

Comments on South Hill Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016-2030

Dated July 2016

Introduction

At the SHARE AGM, members showed their willingness to work with the Parish Council to help develop the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) through consultation and development of Policies.

The key areas that we wish to draw to your attention are the omission of any serious renewable energy policies or the acknowledgement of the existence of South Hill Association for Renewable Energy Ltd ("SHARE").

Background – SHARE

SHARE is a Community Benefit Society in existence since June 2015. We had no formal input into the NDP because the main research into Parish opinion was carried out before this date. Our Society has a total of 77 members (some 20% of the adult population of South Hill, based on figures from the 2011 census) who wish to be involved in the renewable energy decision making process within this parish and who are prepared to make a considerable contribution to the cause of renewable energy and the more efficient use of energy. SHARE exists to support energy efficiency, the creation of renewable energy, energy security and sustainability.

This is fully explained in the Rules of The Society and in the agreed Mission, Vision and Aims, which can be read online at <http://south-hill.co.uk/share/share-member-area/>. SHARE has already demonstrated its expertise by the completion of two solar PV systems within the parish. The financial benefits stay within the parish and can be used for other energy efficiency projects.

Significant Changes

We wish to make the point that, although the government doesn't have a clear energy policy *at the moment*, we believe this will change, and the situation by 2030 could be completely altered. **Our concern** is that our natural resources could be exploited by outside developers, against the wishes of the community, and substantial profit syphoned away from South Hill. **Our aim** is that, should any major project be initiated in South Hill, planning decisions will give preference to projects in which Parish residents are closely involved, and which seek to retain the benefits of the project (financial and practical) within the Parish community. **SHARE's purpose** is to represent those members of the Parish community who wish to make this happen.

We are living in times of immense political and social change that could have a significant bearing on our lives within South Hill Parish for some time to come. It is our opinion that the NDP needs to be updated to take this into account and to try and adapt the wording and policies to suit this rapidly changing environment.

Looking to the Future

We believe that the Parish vision for the future should include a strong statement of the community's interest and involvement in sustainability, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy technologies. We need to be open to innovation, taking advantage of new government incentives and moving towards energy self-sufficiency within our community. The NDP should make provision for these opportunities as they arise.

In Summary

These comments are meant to encourage a positive approach to energy saving and the creation of renewable energy within this parish.

Prepared following consultation with the members and discussion at the AGM held on the 13th September 2016, and approved by the Board of Directors

Peter Tulloch – Director and Company Secretary
South Hill Association for Renewable Energy Ltd
23rd September 2016.