

EXHIBITION FEBRUARY 2019 RESPONSES FROM SITE OWNERS AND VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

ASHINGTON SCHOOL

Dear Karen,

It was recommended that we indicate the views of the school regarding the Housing Plan, while we have not had time to formally discuss and present a view of the entire governing board I thought it might help if we provided comments from Mrs Fairweather, Head Teacher and myself Mr Bunce, Chair of Governors and at a later date we can provide a more collective view from the governing board.

Comments

- We are pleased that you are proposing to provide safe access and protect the area we use for Forest Schools, this is a huge selling point for the school and benefit to the children and we would not accept any plans without this area being protected
- We are concerned that we will lose our allotment which the children enjoy and has huge benefits especially to the special education needs children within our school and we would ask that the small piece of land be gifted to the school
- We are concerned with the safety of the children with the increase in traffic generated down Church Lane and potentially Rectory Lane, we would want to see robust and thought through plans and measures from HDC to protect the safety of our children as they travel to and from school on what already is a very busy route

Regards

Mr M Bunce
Chair of Governors, Ashington COE School

Mrs P Fairweather
Head Teacher, Ashington COE School

STEERING GROUP RESPONSE: Forest Schools and School allotment will be 'protected' in the ANP. Walkway routes have been identified in the ANP to encourage safe pedestrian movement around the village.

THAKEHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Our planning group's latest meeting concluded:

'Members received a summary of Ashington PC's initial pre-formal-consultation ideas about housing provision in their emerging plan. While welcoming the realistic quantum of 225 new houses envisaged (similar in scale to Thakeham's contribution), members were concerned that all of the three currently favoured sites were located along and mainly outside Ashington's current western built-up-area boundary. Adoption of these three sites would result in a significant expansion of this boundary, encroaching towards the Thakeham parish boundary around Warminghurst/Park Lane. Although there was mention that the largest and most westerly site (site 6, Church Farm) might include a country park/leisure area on its western side, a substantial loss of countryside is still implied. This seems to be in tension with HDPF Policy 27 relating to coalescence of existing settlements, and parts of the TNP (including potential loss of 'valued views and landscapes'). Members therefore agreed to send feedback to Ashington PC that flags these concerns, signals that TPC finds site 6 particularly problematic, and encourages reconsideration of some other sites to avoid the BUAB expanding westward in an unbalanced way.'

STEERING GROUP RESPONSE: built development will not significantly encroach towards Thakeham Parish Boundary nor its own built development boundary. Development on Site 6 is to be on the eastern edge of the site with Country Park/Sports pitches to the west to provide an adequate landscape buffer. Development is less than substantial and goes no/little further west than that on Site 1. There are significant benefits in development of 3 adjoining sites and the creation of a 'masterplan'.

SITE 10 BARTON WILLMORE

RE: Neighbourhood Plan Preferred Sites drop-in event

Thank you for providing us with the opportunity to comment on the Neighbourhood Plan Group's Preferred Sites drop-in event. We are disappointed that the Council do not consider our site favourably for allocation in this instance, as we feel that it is well located in relation to the wider village, and presents a sustainable opportunity for locating growth in the village.

As per your invitation letter on 14 January 2019, I note that at this juncture you are seeking factual comments on the presented facts for the sites that have been proposed for allocation, and you do not seek representations on the merits of other sites that were promoted. As such, I set out below comments on the sites identified for allocation.

We note that you will be undertaking a Regulation 14 consultation in April/May 2019, when further background information and evidence will be provided for the allocations proposed as well as in relation to the other sites promoted, such as Land at Rectory Lane, Ashington (Site 10). We will be making representations to the Neighbourhood Plan at that stage, once the further information has been published.

Sites 5 and 6: Land at Church Farm and Church Farm House

Sites 5 and 6 have been chosen to provide the greatest proportion of development in Ashington through the Neighbourhood Plan (150 homes). However, the proposed access to these sites is directly adjacent to the Grade II* St Peter and St Paul's Church, as well as Grade II Church Farm House.

As set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, there are 8 basic conditions which an Examiner would be assessing the Neighbourhood Plan against, and which a Neighbourhood Plan must meet before it can proceed to a referendum.

Of note, the second condition that a draft Neighbourhood Plan Order is required to meet is: "having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses"

Further, and in addition to the above, the Environment objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is stated to seek to conserve and enhance heritage assets.

Given the above, it is critical that the Neighbourhood Plan Group have considered whether the allocation of 150 homes in this location, to be accessed alongside the Grade II* listed building, would have harm to the significance of the building or its setting, in order for the plan to be passed through Examination. We raise concern that the likely significant highway improvement works required along Church Close, as well as the impact of increased vehicular activity, may have an impact on the setting of the listed building, which would be contrary to the basic tests for a Neighbourhood Plan to meet in order to pass to referendum.

It is also important that this is considered more fully at this stage, as any allocations would inevitably need to be considered as a planning application in the future. For any application, the Local Planning Authority would be required to consult Historic England, and consider the impacts of the development on the Listed Building. This would determine whether 150 homes could be accommodated, and would outweigh any harm to the Listed Buildings as per Section 16 of the NPPF 2018.

If the Neighbourhood Plan Group are proposing to use the Neighbourhood Plan allocations to meet their apportioned housing requirement, which will be set out in Horsham's Local Plan Review, then the Neighbourhood Plan Group will need to be certain that the housing allocations are deliverable and could achieve permission for the number of homes stated. If the allocated sites cannot deliver the quantum of units proposed, such as due to its relationship to the Listed Building, this could have an impact on the Horsham's housing land supply and housing delivery test results, which could lead to speculative development in the future. Therefore, it is important that the proposed allocations have been fully considered and are deliverable.

Summary

We would recommend that the impact of the proposed allocations on the Grade II* Listed Church is further considered, in order to ensure the allocations are deliverable to meet the requisite housing target for Ashington. Furthermore, Other sites, such as Site 10, are less constrained in this regard and, therefore, would be well placed to provide alternative allocation.

We would be happy to meet with the Neighbourhood Plan Group to discuss the potential for Site 10 further.

Yours sincerely,
Jen Samuelson
Senior Planner

STEERING GROUP RESPONSE: Sites 5 & 6 are currently undertaking a highways and heritage assessment to check that highways access and protection of the Listed buildings can be achieved.

ASHINGTON SCHOOL HOUSE TRUST (SITE 15)

The Ashington School House Trust would like to comment that any proposed developments safeguard the countryside context and view of the school and land thereon. The Trust would like to see the provision of land for Forest school and school allotment protected for the future long term use of the school on its present site and to allow it grows in pupil numbers over the longer term as the village continues to expand .

The Trust would also like to ensure that any future building developments, and the extra village traffic caused, is managed to the highest levels of safety for the children, staff and families accessing the school.

with our prayers and thanks

Bruce on behalf of the Trustees of the Ashington School House Trust

STEERING GROUP RESPONSE: Forest Schools and School allotment will be 'protected' in the ANP. Walkway routes have been identified in the ANP to encourage safe pedestrian usage. Further expansion of the village is beyond the scope of this Neighbourhood Plan.

ASHINGTON COMMUNITY CENTRE (SITES 12 & 13)

Response to the Neighbourhood Plan Exhibition

Thank you for inviting the Trustees to the Neighbourhood Plan Exhibition. Many visited the exhibition while the others read the material afterwards. Although early days and necessarily high level at this stage the exhibition was interesting, engaging and informative. It has been many, many months' work and the value of it is coming to fruition, well done.

Working Together

Collaboration: The Trustees agreed that the ACCT should work in partnership with the APC to develop the detail proposals so that the end result is a harmonious agreement benefitting the interests of the people in the Ashington vicinity. We support your recent observation regarding the avoidance of duplicating work – which should be one focus of future discussions - and naturally we will need to have some discussions of what that means. Any successful collaboration will need all parties to listen and take seriously the plans and needs of each other.

I would also like to acknowledge and concur with the point made Graham at the exhibition that the point of the NP is to assert some control over the inevitable development of the residential village. The ACCT is supportive of this and while there have been occasional disconnections we are committed to a collaborative two-way relationship with the APC and supportive of the NP process. I am hopeful that we will be shortly enshrining this in a mutual accord arising from the Joint Working Party.

Collaboration: You also recently mentioned a desire to avoid duplication and we wholeheartedly agree. We welcome this if it means a genuine collaboration. One such area we might work on more closely together is the extent to which there is a need for further pitches and if so, how these can be realised in such a way that enhances the existing provision and is not divisive by rendering existing it less desirable. A proper impact assessment of such space needs to be considered in conjunction with stakeholders.

Heart of the Village

We were all hugely supportive of the 'Heart of the Village' concept (the area of school/church/community centre). The Trustees were struck by the choice of sites and how they expanded the village in a way that places the heart of the village much more at the geographical centre. We recognise that as the village expands it will be important to have more facilities – recreational, educational and possibly commercial and health sector - at the heart of the village and well as the extra houses.

Collaboration: We support the development of this area and we believe that developing the Heart of the Village should be a mainstay of the NP. Again, we would be delighted to work with you on this.

Traffic

We noted that this would also mean a significant increase in traffic and we make the following observations:

- Careful planning of traffic flows is essential especially in the Foster Lane/Church Lane area which is already a blackspot at peak times;
- Collaboration: We would be happy to work with APC/WSCC to consider how ACCT may be able to help smooth the Church Lane / Foster Lane tunings and bends around the Scout Hut and the Church;
- We note that the choice of areas could open the possibility for a circular bus route that would service the west and heart of the village and also serve to better connect the Penn Gardens area to the village heart which in turn increases community access to the heart. We recommend that this is considered as part of the forthcoming deliberations. We do however recognise that the APC will wish to avoid making such a route attractive as a rat run;
- Car Parking is already an issue in the heart of the village at peak times. The Trust is pleased to offer its facilities to ease this situation whenever possible e.g. our car parks are open to Church and School when there are no large events, minibus and warden parking, and we worked with the wardens to relocate recreational parking that was causing a noise disturbance.

We support the need for more free parking in this area;

- Collaboration: While car parking in site 5 would be welcome, especially for the Church, we recognise that this may be seen as too far away from the school at peak times. The Trust has earmarked a portion of the land around the centre for an extension to the existing car park and would like to work toward this goal in partnership with the APC.

Working with Other Organisations

We consider it essential that we work to support other organisations around the village as it is in our objects to serve the recreational, physical and mental development of all residents in the Ashington vicinity:

- In particular we actively support the Youth Club, Scouts, and Wardens. Upkeeping the fabric of buildings is a considerable burden on small organisations with few funds, so we are working with them to agree new ways of supporting them e.g. by amending the lease arrangements;
- We are considering the future provision for these organisations beyond the life of the current buildings and Collaboration: would like to work with the APC and the organisations to realise a mutually supportive future. We believe that keeping the centre, the Scouts and the Youth Club closely located is essential to developing the heart;
- You will be very familiar with the original 'Phase 2' plans when you completed Phase 1. Phase 2 proposes an extra building and extra parking. The Trust is entering a strategy refresh where we will consider our position going forward but it seems likely that we will identify a need for a new pavilion, youth and scout facilities, extra hall and parking. If so, we consider these ideal for inclusion in CIL considerations.
- Looking forward 10-20 years it is clear that the village will be significantly larger. Phase 2 SEEDA and AIRS standards suggest half a square metre extra community space for every new house; and you will be aware of the original village plan to have two halls and pavilion and more car parking on its present site.

Collaboration: Discussing the outcome of the refresh with the APC (in addition others of course) will be an important part of our working together.

Developing the Heart of the Village and Supporting the School

We believe that developing the Heart of the Village should be a mainstay of the NP. Referring to our purpose the Trust recognises that that the School also serves to younger residents of the village and we look forward to working with them with and other youth stakeholders as the NP develops.

We support the provision and preservation of facilities that further our goals and the development of the heart of the village. For Ashington School this would include the forest school and similar items (e.g. allotments). It seems to us that it is desirable that the school is located at the heart of the village and as such we would support space for it to expand when needed (noting the traffic point above). With 225 houses in this plan, and presumably more in future plans, this seems inevitable at some point. We

comment on this as an organisation with a stake in the development of the heart.

CIL Monies

I am sure that you will advise if I misunderstand the situation regarding CIL monies. We recognise that CIL monies will be available from the developments but that the default level is 15% returning to Ashington. We support the idea of encouraging different organisation to also make a case for CIL monies to come to Ashington as long as they are aligning and not competing. It would be ideal if it were permitted, for organisations to make such cases in line with a mutually agreed detailed version of the NP.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the current thinking. We look forward to a mutually collaborative working relationship as this develops.

Yours Sincerely

Simon Kinrade, Chair Ashington Community Centre Trust.

STEERING GROUP RESPONSE: Comments are noted. The ANP has been in discussions with Community Groups throughout the Plan process and is aware of their current and future needs. A Community Needs & Priorities document was prepared and this has informed Site Assessment work. The ANP will seek to deliver new/improved community facilities in the best way possible for the residents of the Parish. Whilst further expansion of the village is beyond the scope of this Neighbourhood Plan the ANP sets a robust strategy for Spatial Development. Expansion of the school is not required in this Neighbourhood Plan.