Answers to Question 12.2

a) Our Parish Council has been working on the development of a Parish Plan since 2007. Portbury Village is not expected to be a priority area for housing development in the near future, given its position within the green belt and its designation as an “infill” village. Whilst there has been encouragement from North Somerset Council to contribute toward a Core Strategy for the region, there was no external funding available for assistance in developing a Parish/Neighbourhood/Community plan where no major development was expected. Notwithstanding this, Portbury Parish Council decided to work on a Parish Plan, using its own resources, to help provide a framework of objectives for the future.

One of the first steps in the process towards developing a plan was for a set of strategic objectives to be drawn up. This was completed in 2010 and was based upon key agenda topics that had arisen over recent years and also upon Councillors views of the likely issues that would become agenda matters in the future.

A second piece of work was to develop a Landscape Character Assessment. With limited, voluntary resources available this task took some time to complete and is still a work in progress.

Both of the above documents were made available to National Grid during the consultation process in 2013. Copies are attached here.

Since 2013 work has continued on our Parish Plan and our residents received a questionnaire covering a range of topics based upon the themes in our Strategic Objectives document. These have been returned and analysed by our volunteers. This information is now being collated and the issues raised by residents are being incorporated into our first consultation document for the Village. A copy of this is also enclosed here for information; it should also be regarded as a “work in progress”.

One theme that emerges when talking to residents about the issues affecting their life in Portbury is the proximity of the Village to Royal Portbury Dock, particularly given its progressive expansion over the last 15 years. Residents also have a long memory of the ineffective consultation that occurred in the late 1960’s when the proposed M5 motorway route was modified, bringing it through the Gordano Valley and splitting off parts of Portbury from the main Village. At that time there was
no vehicle for the village to effectively resist such a project.

Over many years therefore the Parish Council has had an implicit objective to protect the Village from the visual encroachment of commercial/industrial buildings and from the growing noise pollution from the docks and the M5.

b) During the takeover and development of the Docks by the current commercial operators the need to screen the boundary of the Docks site became a key discussion point during planning application consultations. At that time there were no specific viewpoints that were agreed as baseline points for monitoring. A significant amount of planting was agreed along most of the southern boundary of the Docks estate, and also along both sides of the Portbury Hundred Road. This was expected, over time, to give a high degree of visual screening to the Docks’ large industrial buildings and would mean that, other than in areas of higher ground, the visual impact of the Docks would be reduced to a very low level. Techniques of 3-D imaging and photomontages were in their infancy at this time and so none of the parameters associated with landscape impact analysis were part of the narrative.

In more recent years the Docks has undergone further expansion and there has been successful two way dialogue and consultation about the visual impacts of industrial buildings. The Port of Bristol has helped Portbury Parish Council to protect its “skyline” preserving or improving the screening that has already been put in place.

In 2010 when the realisation of a Parish Plan first became a firm proposition the Council made explicit a number of its long standing objectives including that of protecting the Skyline. A document recording the strategic objectives of the Council was produced, as referenced above.

During 2013 as the Scoping Report for Environmental Impact Assessment of the Hinkley Connection Project was being prepared by National Grid, Portbury Parish Council first indicated that it wished a number of points to be considered for 3-D image assessment. We incorporated our concerns about viewpoints within our submission to the Planning Inspectorate of May 2013 concerning the ES Scoping Opinion. We wrote to National Grid in August 2013 and again in on 2nd September when our concerns seemed not to be having any impact. We wrote again on 5th September 2013 giving a specific list of viewpoints that we wished to be assessed for visual impact. These exchanges did not result in any action from National Grid until one of our residents visited a drop in centre and managed to get digital copies of screen images of the 3D model of the route, taken from the viewpoints that we had already specified.
On 19th September we wrote to North Somerset Council providing them with some of the 3D images from National Grid, along with a photograph taken in roughly the same location. Our point in writing was to seek support of the Council in requesting more visual analysis. North Somerset Council had already, by then concluded that route option A was unsuitable and were preparing to confirm this at their October Planning and Regulatory Committee.

In early October Portbury Parish Council did receive from National Grid 3D images of the pylon route taken from the viewpoints that we had requested. These images confirmed that the impact of the pylons was significant and would create an adverse visual impact. A copy of our letter to North Somerset Council is appended. National Grid has not reproduced any of these viewpoints either in their PEIR documentation or the DCO.

c) National Grid has a number of documents which are relevant to quote in relation to the issues of option A/B in the Portbury area. First and foremost is the Stakeholder, Community and Amenity Policy which is publicised on their corporate website. In this policy National Grid undertake to engage with stakeholders and communities affected by their electricity networks. In the section 1, Establishing need, National Grid states -

“We will only seek to build electricity lines or pipelines along new routes, or above ground installations in new locations, where our existing infrastructure cannot be technically or economically upgraded to meet system security standards and regulatory obligations, where forecasted increases in demand for electricity or gas will not be satisfied by other means, or where connections to customers are required.”

Furthermore in their document “Development near Overhead Lines”, Page 9 states

“In selecting a route National Grid seeks to reduce the visual effect of the line in terms of the number of people affected and the degree to which they are affected. The nature and topography of the landscape is considered and any statutory protection afforded to an area is also taken into account.”

In their consultation feedback report of August 2011, paragraph 11.5.3, National Grid states that

“A route corridor that followed the west of the M5 was not considered feasible because of the proximity of large towns at Burnham on Sea, Weston Super Mare and Clevedon and the village of Sheepway near Portbury.”

These are clear guiding principles concerning the impact on people of the
routeing of electricity networks, and one clear statement that shows that the option A route was not going to be acceptable.

d) There are several Holford Rules that are relevant to the selection of route for an electricity network. Whilst it is true to say that it is impractical to achieve satisfaction of every aspect of every rule, we have shown in our response the National Grid’s PEIR and also in a representation made by Mr Phipps that whilst Portbury Wharf Nature reserve does suffer some impact (rule 2), the residents of Portbury and Sheepway are clearly impacted in high numbers by virtue of visual impact, (rules 3,4 and the supplementary notes). Whilst National Grid state that Holford Rule 3 is satisfied by route option A, we have pointed out in our submissions that rule 3 is the **ONLY** one to be qualified by the term “other things being equal”.

**Lord Holford** was a highly respected Architect and Town Planner who compiled the so called **Holford Rules**. These rules are written for those concerned by the landscape effects of a pylon network, recognising that a straight line of pylons in normal circumstances will have the least visual effect, rather than to have a route meandering around the landscape. He qualifies rule3 quite clearly with the “other things being equal” term because obviously this rule should not be applied dogmatically and other influences should be taken into account. National Grid design staff have regularly used Holford Rule 3 as a justification for keeping the pylon line straight, but we consider this to be an incorrect application of that rule. We believe National Grid is using this rule to justify an easier option for them in terms of cost.

Submission compiled by M.A.Phipps
For Portbury Parish Council
February 15th 2015.
A progress report of the work carried out for the Parish Council from 2007 to 2015

January 2015
Foreword by Peter Cooke
Chair of Portbury Parish Council

It is vitally important that Portbury Parish develops a Community Plan which serves
the Parishioners. For a long time elected Councils have operated with the best of
intentions for the residents, whilst not knowing specifically what their electorate
wanted them to do. This developing document provides a long term and consistent
framework for the development of all services on which the villagers depend. It will
also give the Council a mandate for dealing with external influences that affect the
village from time to time.

This plan has been a long time in the making, and more time is still needed to make it
functional and practical. Nevertheless we have already been able to establish a clear
framework for the future which will help all both current and future elected Councillors
to work effectively.

Peter Cooke
January 2015
1. Background to the Parish Plan

With encouragement from North Somerset Council Portbury Parish Council have been developing a Community Plan to mesh with the developing Core Strategy work on the whole Region. Whilst the drivers of the need for such a plan do not principally derive from the likelihood of major development within the Parish, the Council decided, in 2007, to develop a living document that would provide current and future Councillors a means by which a continuity of thinking could be applied to the variety of issues that arise within the Village. This document is thus seen as a continually developing framework, or plan, from which a number of other documents have been and will be initiated and added as appendices.

In 2011, following much discussion within the Council and at Annual Parish meetings, it was decided to develop a questionnaire to assemble overall views of the residents of Portbury on the sub-set of issues contained within this developing plan. In order to assist in the formulation of the questions for this exercise the Council developed a set of Strategic Objectives that formalised the strategy that had been followed implicitly for many years, see appendix 1. In 2013 a final questionnaire was distributed within the whole Parish from which specific feedback has now been taken to feed into this plan, see appendix 2.

Some 500 questionnaires were delivered, one per household, and XXX have been returned, representing X% of households and X% of residents over 16. The level of response is considered to be very good; the Council continues to seek the completion of all outstanding returns.

2. Portbury Parish Profile (Based upon the 2011 Census return)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of residents as Census 2011</th>
<th>No of residents in Households responding to the questionnaire</th>
<th>% of residents in Households responding to the questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-44</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>247</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 and over</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>827</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst the funding available to Portbury Parish is very limited, the Council is maintains a major list of aspirations for the Village which helps to provide a blue print for the future should opportunities arise.

3. About Portbury

Portbury has a long and varied history dating as far back as pre-historic cultures of which there is evidence. A minor iron age hillfort atop Conygar Hill was a possible outpost of the larger Cadbury Camp to the West. Standing stones are evident both
from old maps and physical evidence. One such stone was re-discovered in a field adjacent to the Church in 1986, near to its original recorded location. This stone now stands proudly between the 12th century Church and the 20th century School giving a constant reminder of nearly 3000 years of human settlement activity in the area.

Portbury Wharf dates back to Roman times, from where the Romans exported lead and tin from mines on the Mendip Hills. There is physical evidence of Roman and Romano-British settlement in the area from the discovery of a burial site near to the church of Saint Mary the Virgin. Finds of interred Romano-British bodies were discovered to clear battle wounds. It is thought that this site is one of the most important in Somerset dating from the Arthurian period.

There is some evidence of Dark Age activity from the presence of a section of the Wansdyke which follows the same alignment as an old “Summer Road” but remaining straight as it passes Portbury House before reaching the historic sea shore.

Written evidence of Portbury stretches back to Saxon times, the “Hundred” bearing its name in the Domesday Book. The name Portbury is thought to derive from Porberie, in Old English meaning “Fortified place near the harbour.” The first Earl Berkeley was awarded the Manor of Portbury by King William I. Until the building of Berkeley Castle, Portbury was the main seat of the Berkeley family and continued to be held in much favour, evidenced by their founding of St Mary the Virgin Church in 1190. The present Norman building was built upon a former Saxon church.

The Berkeley family were also instrumental in building a small Augustinian Priory, begun in 1188. This was subservient to the Priory of Bromore in Hampshire, and the handful of monks farmed the rich soils and fished the local streams and pills right up to its dissolution in Henry VIII’s time. What remained of the building was given by the Smyth family to the Diocese of Bath and Wells for use as a village school to replace the original School House nearby. The priory stayed in use as the School until the building of the current CEVA School in 1972.

Descendants of the Berkeley family held the manor until 1784 when it was sold to James Gordon, and inherited by William Abdy. On his death in 1870 the estate was sold to Sir Greville Smyth of Long Ashton, in whose ownership it stayed until the death of Esme Smyth in 1959.

Portbury Village sits at the Southerly edge of the mouth of the Gordano Valley, astride the old road connecting Bristol to Portishead. In former times the direct route
to Portishead, along what is known as the Sheepway, was impassable during the winter due to the marshy nature of the land and thus a longer route had to be taken, via Clapton in Gordano, along the base of Tickenham Ridge. This “winter route” then crossed the marsh near to North Weston before entering Portishead from the West.

Prior to 1600, there would perhaps have been more of the settlement close to St Mary’s Church, and mainly houses constructed in wood. It is known that severe floods over the centuries have reached the outer walls of the Church, and it is possible that gradually the centre of the village has moved to higher ground along the current High Street.

In 1840 Portbury was described as having “a rustic inn and half a dozen small houses “. The Blue Anchor Inn was in the High Street on a site later to become Portbury Farm. There was a brew house on the site of the Village Hall and a deep well beneath the Hall floor still provides crystal clear water that is potable to all except young babies.

In 1867 the Portishead Branch Railway line was built which had the effect of creating an artificial boundary between what is now called Sheepway and the main village of Portbury, although a road bridge maintained the continuity of the old summer road. In the 1960’s the building of the M5 motorway brought with it the closure of the original summer road to Portishead, a footbridge however still maintains the connection between the residents of Sheepway and the main Village.

In 1893 a bequest by a local philanthropist, Colonel Brittan, enabled the building of the Village Hall which sits in a prominent position welcoming people into the Village on the approach from the A369, Bristol to Portishead road.

In 1958 most of the village was “sold” to Newcombe Estates, and a further 700 acres were purchased by the Port of Bristol Authority.
Since the 1960’s and 70’s, when much of the current housing development along the High Street and Priory Road was constructed, there has been little additional development within the Village. Any development that has occurred has been carefully managed, mainly on in-fill plots, and through consultation with the Parish Council it has been ensured that the character of the Village has been sustained or improved. In Sheepway there has been more development activity with the creation of Elm Tree Park, on a former farm site. Here a new complex of housing has been established providing some 50 new park homes on a brown field site.

In the 1970’s the Royal Portbury Dock, with deepwater lock, began construction, and was completed in 1977. In 1991 the Port, along with Avonmouth docks, passed into the ownership of the Bristol Port Company. This completely changed the fortunes of the Docks and today there is a very successful and extensive industrial complex alongside the main Port. This success has been provided a much needed boost to the local economy, creating much needed jobs and bringing key infrastructure to the area. However this success brings with it other pressures and impacts upon the residents of Portbury which have to be managed.

4. Health & Welfare

As can be seen above the makeup of the population of Portbury is fairly typical of the mix seen across the region. The gender mix is approximately 50/50 with 67% of the age group 16 to 74 being economically active. The age group up to 15 represents about 20% of the population, those over 65 representing 24%. Unemployment is very low, about 1%, but difficult to compare with the regional position, and deserves continued monitoring. Retired residents amount to 22% of the population which is a greater proportion than the average across the region.

In terms of Health Portbury can be seen to enjoy a better than average health profile with only 4.5% of people considering themselves to be in “bad” or “very bad” health. Those providing some form of unpaid care to others amounts to more than 15% of the “economically active”, which is a figure worthy of note and consideration.

Home ownership, either outright or via mortgage or loan is the predominant basis of living in Portbury with nearly 85% of home falling into this category. The balance of households are occupied on a rental basis, mostly privately. Approximately 50% of households are occupied by people with no dependent children, a further 22% are occupied by one person.

4.1 Issues raised concerning health and welfare

The elderly - The main issues raised in the PPP Questionnaire relating to the elderly is that high percentage of people in this age group find it difficult to obtain appointments with nurses or doctors.

Youth – The main issue concerning the young people in the village is the prospect of future career

5. Safety & Security

Portbury rates “low” in terms of crime statistics, however, based on crime rate Portbury lies 26th out of 30 in a ranking of local neighbourhoods that includes some areas in west Bristol. The predominant occurrence is one of theft, see chart below.
The proximity of Portbury to the motorway and A369 as quick escape routes probably contributes to the frequency of occurrence of crime, a factor which means that Portbury has an active and engaged Neighbourhood Watch group that quickly disseminates information on crime if and when it occurs within the Parish.

5.1 Issues raised in PPPQ

A significant number of responses, 50%, indicate that traffic offences and road safety are a concern. Whilst there is no specific data on what this translates to in terms of objectives the following section helps to put a context to this. In general people do not feel too affected by crime, despite the slightly high rate.

6. Traffic & Transport

Over 90% of people travel by some form of motor transport to get to work, whilst 2.4% use public transport. Home workers amount to 6.4%, a figure which is likely to be growing. More than 50% of households possess 2 or more cars or vans. Whilst there is no information as to the location of the place to work of people in the village it is clear that the connectivity afforded by the proximity of the A369 and M5 makes Portbury a very easy location from which to travel either into Bristol or to the wider region via the motorway network. The paucity of connections via bus or train near to the village centre makes results in the default choice of transport being the car for both work and pleasure.

The North Somerset Core Strategy, April 2012, envisages a new rail link connection Portishead to Bristol, with a station situated on a site yet to be determined in Portishead. This will have limited effect upon the village of Portbury, although those living at the western edge, nearest to Portishead, may take advantage of this new link.
6.1 Issues raised in PPPQ

Whilst this was a large portion of the questionnaire circulated it is worthy of note that this section generated the vast majority of the high ranking issues that concern people, 12 out of 32 high ranking issues coming from this section. In addition this section generated the 2 highest ranked issues of all, namely the need for more road maintenance and the desire to reduce HGV traffic through the village.

Other issues featuring were the need for more lighting for road users and the desire for a station at Portbury on the proposed Portishead to Bristol railway link. A set of priorities around traffic calming, speed limits and cameras and illegal parking were also highly rated.

7. Environment & Planning

North Somerset Core Strategy has placed Portbury entirely within the green belt, effectively removing the traditional settlement boundary. Portbury is classes as an “infill” village which, for the moment means that large scale development of housing is unlikely to be considered.

As part of the preparation for a future Parish Plan the Council requested that a preliminary landscape appraisal be carried out in order to collect data and local knowledge of Portbury in a reference document. This developing document provides a resource to help with planning considerations affecting the village. See appendix 3.

From this work it is evident that Portbury does have a defined landscape character, albeit that this is subject to constant impact sue to proximity to the growing urban conurbation of Portishead and the commercial pressures created by the Port of Bristol (Portbury Docks).

7.1 Issues raised in the PPPQ

The need to preserve the skyline and outlook of the village was rated highly by 94% of respondents, ranking 3rd in overall terms of the main issues. Reduced impact from the motorway was next, with 92% of respondents rating this highly.

Preservation of the green belt was rated very highly, whilst there was no indication as to what this means in practical terms. Light pollution from the docks was also seen as an important issue by 81% of respondents. There was also a large number of people who would welcome more seating in public spaces in the Village.
8. Education

Portbury is served by a voluntary aided primary school, comprising 99 students. In general this means that all children living in the Parish will be able to attend this school, with the balance coming from the Parishes of Easton-in-Gordano and Wraxall & Failand.

In order to enter secondary education students travel to Portishead,(Gordano School) or Ham Green, (St Katherine’s). Further afield are the private schools of central Bristol and a range of sixth form colleges.

There is no adult education capability within the village, although the Village Hall provides a potential venue for this type of activity. The mobile library facility visits once a fortnight on a Tuesday afternoon and is used by small numbers residents.

Over 80% of people aged 16 and over in Portbury have attained a level 1 qualification.

8.1 Issues raised in the PPPQ

This was a relatively short section within the questionnaire and did not reveal any issues of high concern. A small number of respondents indicated a desire for more adult education courses.

9. Leisure & Recreation

For the greater part the residents of Portbury travel to other parts of the region for leisure facilities. There are a range of sporting and other facilities and organisations nearby in Portishead that are well supported by Portbury people. Further afield there are facilities in Bristol, Nailsea and Clevedon that are available.

For shopping, apart from a limited range of retail activity associated with Gordano Services on the junction of the A369 and the M5, residents must travel to Portishead or further afield for the majority of their needs. There are no viable options for newspaper delivery in the village, the local shop once provided this service but closed in the 1990’s due to lack of economic viability.

The Priory Hotel remains a popular destination for food and drink and attracts large numbers of visitors from outside the village.

9.1 Issues raised in the PPPQ

A small number indicated a desire for access to more sporting facilities, with examples of what activities that might relate to.

10. Community Facilities

The main community facility in the village is the Village Hall, built in 1893 and later extended. It has a main function hall and a lounge, both having licensed bars available. There is also a skittle alley which is well used by teams from around the other villages in the Gordano Valley. Whilst the building is pleasant and is generally well maintained, its age means that it is barely fit for the purpose that it is
used for. Its age also means that both energy and maintenance costs each year are relatively high, which eats into the funds raised through the income generating activities that take place there.

The Hall is owned by the village and is operated as a not for profit company limited by guarantee, the vehicle through which the freehold is owned. A Board of Directors oversees and regulates the activities of the Social Club, who run the Hall and its bars. Their prime role is to see that the Hall is viable and sustainable. Land around the Hall is owned by Newcombe Estates who also own several fields along the High Street leading into the village. This means that the Village Hall, and attached motor servicing business, are landlocked and rely on a right of way agreement to gain access. It is unlikely that the village would be able to secure the freehold of any land adjacent and so any aspirations for change or development of the Hall are severely restricted.

10.1 Issues raised in the PPPQ

There was a strong response, 63% of people, who recorded that they would be more likely to use the village hall if there were live music. Although there was no highly rated issue concerning unsatisfied need from the Hall, it figured as the second priority in the list of needs for improvement. Highest rated was the need for improved bus services. The third most highly rated priority was for a village/community shop.

11. Business & Employment

Portbury depends entirely upon its location on the outskirts of Bristol for access to employment. Home-working, whilst a growing feature, represents a small part of the working population. There is a small business park within the village, behind Station Road, offering a number of industrial units, but this site has no means of expansion without consuming green belt land or other privately held plots.

Within the next 10 year period it is envisaged that upwards of 40,000 employment opportunities will be created within easy commuter distance of Portbury. Furthermore the Joint Transport Strategy for the South-west of England has already embodied this within its roll out plan for transportation links. We can thus see that the outlook for opportunities for the active population within Portbury is very good.

11.1 Issues raised in the PPPQ

There were no issues raised in this section and certainly no perceived desire/need to create more employment in the village. That said it is quite clear that ease of access to employment is a key reason why a lot of people chose to live in Portbury.

12. The Elderly

Whilst it cannot be said that Portbury has an exceptionally large number of elderly residents for its size, it can be seen
that the largest current demographic group is the 45 to 64 year old. This potentially suggests that the over 65 group, comprising most of the retired, will grow slowly over the next decade. There is no accurate data on the rate of turnover of houses in Portbury at the present time, but simple searches suggest that about 10 to 12 per year have been sold on average. Local knowledge tells us that the majority of these sales arise from people leaving the village.

Until now there has been no debate in the village about what future is envisaged by people living here as to whether they would like to stay in the village long term, or whether homes for growing family would be in demand. A next step in the planning process should be to investigate what people want and expect and to measure this against the data that is available. The questionnaire is a start point for this analysis.

12.1 Issues raised in the PPPQ

As mentioned above many elderly people encounter difficulty in obtaining appointments with nurses and doctors. A larger number of people registered a concern about access to care in their last phase of life.

13. Young People

The age group 10 to 24 makes up 15% of the population of Portbury, 120 young people as at 2011. It is this age group that requires the most support from facilities and activities outside the home.

Within Portbury there is little or no organised activity for this middle youth group, although the Village Hall does provide a possible venue for this. Cubs and Scouts groups are available in Portishead, and further afield, but the local Cub pack ceased operations some years ago.

13.1 Issues raised in the PPPQ

As mentioned above there is a clear concern within the younger constituency of the village about future job prospects.

14. Conclusion to this phase of the Parish Plan.

Whilst there remain a number of questionnaires to analyse to add to the data set from which this report has been built, the overall picture emerging from the data is unlikely to change significantly. Nevertheless this final analysis needs to be completed.

In addition there needs to be more cross referencing of answers to check if there are issues specific areas within the demographic mix in the village. Health and welfare has already thrown up specific issues for the elderly.
This document has set the scene for a wider debate with the Village to formulate some further, specific objectives in support of the Parish Council’s current broad agenda. An open session of the village with this data as a discussion point is the most likely next step.

The Parish Council would like to thank all participants in this exercise for giving their time to consider the questionnaire. We would also like to acknowledge the efforts put in by Hadyn John in creating the questionnaire and performing the bulk if the data input into the database of responses. Thanks are due also to Stefan Chilcot and Jo John for their work in helping with data input also.

Portbury Parish Council

11th January 2015
Portbury Parish Council

Strategic Objectives of the Parish Plan

Introduction

The Parish of Portbury began the development of a Parish Plan in 2007 and appointed a team to help develop it in 2009. This team is independent of the Council itself and has consulted widely within the village in order to formulate a questionnaire to take the plan forward.

In the early stages of discussion about the plan the Parish Council carried out a number of appraisals of the village to help frame the eventual consultation with residents. This work established a range of strategic objectives which have helped to guide the team formulating the questionnaire. This report outlines those objectives arrived at since 2009 and refers to the other sources of appraisal as appropriate.

Overarching Aim

We want Portbury to continue to be a desirable place to live for all. People should have the certainty that, having chosen to live in the village, they can be assured that the aspects of living in Portbury that are most valued are protected as far as is possible despite the inevitable changes in the world around us.

In order to create a baseline of knowledge to achieve the above the Parish Council has set out a number of strategic objectives below which will help to formulate a Parish Plan. Feedback from residents via a questionnaire will be used to develop a detailed plan.

1. Health and Welfare

Portbury does not enjoy the presence of any Health Services within the village, relying on Health Centres and Dental Practices in Portishead and Pill. Hospital based services are available further afield in Bristol and Clevedon. Social Services are located mainly in Nailsea.

Strategic aims are for the Parish Council to understand the needs of the population of the village and to assess if these needs are being met. There should be no disadvantage to living in Portbury as a result of needing access to Health and Welfare services.

2. Safety and Security

Crime statistics for the Portbury area show a high level of vehicle thefts, in virtually every case occurring at Gordano Services. Portbury village itself suffers mainly from Crime carried out by people from outside the village.
Its connectivity to the M5 being an attraction to those intent upon burglary, which is the main source of problem. Thankfully the level of crime is very low.

Strategic Aims are to reduce the already relatively low incidence of Crime in the form of burglary and to support the community in being aware of other forms of “modern” crime such as internet based fraud.

3. Traffic and Transport
There has an average of 60 accidents per year on Portbury Lane, connecting the village with the B3130, symptomatic of the high speed at which some people drive through the area. Incidents are happily rare in the village itself despite the volume of traffic flowing through during rush hours. The village is rather dominated by parked cars at certain times of day, most recently “car clubbers” using the village as a swap over point and parking area. It is evident from speed checks that a number of cars are driven at inappropriate speeds through the village, some of these drivers live in the village.

There is only one bus service which runs through the village, other services being available on the Portbury Hundred or on the A369 on Martcombe Road.

Strategic Objectives are to control and if possible reduce the various impacts of cars upon street life in the village. Additionally it is important to sustain the current level of bus service and connectivity to other parts of our region.

4. Environment & Planning

A key aspiration is to provide a village environment in which residents of Portbury will be proud and will thus be minded to take care of. We hope that visitors will similarly be impressed by its general appearance and will pass on positive comments to others. To achieve this requires attention to the care of the physical environment and the forgotten corners that can seem uncared for. Our objective is to use Parish resources to supplement those of the statutory authorities in order to add extra features to the village to make is stand out among others.

Preliminary landscape and streetscape assessment concludes that the biggest visual effect on the population of Portbury from potential development arises from activities outside the village. Portbury lies in close proximity to both Portbury Docks and the M5 motorway and these features have the potential to create negative effects on the experience of villagers if development does not consider the character of the Village.
There are only a small number of buildings that exceed 2 storeys in height, most of these being both heritage assets and landmark buildings such as the Church and the Priory, both of which are listed. Where other buildings reach 3 storeys these are set against a hillside backdrop, e.g. the “new” and “old” Mill and the apartments on Brittan Place.

Strategic objectives are to seek to control development within the village to respect the current low level character of the streetscape, and thus to restrict the height of any new building proposed. Views to the North and East of Portbury are already affected by the Docks and distant views of Avonmouth; the objective here is to preserve those landscape views that remain generally unaffected by seeking to restrict the development of tall structures close to, but outside the Village, even in distant views.

5. Education

Education for children up to the age of 11 is provided in the Village by the CEVA School. Thereafter secondary education is provided in either Portishead or Pill. Portbury is endowed with a magnificent asset in the form of the Village Hall and which would provide an excellent venue for a variety of educational offerings.

Whereas the Parish Council cannot directly create opportunities for further education it does aspire to create an environment within which this could happen. This will be achieved principally by working very closely with the Village Hall organisation and supporting, in any way it can, potential educational opportunities that may come about by tapping into resources that may be available at North Somerset Council.

6. Leisure & Recreation

The Parish Council is the tenant of the playing field that lies close to the School and Church and also takes responsibility for the Village Green. This allows the Council to offer the use of the playing fields to Gordano Rugby Club, for their junior teams, in return for assistance with upkeep of the grass.

Strategic objectives are to encourage the use of these facilities by their good upkeep and, where funds allow, their development for a variety of uses.

7. Community Facilities

The main Community Facilities that are available to all are the Village Hall and the Church. Other facilities provide important services, such as the School, but these are separately governed and funded. It is important that
the facilities that are dependant mainly upon money raised within the Village are sustainable in the long term.

Whereas the Parish Council does not have responsibility for the upkeep of the main Community Facilities it will strategically invest its funds where it will do the most good or where this will help to provide “leverage” to secure other funds, e.g. the National Lottery.

8. Representation and consultation

Whereas the Parish Council itself is very busy and involved in the wide variety of issues that potentially affect the Village, there are few people outside the Council itself who desire to play a formal role in support of this work.

The strategic objective of the Parish Council is to find out what residents know about the work of the Council and to fill any gaps in knowledge through wider communication using whatever means it finds is appropriate. In doing this the Parish Council aims to get more residents within the Village to be interested in serving as Councillors.

9. Business & Employment

The main commercial activity that many people will use with any frequency is the Priory Hotel. This provides a source of employment for many younger people within the Village. Gordano Services and Portbury Docks provide close by employment opportunities that are beneficial to the village community. Another source of employment comes from the small, rented industrial units in Priory Farm Industrial Estate. It has been some years since Portbury Stores closed and there is therefore no longer a post office outlet, the nearest being either at Failand, Pill or Portishead.

The strategic objective is to support the businesses that already exist within the village and to provide an environment in which they can expand in synergy with nearby residents. Where new business opportunities arise the Council aims to support them as much as is appropriate whilst also satisfying the other key strategic objectives.

10. The Elderly

Portbury mirrors the general trend in all population centres, in that the age profile of its residents is generally increasing, with a large proportion now being retired.
The strategic aim is to endeavour to be able to support an ageing population so that there is no inherent disadvantage to living in Portbury. This will largely be achieved through success in the other objectives which will emerge in the plan, but specific elements may need to be developed with the elderly in mind.

11. Younger People

The general trend within the population as a whole is that family sizes are reducing and that married couples start families much later. This will have its effect, over time, on the population mix within Portbury.

The strategic objective is to make Portbury an attractive place for a new or growing family to live. This will be achieved largely by the success in other objectives within the emerging plan, but specific elements may need to be developed with younger people in mind.

Portbury Parish Council
January 2011
Re: Proposed Overhead Routes for 400kv Pylon Line, Area F, Portbury, North Somerset.

5th September 2013

Dear Sirs,

We have begun reviewing the information published this week by National Grid as part of the consultation process now in train. Our Mr Phipps and your Mr Stone have been in conversation by telephone, and at Mr Stone’s suggestion we are hereby putting in writing 2 specific requests to help us in our further analysis work.

Firstly, and following on from our previous representations on viewpoints, we wish to request some specific photomontage images for our own evaluation at this stage. There are only 2 relevant views within the data available to us at the moment; we need many more to be able to fairly appraise the route options now in front of us. We therefore request that the following viewpoints are used from which to develop additional photomontages.

1. On the pedestrian bridge over the M5 looking towards Sheepway, from about the midpoint of the motorway.
2. From within Elm Tree Park, looking towards the M5.
3. Looking along Sheepway to the South, from near to Elm Tree Farm House.
4. At the Bus Stop nearest to Shipway Gate Farm – looking in all directions.
5. On the approach to the Village from the A369, at the entry stile to the public footpath on the right, looking towards the Church and M5.
6. On the entry to the village from Clapton in Gordano, on Caswell Lane, at the stile in the wall on the left, looking towards Sheepway and the M5.
7. On Station Road, looking towards the M5, in the vicinity of the Old Methodist Chapel.
8. On Station Road, looking towards the M5, near to Priory Cottage.
9. Near to the Lych Gate at St Mary’s Church, looking across the playing field.
10. From a private garden on High Street, looking toward the M5.

This list is not exhaustive and we may require further images as we come to understand better the precise impact of the new T pylons on each route. We will confirm locations by specific map reference when you are in a position to carry out this work. We would like
these viewpoints also to be available for display on the exhibition day on the 25th of September in Portbury, and again for the evening Q&A session.

Secondly, again following on from previous representations on the subject of assessment criteria, and also responding to a letter from your Mr Walsh dated 27th August. We do wish to discuss the subject of impact criteria directly with you as we have concerns about your particular choice of scales for this. In Mr Walsh’s letter he offers the opportunity for a meeting, we would like to take up this offer, if possible before the 25th of September. At such a meeting we would hope also to agree upon the extent of information to be made available to the Villagers of Portbury at the proposed exhibition.

Yours faithfully,

Peter Cooke
Chairman, Portbury Parish Council.

Cc Portbury Technical Team
Graham Quick (North Somerset Council)
Mr Graham Quick
North Somerset Council
Planning Department

Re: Proposed Overhead Routes for 400kv Pylon Line,
Area F, Portbury, North Somerset – Visual Impact Images

Dear Graham,

I'm attaching below some digital images I have secured from National Grid’s hub in Nailsea, along with 2 images from their PEIR document.

The first 3 images are of 3-D views generated by their software, alongside my previous photo in roughly the same location. The fourth and fifth are from their PEIR document, and are full photomontages. In the last case I don’t have an image that exactly matches but I have included 2 that are close.

In Portbury we are appalled that National Grid have used so few, and selective, photos on which to base their report. I hope that these images give you some hard evidence to support your report to the Council regarding North Somerset’s view of the route options put forward in the PEIR.

I am meeting with National Grid on Monday the 23rd of September to discuss both viewpoints and assessment criteria, I hope that they can be convinced to use a more extensive range of images in order to assess the effect of route A on the streetscape and landscape around Portbury.

Yours Sincerely,

M.A.Phipps
A view looking North from Caswell Lane – at the junction with the footpath leading to Priors Woods
A view looking North and East from the Junction of the approach road to Portbury from the A369 and the footpath leading to St Mary’s Church
A view from within the streetscape of Elm Tree Park
Motorway view
View from Station Road within Portbury

Similar views – identical view not available