

Minutes of Neighbourhood Planning Meeting Held in Cross House on 6th February 2014, at 7.00pm.

Steering Committee Members present were: Malcolm Bell (Chair), Chris Flooks, Peter Hayes, James Hare.

Planning Aid Volunteer: Philip Turner

Apologies: Malcolm Knowles, Lucy Knowles, Tony Durrant,, Bruce Ansell, Louise Hayling, Keith Owen, Pilar Owen, George Zaidmann,

ITEM COMMENT

- 1.0** MB welcomed Philip Turner from Planning Aid to the meeting. Minutes of the last meeting (8/1/14) were reviewed. MB summarized ongoing issues: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be operational from April 2015 (replacing s106); a report on Bramley's economy; an upcoming meeting with Thames Water; site assessments.
- MB reported on a BDBC Planning & Infrastructure meeting he had recently attended with TD. There is a proposal to increase housing allocation from 748 to 807 P/A, plus the withdrawal of 450 houses from the land east of Basingstoke. This makes a shortfall of housing and further sites have to be identified and await assessment. The meeting recommended retaining the 748 figure. The shortfall in land availability means that all communities are open to developers. Charles Church is likely to submit a planning application for 200 houses in Minchens Lane in February/March.
- 2.0** **Briefing for Philip Turner on the NDP.** MB said that objectives had been presented to the community and the committee was ready for policies to be written. PT indicated that these should not include major infrastructure projects. MB suggested that recreation, transport and preserving views were key priorities for the community.
- MB said that a consultant was now needed to write the policies, drawing on the objectives and the evidence base: 22 days of work were anticipated. 4 people had been approached and one had already responded. PT said that he would make a pre-contribution to this work (as a volunteer) and this would cut down on the number of consultancy days required. MB added that he and CF would attend a meeting with BDBC on 10th Feb. to see what kind of support the borough would give.
- 3.0** **Economy: Paper from CF.** CF had produced statistics on employment in the village. 79 out of 539 jobs were filled by local people (many at Cherry Blossom Home). From the 2011 census it was found that 199 people in Bramley worked from home. This was 6.6% of the working population of 2937. For the borough the percentage of home workers was 8.4%. Discussion suggested that work at home should be encouraged: PT thought that future developments could include live/work units or studio houses: fast broadband would be vital.
- 50% of the population of Bramley is working, but only 8.7% of workers use the train. PT thought it would be useful to compare statistics with other villages with a station e.g. Mortimer. It was suggested that there might be a survey of workers who leave the village by car but it could be logistically difficult. PT suggested that the notion of 'small scale employment' would be suitable for Bramley going forward.
- 4.0** **Site assessments.** CF reported that he and LH had been looking at a number of sites to the west of the parish (inc. Church Farm, Church Farm Cottages); also Beech Farm (off Lane End). CF said that there were drainage issues with water off the fields to the west going under the railway line; he produced recent photos. to underline the point. CF said that Thames Water suggested that their current systems could only take 40 more houses in the village. He and MB will be meeting with the water company on 18th Feb.

PT thought it was very thorough to look over all the fields. He gave the view that the committee should talk to the MOD about their land in the longer term; also to all landowners (principally the Stratfield Saye Estate and the Clift family). He underlined the need for strategic environmental assessments and advised on keeping a paper trail of such assessments throughout the planning process. MB said that such assessments had already been done for Minchens Lane and Strawberry Fields; PT suggested asking BDBC if they were happy with them. He added the example of Slougham (mid-Sussex) whose Plan had failed because of insufficient heed being taken of environmental assessments.

James Hare inferred that Stratfield Saye would be putting in a planning application for their site on Strawberry Fields alongside that of Charles Church on Minchens Lane! That being the case, Bramley faces not 200 houses but 400 houses against the Local Plan of 200 houses allocated via the Neighbourhood Plan. This is ahead of both the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan being approved. As Basingstoke and Deane do not have a 5 yr. land availability programme as reported above, Parishes are vulnerable to such housing developments.

PT proposed an approach to the rural council HARAH (formerly CAH) who acted as enablers for affordable rural housing. They would carry out a local housing needs assessment (probably for a fee). The figure of 76 houses to meet local needs was raised – was this figure accurate if people from other villages were putting Bramley as an option? This figure could also be checked with BDBC

5.0 Types of possible development sites. PT suggested looking at:

- Housing exception sites – these would lie outside the settlement boundary and yield small numbers of social housing. This option gave the community more control over who lived there.
- Self-build only sites – he said that there was a demand for these (nationally); they are good for smaller builders; provide better quality housing: Beech Farm was a possible site.

PT advised on the viability of sites: What would the developers' contribution be? Would the demands from HCC education, the water company and the community stack up?

6.0 Tips on preparing the Plan. PT made a number of points:

- Focus on planning and land use; everything else goes into a revised Parish Plan
- You need to have a strategic gap approach
- Consider surrounding landscape, protected views; ancient woodland (where applicable)
- Look at 'design character' for developments
- Distinguish between an aspiration and a firm proposal
- Keep your number of objectives small; the rest go to the Parish Council

PT said that he would feed back to MB on the 4 sets of objectives.

Next meeting: tbc. PT will attend.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.