

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP MEETING

28 February, 2013

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Present:

Phil Applin	Trevor Honychurch
Neil Basnett	Roger Matthews
Charles Bates	Harry Nicholls
Tom Baxter	Neil Pearce (Planning Consultant)
David Bowie	Richard Rose
Carol Cholerton	John Scampion
Elizabeth Dixon	Dave Savage
Andrew Dow	David Stephenson
Peter Emmerson	Sarah Summers (Clerk)
Mark Haselden (Chairman)	

3 Members of the Public were present

1) Apologies

Apologies were received from Helen Crook, Ann Hicks, David Langman, Kate Rolfe, Tim Sanders and Moira Tsolakis.

2) Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 January, 2013 were approved as a correct record.

3) Chairman's Report

The Chairman advised that in the month since the last Neighbourhood Plan Meeting, a lot of activity has gone on behind the scenes. Mark and David Stephenson have met with Dave Nash from the District Council, who is charged with producing the Core Strategy. It appears from that meeting, and confirmation from the Leader, Chris Saint, and the Chief Executive, Paul Lankester, at a subsequent meeting, that the Plan and the Core Strategy appears to be broadly in parallel.

Mark gave a brief recap on where the plan is going and what the plan is going to look like, advising that a lot of last year's work, written primarily by David Morgan on the relatively uncontroversial areas, is currently being edited by Trevor Honychurch. These issues which revolve around the character, heritage, design, and open spaces and trees, are all relatively straightforward.

The Group must now concentrate on the more difficult areas which mainly relate to providing for the housing need, making the town centre vibrant with a strong local economy, in a sustainable manner without damaging the character of the town.

Mark advised that we do not have the housing numbers from SDC as yet, but the outcome of the Shottery judicial review may very well have implications on the numbers of houses for the District. If the District has to accommodate 12,000 houses, rather than 8,000 then we may have to find a further 4,000 houses, as there is a ceiling to the dispersal approach. There are potentially, three options available:

- New Settlement e.g. around Gaydon
- Major expansion of Stratford. This could help fund new infrastructure such as an Eastern Relief Road. (See map attached as Appendix 'A')
- Combination of above, but note infrastructure constraints to Stratford

If the 800 houses in Shottery get the go-ahead, plus 800 additional houses on brownfield sites, with the other small developments already in the pipeline, it would appear possible to accommodate 2,000 houses without using greenfield sites.

Mark confirmed that at the special Town Council workshop on 19 February, Council gave unanimous support and a very clear mandate that the Plan should look at brownfield development first and the regeneration area as identified.

4) Presentations

4.1 **Regeneration Area**

David Stephenson gave a brief presentation using maps, which are circulated as Appendix 'B' as part of these minutes, detailing the area in question, which includes the canal, Masons Road, the old football stadium, the DCS site and possibly Western Road.

4.2 **Business Park**

Brownfield development within the regeneration area would have to be done in conjunction with a new business park on the A46, as suggested in the draft Core Strategy. Peter Emmerson presented a comprehensive Power Point presentation which identified five possible sites, and detailed the advantages and disadvantages of each site. Peter made it clear, that these were just his ideas, and those of the Parish he represents, Old Stratford & Drayton. The presentation is circulated as Appendix 'C' and forms part of these minutes.

David Stephenson was asked to comment on WCC's reaction to highways issues. An official response is awaited, but it was implied that we don't need to worry too much about highways implications for sites off the A46 at this time.

4.3 **Town Centre**

Neil Basnett's presentation on the town centre is also circulated as part of the minutes as Appendix 'D'.

John Scampion commented on the Stratford Society's interest in the historic spine, which is the pilgrimage route from the Birthplace to Holy Trinity, containing the most and the best heritage buildings in the town. In order to provide better facilities for the public on the spine route, the Society would like to advance the concept of pedestrianizing that route, by organising a trial period, possibly in September.

It could either be a complete closure, or partial closure using chicanes. Any closure would have a knock-on effect to traffic movement within the town and approaches, and before WCC can make an order to facilitate this trial, they would need to be satisfied that the different interests are all in favour of a trial. Therefore, any trial application will require a prior effective consultation programme.

John advised that he sees the proposed pedestrianisation of the route linking with the Neighbourhood Plan in that there are a number of principles in common:

- a) Preservation of the town's historic centre, and the enhancement of the experience for residents and visitors;
- b) The town centre should be prosperous and flourish.

He believes that the concept of the pedestrianisation principle should be tested as the Plan goes forward and suggested that the consultation process should be harmonised.

4.4 **Communication and Consultation**

Richard explained that we have reached the critical stages in how we communicate and market the plan in the lead up to the Open Days which are planned for early summer, possibly June. His detailed presentation, which forms part of these minutes as Appendix 'E' gives a clear route plan in the communication and consultation campaign.

Richard also advised that with the agreement of the Town Council, his group has engaged Charlie Neal, an ex-weather presenter from ITV who is also a trained journalist who will help in getting the message across in a succinct and catchy manner. She is not being employed to write the Plan, nor the summary, her involvement will be producing the material to raise awareness. A series of workshops have been scheduled to progress this.

5) Update from the Planning Consultant

Nothing specific to report at this time.

6) Public Participation

6.1 Mr Ralph Brown considered that concentrating on the canal area would be a vote winner. 'You need key triggers which will make people come out and vote'. He also raised concerns regarding Town Square, car parking, underutilised and unmaintained local paths.

6.2 Mr Tony Jefferson warned of apathy within the town, which shouldn't be underestimated. He also advised that Cllr Ron Cockings has undertaken a survey on pedestrianisation and the result was 2-1 against.

5) Summary

Mark summed up by advising that the difficult topics are: regeneration, Business Park, town centre, shared space/pedestrianisation and parking. He advised that we need to consult on these issues quite extensively and reach conclusions speedily. There are three outputs:

- i. Check we have it right;
- ii. We need evidence to show the Plan is sound;
- iii. We must raise awareness to ensure as big a turn out at referendum as possible, without it, single issue groups could potentially scupper the result.

The chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:25pm

Attachments: Appendix 'A' - Eastern Relief Road Map
Appendix 'B' - Regeneration Area Maps
Appendix 'C' - Business Park Presentation
Appendix 'D' - Town Centre Presentation
Appendix 'E' - Communications & Consultation Presentation