

**Witherley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan  
Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Group  
7.30pm Wednesday 5 February 2020, Witherley Parish Room**

**Present:** Kay Conway (Chair), Brian Bates, Denise Bloomer, Helen Bullivant, Brian Conway, Maureen Cook, Julia Deeming, Tony Deeming, Laura Dyer, Dayle Flude, Anji Forsyth, Roger Laine, Pat Roberts, Geoff Robinson, Mark Simpson, Rhiannon Taylor (JD & LD left the meeting during item 5)

**Apologies:** Rob Flude, Samantha Ridgway, Barry Smith, Richard Trivett

**Welcome:** KC welcomed all the members from the various theme groups who are now attending the Steering Group. KC started the meeting by reminding everyone that the purpose of the Neighbourhood Development Plan was for us to be able to be in control of shaping sustainable development in our Parish.

**1. Declaration of interests**

The meeting noted the following interests:

Mark Simpson declared an interest in the land owned by his family farm in Fenny Drayton.

Brian Bates declared that his son has planning permission for a bungalow on Post Office Lane, Witherley.

**2. Past Minutes**

Minutes from 6 January were agreed with no amendments.

**Matters Arising**

All household survey respondents have been contacted and checked whether they are happy for their email addresses to be retained on the database to enable us to keep them up-to-date on progress with the NDP. Only a small number asked for their details to be removed from the list which is now GDPR compliant for the purpose outlined.

At its meeting on 7 January the Housing Group reviewed all the comments from the Environment Group and some amendments were made as a result and also in response to comments received from some of the landowners. KC explained the role of the RCC to the meeting. KC has spoken to RCC about our desire to move at pace, ideally without a SEA. There is some uncertainty about the role of the RCC going forwards as financial support from HBBC hasn't yet been confirmed.

**3. Financial report**

AF gave the financial report which showed that we have now spent all the available budget. The Parish Council has agreed to fund the current gap of £295.68. More funds can be applied for in April to enable us to complete the process.

#### **4. Update from Housing Group**

BC gave a presentation about the process the housing group has undertaken to date. He reminded the Steering Group that the key drivers for the Parish Council in creating the Plan was to ensure that we were able to do 2 things: Firstly, to provide new housing to meet the needs as identified by parish residents; secondly, to proactively manage the location and scale of any new developments in our parish.

BC then went on to recap and describe the process of identifying sites that the Housing Group followed:

- 14 landowners were contacted to see if they were interested in offering land for development in line with the needs we had outlined. This included the sites that had previously been submitted as part of HBBC's SHLAA as well as other landowners in the Parish. 7 landowners didn't respond.
- 12 sites were put forward which were then assessed by Group members using desk top information and site visits. All of this was reviewed by Derek Doran. The draft site assessments were then sent out to the landowners for them to review and respond to if they didn't agree.
- 4 landowners challenged the site assessments.
- These challenges, along with the comments from the Environment Group were then reviewed again at the Housing Group meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> January and several amendments were made. In conclusion the Group identified the top 3 scoring assessments to invite for a face to face meeting to discuss their submissions.
- All other landowners who had submitted sites were written to, confirming that we would not be proceeding with their sites.

Meetings were held with each of the 3 top scoring site owners. Derek Doran from Your Locale attended all 3 meetings. All the meetings were constructive and positive. Key points made during the meetings were as follows:

##### **Fenny Drayton site**

In attendance from Housing group were: Barry Smith, Maureen Cook & Brian Conway

- Owner recognised that site was only viable if it gets the backing of the NDP
- He is willing to meet the 50% affordable housing but needs the site to be viable so this could affect the number of dwellings he will propose
- Owner willing to provide additional recreational open space and possible facilities (i.e. pub) for the village as part of the development
- Access to site appears, at first assessment, to be deliverable.
- Owner highlighted that part of the site is designated as brownfield.

##### **Chapel Lane site**

In attendance from Housing group were: Barry Smith & Maureen Cook

- Owner challenged several of the scores, but the majority were jointly agreed.

- No clear resolution was given to the challenges of access to the site which raises questions about its deliverability
- Some amendments to the assessment will be made but the overall ranking of this being the least preferred of the three site options was understood and not contested by the owner.

### **Hunt Kennels site**

In attendance from Housing group were: Kay Conway, Maureen Cook & Brian Conway

- There were no challenges to the assessment, so the score remains the same.
- Owner confirmed that they aim to repurpose the buildings rather than demolish.
- Accepted that several surveys would need to be undertaken before development.
- The owner indicated that they might need to utilise some of the site beyond the brownfield site for access.
- They will come back swiftly to us with the size of site .

In conclusion the recommendation for taking forward and including in the plan as our two preferred sites at the Drop-in events at the end of February are the Fenny Drayton & Hunt Kennels sites.

BC also informed the meeting that as all the assessments have been reviewed and communicated to all the landowners there would now be no further changes made to the site assessments. Further amendments will only be made if suggested through the Regulation 14 review.

### **5. Feedback on draft Plan**

KC took the meeting through the draft plan and the outstanding comments from Gary Kirk. It was noted that the RCC want the final draft of the plan by **13<sup>th</sup> February** in order to prepare the Drop-in boards.

Members of the Environment Group expressed satisfaction with the document. HB raised the fact that the policies around the bat foraging and great crested newts are yet untested so she thinks we may need to be clearer on the evidence that we are using to back these policies and include these as appendices so that they are available should they need to be referred to by the examiner. This was agreed by other members of the meeting. It was also agreed that we should put in a hedgerow policy. The group had included an action that where a tree was felled to make way for development, three trees should be planted to replace it, not necessarily at the original site.

Also discussed was the potential to look at how we could, through the Plan, encourage tree planting and the development of woodland sites by landowners. This would assist with the parish's bio-diversity and the reduction of our carbon footprint. There was very strong and enthusiastic support for this idea. Agreed that this should be included in the plan as a community action. Environment Group to propose wording for a community action.

The Community & Sustainability Group agreed to look again at the wording of the flooding section and the related community action. They will meet to finalise these elements.

**6. Photos**

It was agreed that all photographs that have the potential to be included in the Plan to illustrate policies should be uploaded to the main Dropbox facility. It was agreed that TD select any photos representing Ratcliffe Culey, MC select Fenny Drayton's, DF select Atterton's and BC Witherley's.

**7. Date of next meeting**

A provisional date of 11<sup>th</sup> March was agreed, dependent on venue availability.