



STEERING COMMITTEE

Minutes 25th October 2016

A meeting was held in Ashington Community Centre, on Monday 25th October 2016 commencing at 8pm.

Present: Nigel Spiers, Di Clarke, Tiena Currell, Mary Davis, Graeme MacPherson, Colin Hoare, Mike Humphrey.

Neighbourhood Plan Clerk: Karen Dare

Apologies for absence: Clare Barker (personal) & Brian Clarke (illness).

Karen Dare (Neighbourhood Plan Clerk) had previously prepared and circulated an agenda.

Karen Dare updated the committee on activities since the last meeting:

- a. Call for sites – 25 sites have either been put forward to the NHPlan or to HDC (submitted to SHELAA or a planning application) and all will be considered on their merits. The Clerk had researched 'site selection criteria' used by other Parishes in Horsham District and further afield and had drafted a questionnaire. The Steering Group identified that assessment could be done in a two-stage process with Part 1 assessing basic compliance with HDC's HDPF and Part 2 assessing benefit of the proposals to Ashington. Part 1 could be sent out immediately for landowners/agents/Developers to complete as it does not require any formal proposals to be prepared. Part 2 would have to wait until the State of the Parish Report had been completed as specific site proposals would need to address village needs. Any site failing Part 1 would not be taken forward to Part 2 as the site would not be in compliance with the HDPF. It was agreed that the Clerk split her draft questionnaire into the two parts and issue Part 1 immediately.
It was agreed that a list of sites be put on the Parish Council website as there is no reason to withhold this information.
It was agreed that the Clerk produce a map showing the locations of all sites submitted and put a copy on the Parish Council website.
- b. Ashington Festival – a total of 13 new recruits had been gained due to the Stand at the Festival. Thanks to Tiena for organising the Stand.
- c. Focus Groups – had met in September and completed a comprehensive SWOT analysis of the village. Copies of the detailed analysis and a summary are available on the Parish Council website.
- d. Detailed Questionnaire – the Clerk and Tiena had used information in the SWOT analysis to draft a detailed survey for the Parish. This was not yet fully complete but a draft was circulated. They would complete the draft and circulate to the Steering Group for comment.

The following next steps were agreed:

- a. Call for Sites – see above.
- b. Detailed Survey – see above. In addition, the survey would need to be heavily publicised – social media, website, posters, banners, adverts in newspapers. It was felt that an event where the site locations could be displayed for residents to see could be combined with advertising/hand-outs of the village survey. Prizes would be needed, drop-off points, help-points etc would all be organised and perhaps a ‘countdown’ to the Survey could be done by way of banners/posters to keep the survey in the minds of residents.
- c. Young people – the draft survey had not been completed yet due to other commitments. It was agreed that the Clerk discuss this with the Youth Worker, Youth Club Chairman, Scouts, Junior Football Club and agree an action plan.
- d. Businesses – a business survey had been agreed and Tiena, Brian & Diann would arrange to take copies to all of the Ashington businesses and gather completed questionnaires.
- e. Planning Workshops would be held whereby landowners/agents/developers would present their development proposals to Ashington residents. However, this would need to be scheduled after completion of the State of the Parish report and Part 2 site assessment was underway.

AOB:

1. There was much discussion about the recent judicial review of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan. The Clerk reported that Henfield’s Neighbourhood Plan had been approved by HDC, the Planning Inspector and had passed the Henfield referendum but had been overturned at judicial review. It was understood that this was instigated by a Developer who was not satisfied that the reasons for not excluding his site for development were not robust. This highlighted to the Steering Group the importance of getting the site selection criteria right and having a robust evidence base upon which decisions are made. Given that the HDPF is an adopted document and is the relevant planning document then all site selections must be fully compliant with the HDPF.
2. Concern was expressed by Steering Group members around the sheer number of sites having been submitted to the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan for consideration. Without pre-empting formal assessment of the sites it was clear to members that many sites are greenfield and outside the Built Up Area Boundary and it could be very difficult to select between these sites and that if one site were allowed then challenges could be made against exclusion of other sites from the Plan. If one site were to be allowed then Ashington could end up with hundreds of new homes on greenfield land. The Clerk explained that the HDPF is very specific in that Ashington is a ‘medium village’ with limited facilities and services. It is in the third tier of HDC’s settlement hierarchy, and that development within the District should be highest in Tier 1, less in Tier 2, less in Tier 3 etc. Development should be prioritised to brownfield/Previously Developed Land and within the BUAB. Development on greenfield land abutting the BUAB should only be allocated within Neighbourhood Plans if it meets a community need and should be of a size appropriate to the settlement ie not have an adverse impact on infrastructure. Ashington is expected to allocate some sites for development within the

Neighbourhood Plan but the number should be small scale not strategic (large scale). The Neighbourhood Plan site assessment would identify those sites within the BUAB, brownfield/PDL and would count up the number of potential new homes from these priority sites before considering any greenfield land development. HDC will be undertaking a review of the HDPF in 2017-18 and may allocate strategic development sites across the District and a full review of all potential sites in Ashington would take place. Strategic development is large-scale and involves provision of infrastructure – Neighbourhood Plans are not the vehicle for approving strategic developments.

3. The Clerk reported that HDC are appointing a new Neighbourhood Planning Officer in November and she will arrange a meeting to go through work to date to make sure the Plan is progressing properly.

The next meeting will take place after Part 1 site assessment forms have been received (due to be returned by 7th December) or when the completed Survey draft is available.

Signed:

Date: