



Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan



Minutes of the Steering Group Meeting
held on Friday, 22 January 2016 at 10am
at the Parish Council Office - UNAPPROVED

Present:

Steering group members: Patrick Wingfield (PW) – Chairman, Tennant Barber (TB) deputy Chairman, Mike Dennett (MD), Dudley Ives (DI), Danusia Morsley (DM)

Apologies: Neil Kiley (NK), John Cornwell (Planning Consultant), Jane Rabbiosi (JR) Research & admin assistant

Public & Press present: None

ACTIONS

1. **Approve minutes of Wednesday 23rd December 2015**

The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. **Declarations of interest**

No declarations, no members of the public present

3. **Matters arising from the previous meeting**

None

4. **A Review of Progress**

In response to the West Berkshire Council (WBC) representation to the pre-submission consultation which seemed to imply the NDP was rejected a meeting was held with Liz Alexander and Rachael Lancaster (WBC policy officers). WBC was very supportive in resolving the issues. The policies of concern have been revised and copies sent to WBC for comment (see item 5 below).

A meeting was held with TA Fisher's (TAF) to discuss access to the site. The purpose was to get confirmation that there is access. TAF presented a drawing (subsequently emailed to the SG for inclusion in the NDP) confirming site access. At the meeting a number of ideas/options were discussed e.g. removal of engineered path on the eastern edge, introduction of 20mph zone on The Street, extending the raised table on The Street to include the access to and from the houses on either side of the entrance, the inclusion of living willow sound barriers.

It was agreed that the PC should be advised that

1. TAF had confirmed that access to the Site was available accompanied by the drawing
2. A number of options had been identified which the Steering Group will be pursued with WBC Highways.

PW (in report to PC)

5 Presentation of Final NDP to Parish Council.

The proposed format was

1. A summary report highlighting the main points in the responses to the representations in the pre-submission consultation and the critical regulatory documents for approval.
2. As accompanying background reading
 - a. the proposed 5 major changes of substance – Commercial, Housing Mix and Density, Biodiversity, SDB and Heritage
 - b. The proposed regulatory requirements - Pre-submission consultation statement, Basic conditions statement
 - c. The detailed representations review
3. A copy of the proposed final NDP (electronic).

The PC would be asked to approve the submission of the NDP to WBC and give the parish clerk authority to oversee minor changes considered necessary post PC approval before submission.

MD (St the agenda item as necessary)

6 Review of Principal Changes

The main changes to the NDP were reviewed

1. Biodiversity – Policy B1 Removal of policy of not allowing development inside BOA replaced by
Any development within the part of BOA13 identified by the Berkshire Local Nature Partnership will need to show positive changes for biodiversity. Opportunities will be taken to create links between natural habitats and biodiversity improvements will be actively pursued within Biodiversity Opportunities Areas. This will seek to restore, expand, link and buffer existing priority habitats within the BOA including Ancient Woodland, Habitats of Principal Importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity and Local Wildlife Sites
2. Commercial –
 - a. Policy on reuse of Rural buildings, the restriction of expansion of the area to 30% removed
 - b. NPPF requires that local plans to be positive about economic development, consequence 2 new policies
 - i. new, renovated or extended buildings redrafted to state under what conditions they will be supported. The design requirements would not stop a high street retailer applying for permission e.g. Tesco
 - ii. For development of businesses outside the settlement boundary, emphasis is placed on protecting the countryside in particular directing large commercial and industrial activity, warehousing and distribution to WBC Protected Employment Areas and existing suitable located employment sites (latter for large office buildings, Mortimer is not one of those sites). This does not cover such things as solar farms.
3. Housing Mix and Density –
 - a. Mix of tenures for affordable housing restated to comply with WBC policy which is to seek 70% social rent and 30% equity based. Included in the context section is a statement to the effect that the mix would be reappraised at the planning application stage in the light of circumstances at that time e.g. Fisher's apply or variation, needs of Mortimer, possible government regulations change in favour of equity.

- b. Additional policy Mix of types of houses included as a policy so it would apply to all developments not just the SDB.

Stratfield Mortimer will seek a mix of home types of approximately 40% 1 or 2 bed dwellings split between apartments and houses, 20% 2 and 3 bedroom bungalows and the remainder being 3 and 4 bed houses. Identified local need and the site specifics, funding and the economics of provision will be taken into consideration

- 4. SDB being revised to extract all the policy elements that would apply to all developments into the general design policies.
- 5. Designated Green spaces will include the evidence and criteria assessment to justify the selection.
- 6. Revised Flooding policy to seek a strengthening of the design parameters/rainfall conditions.

These were accepted subject to a final review by SG members.

NOTE Following the meeting WBC emailed to say the changes to 1,2,3 ad 6 were accepted with minor word changes.

7 **Review of Pre-Submission Representations**

- a) The process for reviewing and recording of NDP responses was described. The wording of the responses is to be reviewed to ensure that they are correct and accurately record the NDP response. It was noted that two representations await a personal response. These will be drafted for the parish Clerk to send when the PC has approved the final NDP (to be done when the NDP has been completed for submission to the PC) **DM**
- b) The representations from the Stratfield Mortimer Benefice and St Mary's school suggested that St John's Infant and St Mary's junior schools work together to assess the benefits and practicality of a co-operative development of the two schools including co-location for the benefit of future generations of children. St Mary's requested that the reservation of land for a relocated school be included in the NDP. The Steering Group noted it had always recognised the potential benefits of such a development. However, due to the very low probability of funding for a new relocated St Mary's reservation of land could not be justified in the NDP. At this time there is no evidence that the position on funding has changed. It was agreed that if after further discussions between to the schools and the Benefice a reasonable prospect of funding was identified then the PC would investigate the potential of such a scheme with all the interested parties.
- c) The detailed responses will be reviewed in week commencing Sunday 24th January and to check that all the changes have been included in the final NDP **PW, DM, TB**
- d) WBC had suggested that a section be included at the end of the NDP listing the projects and how they would be monitored and delivered. It was agreed this would not be included. A paragraph stating the PC would consult the NDP when commenting on all planning matters put before it will be included. **DM**

NOTE WBC has confirmed that the policies in the NDP apply equally to developments within the settlement boundary with the presumption in favour of development as well as any development outside the boundary.

8 **Regulatory Submissions**

It was reported that the Pre-submission consultation has been drafted but the table containing the summary representations and NDP response is to be updated. The **TB**

early draft has been reviewed by WBC and supported.

The Basic Conditions statement was briefly reviewed. The length of the document is a consequence of investigating other NDPs which all have a basic conditions statement of similar length. Attention was drawn to the last section on Human Rights. SG members were encouraged to read this section to satisfy themselves that it is a fair reflection of the NDP relates to Human Rights in Mortimer. The document is to be sent to the Parish Clerk so that he can satisfy himself and the PC that it meets the regulatory requirements.

TB

NOTE Subsequent to the meeting WBC have reviewed the document and approved it with a few minor wording changes.

9 Managing the Projects List

The PC has agreed in principle to set up a projects committee. It was agreed to help move this forward the Parish Clerk should prepare a terms of reference for that committee to be approved at the next PC meeting. Subsequent to that the membership which will be able to have non-councillors on the committee would be agreed at the following meeting. The St John's and St Mary's project in item 7b should be used to exemplify the type of work of that committee.

MD

10 Date of next meeting: To be confirmed.

DRAFT