WC Southern Area planning committee.

It should be noted that Steeple Langford also have a Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan published in 2009 <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-conservation-areas>

WEST ASHTON pop 737

Their circumstances are less relevant to us. They do not have a conservation area and just a few historical buildings. Their approach is concentrating on two fairly large scale developments within their parish; their NP is solely about the suitability of these sites, they have not looked at anything else.

WOOTTON RIVERS pop 228

Wootton Rivers have a VDS but dates from 2004; however, it makes some interesting statements about its status within the planning process. http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wootton_rivers_village_design_statement.pdf

WORTON: Pop 600 | Dwellings 250 | Large Village

Worton began their NP process about three years ago. It was instigated because of a controversial planning application (which was eventually stopped) for a large development of 30 houses at the eastern end of the village. This was supported by the PC but opposed by up to 50 residents. The PC Chair stood down and there is a 4 against/5 for split on the PC over the application which is partly why they have chosen the NP route.

There has been division within the village which is still continuing. They have been floundering along on their own and not making much progress and, although they decided to engage a consultant (the same one as Seend) there is still no great optimism about the benefits of an NP. Planners seem to do what they wish. Some wish to include development sites in their plan.

Worton did not have a VDS to build on. The Parish Councillors we spoke to were not very encouraging and said they would not go down this route again.

2. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING WORKSHOP March 2018

The Workshop was attended by a large proportion of large and small villages like Keevil who all appeared to have very much the same concerns as us. The main aim of the Workshop was to describe the process of starting a Neighbourhood Plan and the importance of engaging and communicating with the community. Most of the information discussed is available on WC website.

The Workshop was of no real help in deciding which route to take regarding a village plan. The Planning Officers could not (or would not) confirm whether an updated VDS would be adopted as an SPD in the determination of planning applications. To do nothing would mean relying on (or being at the mercy of) Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy.

Given that this document needs to be updated every five years or so there was also the problem of having to update any NP prepared in line with the last policy. There was not much guidance about the updating process.

The aims of Neighbourhood Plans are primarily to decide where and what type of development should happen in the local area and to promote more development than is set out in the Core Strategy. This is perhaps why they are promoting NPs so vigorously.

In conclusion:

- A Neighbourhood Plan takes on average two years to complete.
- Is expensive to produce although grants are available (and increasingly accessible).
- Is primarily about the use and development of land and buildings.
- Parish Councils must take the lead in Neighbourhood Planning.
- Once adopted, neighbourhood plans will have significant weight in making decisions on planning applications. They can be used to decide where and how development takes place but cannot be used to say no to development.

Wiltshire Core Strategy: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshirecorestrategy.htm> - There are a few more slides added in which summarise the Wiltshire Core Strategy for each type of settlement. These relate to the 'settlement strategy' and it is worth having a look at the full detail and wording of this in the WCS online, as well as looking up the 'area strategy' for your community area. (Tip: Once you have downloaded the WCS PDF - press 'Control + F' which will bring up a search box. Put in the name of your village, town or parish and search for it in the PDF. This way you can confirm which area strategy / community area relates to you and also where the settlement sits in relation to the settlement strategy.)

Community planning: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-neighbourhood-what>. There are some slides in the presentation on the different approaches to community planning. There is a little more detail about this on WC website, click on the link for 'Approaches to Neighbourhood Planning'.

Project Planning Template: <https://www.ourneighbourhoodplanning.org.uk/resources> For all manner of neighbourhood planning guidance notes – there is a note for every stage and lots of videos too. The one on 'Evidence gathering' – which also includes ideas on community engagement and contains further useful links – may be particularly useful.

3. Other LINKS AND REFERENCES:

Statement of Community Involvement: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/statementofcommunityinvolvement.htm>

WCs published Statement of Community Involvement (from about page 22; follow the link below) for the process for producing and adopting a SPD. WC are currently thinking about how and whether they would advise communities to go down this route.

You will also see there is some detail about the VDS process and a link to the guidance on WC website. This is not up to date – especially in light of the adoption process and the support WC can offer. As mentioned there are a few communities interested in how the VDS can be strengthened and how to approach this with or

without a formal neighbourhood plan. With this critical mass WC are looking at advice and approach in order to support parishes.

Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan advice from Historic England:

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-designation-appraisal-management-advice-note-1/heag040-conservation-area-designation-appraisal-and-management.pdf/> - for starters, see section 14 and 18 which touch on how communities groups can initiate the process.

Heritage in Community-Led Plans: <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/knowning-your-place/knowning-your-place12.pdf/>

Historic England Character-Assessment Toolkit:

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20193/character_assessment_toolkit currently in use in Oxford

Grant Funding increase: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-commits-to-further-support-for-neighbourhood-planning> Article published in March this year, talking about an increase in Govt funding for NPs.

Council obligations to be clear about support:

<https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1454634/neighbourhood-plan-advice-requirement-effect-july>

Parliament made an update to Regulations of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 in January this year, such that from July 2018 Councils are obliged to set out their policies on the provision of advice and assistance to NP groups. The Act regs are here <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/38/contents/made>

MyCommunity <https://mycommunity.org.uk/> source of grant funding

4. PROJECT BRIEF

Proposal for Keevil VDS/NP options discovery project 11th March 2018

Background

In January 2018 the Church Farm planning application exposed some vulnerabilities in the influence the Keevil Village Design Statement may have on planning decisions, as it is not aligned with current Core Policies contained within the WCS.

Options

1. Currently the Keevil VDS, adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 2003, is, according to Planning Officer Victoria Burvill, a material consideration in planning decisions. In her view, though, the fact that it refers to policies that are no longer part of the Development Plan is an issue, and she cannot yet confirm how much weight an updated VDS would hold in planning decisions.

A VDS can still be adopted as a SPD, which must be taken into account when determining planning applications. However, it needs to be established with some degree of surety how much authority this would hold (see above para).

2. A CAA and MP Plan holds significant weight in planning decisions and builds on the detail in the existing VDS. This approach would be appropriate if the heritage assets (listed buildings, conservation area, archaeology etc) merit protection.
3. A Parish or Neighbourhood Plan may be more appropriate if there are wider issues than the impacts on heritage assets (and has legal standing).

Considerations

- What issues are important to our community?
- Is our community resilient to the challenges of the future?
- Ministry Of Defence (MOD) and airfield;

- Conservation and Heritage matters;
- The holding of a Planning Portfolio by a Parish Councillor;
- Available Grants and Funds;
- Continued submissions for development within the village (and a plan of response);
- Communication of Planning matters both through the PC and to the wider village community.

Methods

- Project Steering Group to consist of Sarah Dow, Rob Kevan, Michael Abraham, Gerry Vaughan, Ian Simpson and Norman Owen, plus Geoff West as Chairman of KPC;
- Review all available online information and guidance;
- Consult directly with Wiltshire Planning officers, and Conservation and Heritage organisations;
- Canvass village opinion (questionnaires, door to door, village events, Public Meeting);
- Talk to other parish councils: Chirton & Conock and Wootton Rivers vis-à-vis how they have approached design and/or used their VDS in their neighbourhood plan; Oaksey and Ashton Keynes have used a Conservation Area Appraisal within their NP process; West Ashton is a small village producing a neighbourhood plan and looking at steering where development should go/considering allocating a small site for housing. Seend PC.

Outcomes

Deliver a HIGH LEVEL review to Parish Council with findings and recommendations for the most appropriate course of action, and next steps, to help ensure the preservation, character and environment of our village and protect it from the threat of insensitive development.

Timing

Ideally an 8 week project so that a report can be made for the next PC Meeting 14 May 2018.

Article published in Keevil Parish News April 2018

REVIEW OF KEEVIL VILLAGE DESIGN & NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING OPTIONS

At the last Parish Council meeting, some residents expressed concerns that the Keevil Village Design Statement is no longer aligned with current Wiltshire Council Core Policies, and therefore its influence on planning decisions for development within the village is uncertain.

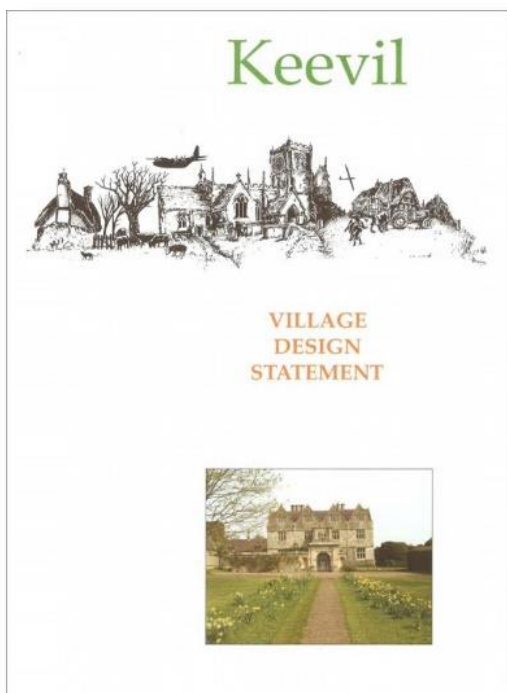
With the support of the Chairman and the Parish Council, a small project group consisting of Sarah Dow, Rob Kevan, Michael Abraham, Gerry Vaughan, Ian Simpson and Norman Owen has formed to conduct a brief review and consider which of the following options might best ensure the preservation, character and environment of our village and protect it from the threat of insensitive development:

4. Confirm how much weight an updated Village Design Statement would hold in planning decisions.
5. Consider whether a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan would be a useful option.
6. Investigate whether a Neighbourhood Plan may be a worthwhile approach for the long term.

We intend to report our findings at the next meeting on May 14th, then follow up with a wider consultation of village opinion. In the meantime, if you have any experience or thoughts on these matters, or would like to help in any way at all, please get in touch with any of the team – we would welcome your input.

5. THE KEEVIL SOCIETY

The original Keevil Society was formed by residents on 20th July 1987, with the founding aim of “stimulating interest and care for the beauty and character of the village among those who live here, a collective desire to keep Keevil unique in its own small way”.



In 1990 members published the first edition of the Book of Keevil; three more followed with Book IV published in 2002. These volumes tell the history of the village and stories of the people and buildings which formed the community, and are the result of dedicated work by many people most of whom are past or present residents of the village.

In addition, after widespread village participation and consultation, and with the assistance of the then West Wiltshire District Council (WWDC), a VDS was published to provide guidance for planning and modifications within the village.

On 12th March 2003 the VDS was adopted by WWDS as Supplementary Planning Guidance to key policies contained within the West Wiltshire District Plan. You can view a PDF of the full printed version [here](#):

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/keevil_village_design_statement.pdf

Conservation & Wiltshire Core Strategy

The Keevil Conservation Area was designated in 1973 to 'preserve and enhance the special architectural and historic interest' in certain parts of the village and, whilst this and key principles of the VDS remain valid (and may be referenced by planning officers at their discretion), the Wiltshire Council Structure has changed since its adoption.

New National Policy led to new Local Plans, and a new Core Strategy was adopted by WC in January 2015 (running until 2026) – which means that the policies with which the VDS were aligned no longer exist. Therefore the VDS is no longer a Supplementary Planning Document.

Alongside these changes, Neighbourhood Development Plans were introduced as part of the Localism Act 2011 to give local people direct power to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.



<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/adopted-local-plan-jan16-low-res.pdf>

- The removal of village boundaries (Village Policy Limits), with development limited instead to infill to meet the needs of local people;
- The removal of areas of minimum change. In Keevil this covered the area from Field Head up to and including the Church;
- Core Policy 58 now covers Conservation of the Historic Environment.

Despite the Core Policy changes coming into effect in January 2015, the committee and members of the Keevil Society were not aware of the impact this would have on the VDS, and in December 2015 it was decided that the Society would close. The following year the remaining funds were distributed to other village projects voted upon by members, including the Keevil Community Shed.



6. ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

CAA	Conservation Area Appraisal
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MP	Management Plan
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
KPC	Keevil Parish Council
PC	Parish Council
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
VDS	Village Design Statement
WC	Wiltshire Council
WCS	Wiltshire Core Strategy
WWDC	West Wiltshire District Council

Research March-April & Report compiled May 2018 by village residents Michael Abraham, Gerry Vaughan, Sarah Dow, Rob Kevan, Ian Simpson, supported by Norman Owen, Geoff West, Juliette Goodwin, David Lambard