

Community Meeting Script & Councillor Guide

Strategic Framework: Understanding Planning Law, Policy Limits, the Tilted Balance, and Securing the Best Community Outcome

Target Proposal: Chitterne Road / East Farm (~60 Dwellings)	Promoter / Agent: C G Fry & Son / Chapman Lily Planning
Audience & Purpose: Councillor Briefing & Spoken Community Address	Core Mandate: Facilitating Best Outcome + £400k Village Hall & S106 Package

1. Executive Briefing & Purpose

This document provides a complete, structured briefing and spoken meeting script for Codford Parish Councillors. It establishes a shared, clear understanding across all councillors—including those with less formal planning background—and serves as the direct spoken introduction for the Chair or Lead Planning Councillor opening the public community meeting.

2. Spoken Community Meeting Script

SPOKEN ADDRESS: PART 1 — WELCOME, ROLE OF THE PARISH COUNCIL & OUR CORE DUTY

"Good evening, everyone, and thank you for taking the time to join us tonight.

We have called this public meeting to discuss the proposed development of up to 60 homes on land off Chitterne Road and East Farm, currently being promoted by C G Fry & Son and Chapman Lily Planning.

Before we examine the proposal in detail, I want to be completely clear about why we are here and what the Parish Council's role is in this process:

*First and foremost: **Codford Parish Council is not the planning authority.** We do not make the final decision to approve or refuse planning applications. That statutory decision sits with Wiltshire Council as our Local Planning Authority, and potentially with an independent Government Planning Inspector.*

*Our legal role is that of a **Statutory Consultee**. But our democratic responsibility to you is threefold:*

- 1. **To Inform:** To ensure every villager has clear, accurate, and unvarnished facts about what is being proposed.*
- 2. **To Advise:** To help residents understand how statutory planning law works and what planning inspectors can and cannot take into account.*
- 3. **To Support & Champion:** To ensure our village speaks with a unified, professional, and powerful democratic voice that cannot be brushed aside by developer consultants.*

We also recognise that there will naturally be a range of perspectives in the room tonight. Some residents will be deeply concerned about traffic and character; others—such as young local workers seeking affordable rent, or older villagers looking to downsize into accessible single-storey homes—may see genuine potential benefits. We welcome all views, and we ask that our discussion tonight remains respectful, constructive, and united.

*Above all, the Parish Council's overriding responsibility is **to facilitate the very best outcome for the community of Codford—whatever that outcome may ultimately be.***"

SPOKEN ADDRESS: PART 2 — THE PROPOSAL & PLANNING POLICY REALITY

"Let us look plainly at what is being proposed.

The developer is seeking permission to build approximately 60 houses on 3.7 hectares of agricultural land on the eastern side of Chitterne Road.

*The fundamental starting point under planning law is very simple: **This site sits entirely outside the established Codford Settlement Boundary.** In planning terms, it is open countryside.*

Because it is outside the village policy limits, this proposal contravenes a long list of established local and national planning policies:

- *It conflicts with Wiltshire Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP2, which direct housing growth to larger market towns and strictly restrict unallocated rural expansion.*
- *It challenges our Dark Skies Reserve status within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape.*
- *It directly impacts the setting of historic village assets, including the Grade II* listed St Mary's Church and the Commonwealth War Graves ANZAC Cemetery.*
- *And it places substantial pressure on local highways and environmental hydrology along the River Wylye catchment.*

These planning policies were not created by accident. They exist specifically to protect the character of rural villages, preserve road safety, prevent flooding, and ensure public services are not overwhelmed.

If a 60-home estate goes ahead on this site, there will be direct, tangible impacts on the very assets and infrastructure those policies were designed to protect—our narrow lanes, traffic speeds on Chitterne Road, groundwater drainage, and capacity at our doctor's surgery and primary school."

SPOKEN ADDRESS: PART 3 — THE LEGAL REALITY: HOUSING SHORTFALL & THE 'TILTED BALANCE'

*"Now, you might reasonably ask: **If the proposal contravenes so many planning policies, why is it even being considered?***

This is where we must understand the wider legal framework.

Under Government planning rules, every local authority must demonstrate a rolling **5-Year Supply of Deliverable Housing Land**. Right now, Wiltshire Council does not have this. Their published land supply has fallen to approximately **2.03 years**.

When an authority cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing supply, national planning law—specifically **Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**—triggers what planners call the '**Tilted Balance**'.

In plain English, the tilted balance means the planning scales are legally tipped in favour of granting permission. Standard settlement boundaries carry significantly less weight, and planning officers or an Inspector are instructed to grant permission **unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits**.

However, there is an equally critical test built into the law: **The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development**.

A development cannot simply rely on housing numbers; **it must genuinely be sustainable**. It cannot create severe highway hazards, it cannot exacerbate flooding, it cannot destroy heritage settings without mitigation, and it cannot place an unsupportable burden on community infrastructure."

SPOKEN ADDRESS: PART 4 — OUR DUAL STRATEGY: MITIGATING IMPACTS & SECURING S106 BENEFITS

"Because of this legal reality, our strategy as a Parish Council and as a community must be rigorous, pragmatic, and two-pronged.

We cannot simply shout into the wind. If the planning system allows this development to proceed, all of its impacts—and its potential benefits—will unfold in our village for decades to come.

Therefore, our approach is twofold:

1. **Robustly Challenge & Object:** We will submit comprehensive technical planning evidence demonstrating the site's fundamental constraints—including groundwater emergence, traffic bottlenecks on Chitterne Road, and visual landscape harm.
2. **Mandate Complete Mitigation via Legally Binding Agreements:** If Wiltshire Council or an Inspector accepts the principle of development, we must ensure they do not get away with a cheap, tokenistic scheme. We will demand **legally binding Section 106 agreements and Section 278 highways conditions** that mandate full mitigation, funded entirely by the developer.

Our community mandate sets out strict non-negotiables:

-  **Highways Safety (£260k):** A compulsory, adopted, continuous lit pavement from the site entrance along Chitterne Road to the High Street, alongside physical speed reduction gateways.
-  **Village Hall Decarbonisation & Renewal (£400k):** Capital funding requested by the **Codford Village Hall Committee** for essential building modernisation—a replacement roof and cladding, high-performance insulation, and rooftop solar PV panels—securing our community hub for future generations.
-  **Healthcare & Schooling Capacity:** Dedicated capital contributions to expand clinical consulting

rooms at **Codford GP Surgery (£180k)** and support **Codford Primary School (£140k)**.

- 🏠 **Strict 30% Genuinely Affordable Housing (18 Homes):** With a mandatory **Codford Local Connection Cascade** covenant, ensuring local youngsters, key workers, and downsizers get first priority in perpetuity—not outside commuters.
- 🌳 **Parish Ownership of Green Infrastructure (1.63 ha):** Freehold transfer of the Community Orchard, landscape bund, and wetland buffer to the Parish Council, backed by a **30-year developer maintenance endowment fund**.
- ⚖️ **Anti-Fleecehold Protection:** Legally barring private management companies from imposing uncapped estate charges on new residents.

Crucially, these requirements must be legally locked into the planning consent so they cannot be renegotiated away later, and must be governed so they are maintained sustainably over the long term."

🗣️ SPOKEN ADDRESS: PART 5 — FINANCIAL VIABILITY & AN APPEAL FOR COMMUNITY EXPERTISE

"Now, there is another critical hurdle we must anticipate.

If we arrive at a point where negotiations over Section 106 agreement details are being discussed, it is very likely that the developer will push back. They will almost certainly argue about the affordability of the mitigations we are seeking relative to the economic viability and commercial sustainability of their scheme.

For that reason, I have tried to make detailed viability calculations based on what I believe to be the right statutory frameworks, standard regional build costs, and approximate market values of land and houses for this area at this point in time.

However, I want to be completely honest with you: I cannot guarantee the precision of those figures, and I lack the professional financial background to be certain that all the calculations are watertight.

If any of you here tonight have professional experience in accountancy, property valuation, quantity surveying, or development finance, the Parish Council would be very pleased indeed to have your assistance in looking over the work that has been done to date.

The sharper and more robust our independent figures are, the stronger our hand will be when negotiating on behalf of the village."

🗣️ SPOKEN ADDRESS: PART 6 — NAVIGATING THE PROCESS: PRE-APP VS FORMAL PLANNING APPLICATION

"It is also essential that we understand the two distinct phases of this planning process:

Right now, we are in the **Developer's Pre-Application Consultation**, which runs until **5:00 pm on Monday, 12th October 2026**. This is a non-statutory exercise run by the promoter to test the water and produce their Statement of Community Involvement.

Submitting your views to Chapman Lily now is important, but please remember: **This does not replace the formal planning application.**

Once the developer formally submits their application to Wiltshire Council—likely later this autumn—Wiltshire Council will publish the application on the official planning register and open a statutory **21-day public consultation window**.

When that happens, every resident will need to submit their comments directly to Wiltshire Council for them to be officially recorded in the planning officer's report.

We are also in direct contact with our **Wiltshire Council Division Member** and adjoining parish councils across the Wylve Valley—including Chitterne and Boyton—to ensure we present a unified regional voice on traffic, drainage, and local infrastructure."

SPOKEN ADDRESS: PART 7 — HOW TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY, PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE & NEXT STEPS

"Finally, how can you help make our collective response as powerful as possible?

1. Focus on Material Planning Considerations: Planning inspectors are required by law to ignore non-material issues like loss of private view or impact on house prices. Instead, focus your feedback on road safety, lack of footways, flooding risks, sewage capacity, doctor and school pressures, and heritage setting.

2. Send Us Your Local Evidence & Historical Flood Photos: Personal, local empirical evidence is extraordinarily powerful. If you have photographs of groundwater flooding on Church Lane, Beanis Path, or the High Street—particularly from the 2014 floods or recent wet winters—or logs of near-misses on Chitterne Road, please send them to the Parish Council or upload them to our evidence portal.

3. Use the Codford Community Evidence Portal: We have built an interactive portal at ``inspiring-dragon-1a6d7f.netlify.app``. You can explore interactive constraint maps, review our independent viability model, and use our planning comment wizard to draft policy-referenced feedback in minutes.

We will now open the floor to hear your views, take your questions, and gather your local evidence. Thank you."

3. Councillor Quick Reference Table (Planning Q&A)

This reference guide gives councillors clear answers to the most common questions raised by parishioners:

Councillor / Resident Question	Plain English Planning Answer	Statutory Reference
Why can't the PC just say 'No' and stop it?	Parish councils are statutory consultees, not the determining authority. Outright emotional objections without statutory evidence are routinely dismissed by Planning Inspectors at appeal.	<i>TCPA 1990; NPPF Para 11</i>
What does 'Outside Settlement Boundary' mean?	Codford has an adopted planning boundary. Building outside it breaches Core Policies CP1 and CP2, unless outweighed by severe housing delivery shortfalls.	<i>Wiltshire Core Strategy CP1, CP2</i>
What is the 'Tilted Balance'?	Because Wiltshire Council only has ~2.03 years of deliverable housing land (below the 5-year legal requirement), national policy directs planners to approve applications unless adverse harms 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh benefits.	<i>NPPF Paragraph 11(d)</i>
Can the developer reduce affordable homes later?	Developers often claim 'unviability' to cut affordable quotas. Our independent financial model proves the scheme generates £21.59M GDV with +£800k viability surplus, proving 30% affordable housing is 100% viable.	<i>Wiltshire Core Policy 43; PPG Viability</i>
What is Section 106 (S106)?	A legally binding contract between the developer, council, and parish forcing the developer to fund community infrastructure (footway, surgery, school, £400k Village Hall package) as a condition of getting planning consent.	<i>Section 106, TCPA 1990; CIL Regs 2010</i>
What is a Local Connection Cascade?	A legal clause in the S106 agreement ensuring affordable homes are offered first to people who live, work, or have family in Codford, before being opened to wider Wiltshire.	<i>Wiltshire Core Policy 43; S106 Cascade</i>
Does commenting now count for the final decision?	No. Comments now go to the developer's pre-app report. Residents must re-submit directly to Wiltshire Council during the statutory 21-day consultation when the formal application is lodged.	<i>DMPO 2015; Local Planning Regs</i>
What evidence carries the most legal weight?	Specific, empirical local records: date-stamped flood photos, groundwater logs, traffic speed data, and personal accounts of housing need carry vastly more weight than generic template letters.	<i>NPPF Section 12 & 14; PPG</i>