



WEST HOATHLY PARISH COUNCIL

representing Highbrook, Selsfield, Sharpthorne, Tyes Cross and West Hoathly

Neighbourhood Plan Task Force Meeting Thursday 25th April 2014 in West Hoathly School

Attendees

Ken Allfree, Paul Brown, John Cull, John Downe, Sylvia Downe, Keith Faricy, Neil Greatorex, Dave Gunter, Andrew Perkins, Lesley Perkins, Stephen Sykes, Melvyn Willie, John Young

Also attending:

Helen Schofield
Chris Bowden (Navigus)

Others present

Anne Gunter, Mrs Knight, Anne Sykes

Apologies

Apologies were received from Anne Halligey

Introduction

The purpose of the meeting was to consider the assessments made for each of the sites against the sustainability criteria agreed by the Task Force at the meeting on 25th March.

Chris Bowden had prepared a draft assessment as agreed by the Task Force. This was to ensure consistency and to provide an independent perspective to the sites. The draft assessment had been circulated to Task Force members prior to the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Those present were asked if they had any interests to declare. Mr and Mrs Gunter were near neighbours of the Cookhams site. Other interests had been declared at meetings held on 5th March and 25th March. No further interests were declared.

It was noted that the request for a copy of the Sharpthorne Community Action Group manifesto was still outstanding.

Site Assessment

It was proposed that the Task Force review each site and discuss any changes. If consensus could not be reached points would be noted for later resolution.

Overall Questions

Do the assessment criteria carry different weightings? As had been discussed previously by the Task Force this is not a scoring system and the criteria need to be considered together when coming to an overall assessment. This is not a statistical exercise and judgements made need to be fair and consistent across all sites.

The draft being reviewed has been prepared by Chris Bowden, as an independent planning consultant, based on information known about each site (which included site visits).

How will public opinion be assessed? The purpose of this task force meeting is to assess each site from a sustainable planning perspective taking into account the

objectives of the West Hoathly Neighbourhood Plan. This should eliminate some sites leaving a short list of sites with the potential to support these objectives. Which of these sites are then built into policies within the Neighbourhood Plan will depend on answers to questions that need to be asked of landowners/developers and a view taken of local public opinion.

Any revised draft plan will undergo 2 further, 6-week public consultations before independent examination and referendum.

It was noted in discussion

- The majority of sites were too small in scale to drive specific traffic calming measures. However a policy in the draft plan does identify traffic calming as the top priority for Community Infrastructure Levy money associated with any Neighbourhood Plan development.
- The assessments have been done based on the sites and their potential to deliver against the Neighbourhood Plan objectives not against ideas raised by developers.

Criteria on which there was no clear consensus were related to criteria for individual sites related to traffic and views and open countryside.

Hangdown Mead

Distinctiveness of parish settlements - should it be neutral rather than amber?

Bluebell Woods

Previously developed land - should it be light green rather than neutral?

There was a consensus on changing the traffic criterion to amber rather than neutral on the basis of the difficulty of emerging from Station Road onto Top Road.

Bluebell Railway Station Goods yard

No queries

Webbs Mead

Addressing housings needs - should this be dark green rather than light green?

AONB - should this be amber or neutral rather than red?

Traffic - should this be neutral rather than light green?

North of Top Road

AONB - should this be neutral or amber/red (like Webbs Mead) rather than light green?

Site adjacent to Cookhams

Previously developed land - should this be amber rather than neutral?

Traffic - should it be amber rather than neutral?

Workhouse Platt / Langridge,

No queries

Land adjacent 9 Bayhams Field

No queries

West Hoathly garage

No queries

It was noted that in most cases these changes were unlikely to change the overall assessment or deliverability.

The Task Force agreed that there were 3 sites that did not meet the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and their recommendation was that these were not part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The question was asked as to whether, if there were 3-4 sites that between them satisfied the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan, what were the benefits to any front loading being on only one site or on multiple sites. The view was a single site may be less disruptive. Also it was more likely that focusing on one site in the short term would mean the objectives for affordable or smaller homes could be better achieved

The Next Steps

The assessment had highlighted specific questions that needed to be asked about certain sites. Landowners/developers have been asked for their availability to meet or have a telephone conference in the next couple of weeks to bring them up to date on progress and get clarification on any specific questions for their sites. The Parish Council are to hold an extraordinary meeting on Wednesday 7th May when the outcomes from the task force will be discussed and the outstanding issues resolved.

At this stage there was no expectation of the Task Force needing to meet again in the near future.

Attendees were thanked for their time.

Chris Bowden was also thanked for his time and input into the process.