

PUBLIC MEETING ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN OBJECTIVES

Friday 14th November 2014 @ The Fieldgate Centre

Chaired by Cllr John Sawyer

Presentations by: Cllr Sue Adams – NP Group Leader; Stuart Woodin – URS Consultants

Meeting Notes: Sheila Thompson

Attendees: 10 Parish Councillors & NP Group Members; 71 Members of the Public.

Cllr Sawyer - opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming. He briefly introduced the key presenters and advised on the purpose and format of the meeting; to consider the implications and needs of our Neighbourhood Plan. He then introduced Cllr Sue Adams:

Cllr Sue Adams – presented on the purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan and why we were working on behalf of Kingsclere to produce one. How it will be used to influence the future development of the village in areas of Housing; Environment and Facilities. Currently we will have to provide 50+ houses in Kingsclere over the next 15 years and without a Neighbourhood Plan in place we will have no say on where they go or what form the development may take. This could impact severely on the character of our village. Having a plan, means having control over these issues.

We have to be compliant in many ways with Basingstoke and Deane's Local Plan but this has been rejected by the Minister as having too few houses in their Plan. This means if they are forced to increase their housing allocation, they may pass some of that onto us. If we wish to ensure the housing doesn't adversely affect our village we need this Plan.

The floor was opened for Questions:

Q: Why did we not join with neighbouring villages in order to present a joint Plan which would have the benefit of providing a wider area for development and have a more integrated impact.

A: We did approach our neighbours but none wanted to take up the offer. It appears some of them were happy for the decisions to be left with BDBC, some did not see the need.

Q: What if there is a "No" vote in our Referendum

A: Our Plan could not be implemented and BDBC will be able to dictate what happens with the development in Kingsclere.

Q: Why are some suitable areas of land not on the map

A: We cannot force people to sell. Whilst there are some areas that seem suitable, if they are not on the map, they are probably not for sale, or have already been ruled out.

Q: If the Plan covers all development up to 2029, if potential sites have been rejected now, could they still be considered later.

A: No - Stuart Wooding will address this in his presentation

Q: Comment – we may be instructed to find sites for 50+ houses ourselves but have we considered the huge impact the development at Manydown will have on us?

A: Yes we share these concerns but have no control over what Basingstoke do in their own area. The Traffic issues will have to be addressed by HCC as part of the Planning Process but this is why it is important that we have our own Plan and controls, so we can have an input on the possible knock on effects for Kingsclere.

Stuart Woodin of URS Presented:

URS have been engaged as Consultants, assessing sites identified through the Plan process for their suitability and viability.

There are three criteria that they have to look at in assessing a site:

- It is available – there is no point in assessing sites that are not for sale, even if it is possible they may become available in the distant future – if it is not in the Plan it cannot be considered for the duration of the Plan.
- It is suitable – there maybe impediments to a site even if it does not appear so at the outset.
- It is deliverable – looking at things such as accessibility; environmental and bio-diversity implications of development etc.

Mr Woodin went on to discuss the sites individually and what they have been able to establish so far. All the sites in Kingsclere have Pro's and Con's and all still need an ecological study to be done. There is NO perfect site.

The floor was opened to Questions:

Q: What can be done to open up the roads to take all the extra traffic.

A: The capacity of the roads needs to be addressed by the Local Plan. We can suggest Traffic Calming measures; new junctions; improved signage etc. Issues on smaller roads can be accommodated in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Q: Can we look very carefully at Gailey Mill and the Water Works as these are valuable and fragile habitats for local wildlife and we would not like to see them destroyed.

A: The Environmental Assessment will pick this up and it will have to be addressed accordingly. It is not our intention to damage any of the ecological benefits of any site.

Q: Gailey Mill site is partly on a flood plain, how can you consider using this.

A: This is recognised and will be addressed by any developer. They will need to demonstrate this can be dealt with in the Planning process.

Q: Development at the Povey's Mead site would impact visually on the village as the site is elevated. How do you address this?

A: The Neighbourhood Plan can develop Policies concerning topography in order to lessen the impact. This is something that can be dealt with in discussions with the Developers. We can write this into our Plans Policies to ensure resident's concerns are dealt with. URS are looking at significant sites in line with National designations...it is up to us to decide what is "significant" to us.

Q: The site behind Fawconer Road, though only designated with very limited development, could still impact severely on the natural landscaping and trees. Could we ensure these are not all cleared away to leave a bare site. Also any access road would be very short and could impact on the junctions already present.

A: It is agreed that there are location access issues but these are being looked into for this site. One possible solution would be to use an existing gate onto the B3051. Regarding trees, again we can write landscaping Policies into our plan to safeguard the natural ecology of these areas.

Q: Why has site KI02 been rejected.

A: Because it is a Site of Importance of Nature Conservation (SINC site) and therefore would not get planning consent.

Q: It had been said before that the Gailey Mill site was not suitable, why is it now being considered.

A: The developers have looked at this site and mitigated environmental issues through their sensitive development plans.

Q: There are large areas within the parish boundary map that are not being considered...why not use them?

A: We are constrained by the By pass to the North; the AONB to the South and the Settlement Policy boundary to the West and East. To add to the current residential area we would have to move the SPB and there would also be issues of infrastructure. 60% – 65% available outside the SPB is not sustainable.

Many commented in support of this suggestion, asking for us to consider extending the village and using parts of the wider area. People were advised that the AONB is only one step down from a National Park and as such cannot be developed. Logistical problems and lack of available land are barriers to extending at other the natural boundaries of the village.

Q: Could we not lobby BDBC to use smaller sites.

A: We will try this approach but we still have to consider whether or not landowners are prepared to release their land for development.

Q: Concern over smaller sites being used for single large house development.

A: There is little we can do if landowners choose to do this. Each will still be subject to planning approval and BDBC will have to refer to our Policies before consent can be given to ensure compliance with our NP.

Q: Expansion of the village will impact on schools, has the steering group any influence in this area.

A: Yes we can assist on provision through a Policy within our Neighbourhood Plan. But Local Authority has a statutory responsibility for the growth of some ancillary facilities. These issues are being considered as with the added pressures on traffic; businesses, health facilities etc.

Q: Once a Neighbourhood Plan is in place can Kingsclere Parish Council control the planning or is this still under the control of BDBC.

A: KPC will work closely with any Developer to ensure compliance with what people want through our NP, but BDBC will still be the Authority for planning submissions.

Q: Will the NP take account of our Rights of Way and ensure they are not obstructed.

A: Yes – R o W are maintained on behalf of the public and controlled through HCC. They cannot be built on.

Q: the figure of 10+ houses, is that a National figure or one decided by the Borough.

A: We are still waiting for the answer to this one.

Q: Site NP6 road is landlocked, would it have to be upgraded

A: This is a material consideration for any site but usual planning rules will apply.

Q: If a site is not named in the NP can a developer still come in.

A: No – not within the lifetime of the Plan 2029 – but there will be regular reviews to ensure we can take account of local changes.

Q: There has been a lot of discussion on just three sites tonight, are we still looking at other sites and are we considering that availability today may be affected by market forces in the future and that these can change quickly. Having a 10-15 year locked in plan may not be the best effective model to work with.

A: Planning has to think ahead. Market forces are essential to planning and we are looking closely at these elements. The NP is all about intention but also has to have a linked timescale to make it viable. We are trying to consider market forces within our plans, working 10-15 years down the line. This 50 we are trying to find room for now is all about identifying possible sites in the short term which will carry us throughout the lifetime of the Plan.

Following a closing address from the Chair, he thanked URS for their presentation and everyone present for their time and input. He invited further comment on the plans, via materials made available at the back of the room.

The meeting closed at 9:35pm