

## **SHERSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

### **STEERING GROUP/ OPEN MEETING**

#### **Notes of Meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017**

#### **Sherston Village Hall at 7.30pm**

#### **Present:**

Steering Group Chairman-John Matthews

Steering Group Members-Mike Johnson(MJ), John Knight(JK), Graham Morris(GM), Harry Stevens(HS), Dr Pip Petit(PP), Judy Sharp(JS), Nigel Freeth(NF), Graham Hayman(GH), Polly Clements(PC), Rob Johnson(RJ), Saara Sharman(SS), Kevin Smith(KS)

AOG Representatives, Zoe Metcalfe(ZM), Giles Robinson(GR) and John Shipsey(JS)

Members of Public-18

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies received from John Thomson, Sarah Wood and Rupert Evelyn

#### **2. Declarations of interests**

Nil

#### **3. Update from John Matthews and Mike Johnson**

JM advised that The Steering Group had not done a great deal since the last meeting, held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017. All SG Members had however been asked to re-read the full Development Appraisal Report in response to criticism made by an interested party - so as to ensure that they were comfortable with its contents and conclusions.

JM was conscious though that AOG had been busy, resulting in the issue on 30<sup>th</sup> May of their response to the SG's Development Appraisal Report 08/16.

JM expressed thanks for this but advised that obviously there had been little time to take the information on board in preparation for tonight's meeting. JM also noted that there were no details included covering viability aspects, highlighting these to be a vital requirement.

JM expressed some disappointment in the negative use of social media during the interim and felt continuation of this practice would not be beneficial to the process.

#### **4. Update from Alternative Options Group**

ZM advised the meeting of her background and the relevance of this in the activities of AOG, which had been formed subsequent to the issue of the Steering Group's Development Appraisal Report 08/16 and the related Public Consultation Meeting. It was considered by AOG at this time that the Report/ Neighbourhood Plan needed review, leading to related work being undertaken and their proposal as "Sherston Area Neighbourhood Plan" (SANP) being assembled.

This process had involved the input of experienced consultants with the costs of this work being funded by private individuals.

**Inclusive Access and Safety.** A Traffic Impact Assessment(TIA) had been considered necessary by ZM as a starting point and this had involved appropriate site visits by Arup engineers. The Assessment concluded that neither the scheme proposed by the Steering Group nor that as SANP should be considered unviable on transport grounds although some off-site highway works were considered necessary requiring the provision within Plans of appropriate funding.

The highway works considered necessary are the establishment or improvement of pedestrian/ cycle routes along Green Lane, Court Street and Sopworth Lane together with a dedicated parent drop-off/ pick- up area within the school site.

The combination of school related and surgery visitor traffic was advised as requiring careful management.

ZM advised that It is an expectation of AOG that the costs relating to the above work should be included within the viability appraisals and reflected, as appropriate, in the valuation of the land.

**Housing Needs.** It was considered by AOG that neither Wiltshire Council nor The Steering Group had provided supporting evidence on the proposed number (45) of new houses to be erected upon the site, nor on the split of house types. The rationale of this was requested by ZM.

Within this context ZM advised that AOG had referred to the housing needs survey undertaken in the village in 2012 and that from this have made their recommendations on house types as their SANP paper.

**Incremental Development and Funding.** ZM tabled plans, Option A/ Phase 1 and Option B/ Phase 2, within which a proposal is made considered to align both with community needs and Government policy and guidelines. This is in the form of an incremental development which, it is considered, will enhance the village and provide inclusivity and safe access.

Option A, with the possibility of some variation of the site boundary to the North is considered appropriate as the submission for the current Neighbourhood Plan(NP) with Option B/ Phase 2 to be reviewed in 10 years as part of the next NP.

ZM advised Option A to be a site of an area of 4 acres providing scope for future school expansion, 0.4 acres for a pre-school facility, 0.6 acres for 18 No. Independent Living Units, space for 13 new dwellings and space for a new GP Surgery of an area 550ms with appropriate car parking.

The scheme was advised to be commercially viable albeit, as previously stated, this remains to be substantiated. Proposals were made in respect of private financing of the GP Surgery but these also will be required to be developed with issues as programme and long- term ownership covered.

**New Homes Bonus.** The opportunities for the Village to benefit from this process were highlighted by ZM and AOG undertook to investigate this further with WC.

## **5. Steering Group Response.**

JM thanked ZM for all of AOG's recent hard work and, further, for the funding of the TIA. He continued with reference to the need of liaison with WC to facilitate responses to issues raised of The Steering Group within the AOG presentation and advised that these will be progressed quickly.

AOG responses to outstanding queries of them are also of an urgent nature.

To avoid any doubt JM stressed the need of being able to see and understand all workings of cost and value numbers assessed by AOG in the support of their SANP document and its advised viability.

JM noted that AOG still have to meet with the landowners and further that they may have assumed within their plan that WC will make all of the land for this development available upon concessionary terms.

To expedite the development of the Neighbourhood Plan from this point JM suggested that ZM and GR joined the Steering Group, and this was agreed.

## **6. Questions.**

Many comments and questions were raised from the floor covering similar issues. These can be grouped as:

- High Pressure Water Mains. ZM advised that the AOG Scheme included for the diversion of these with related costs included within the scheme viability.
- Pick-up/ Drop-off facility. The benefits of this in respect of convenience and safety was agreed from many individual standpoints. An added refinement to the Arup proposal to be considered was suggested from the floor in switching the location of this facility with the location of the existing Teacher's parking spaces.
- Pre-school Facility. SS advised that space for the facility had been made on both the original SG Scheme and the AOG proposal. In neither though was there capital provision for works of construction. Funding will require contributions from charitable and other sources and SS expressed concern over the time the whole process may take. SS further advised her concern that the longer the process will take the more difficult it will become.
- New Surgery. PP advised that the proposed new Surgery will be larger than the existing providing scope both to meet future demand and also for the offer of a broader range of health treatments, with the latter reducing some need for villagers to travel. The development of the project and related funding and programme terms are of concern to the GP Surgery as possibly impacting upon the recruitment of key staff and continuity.
- AOG option A was expressed as meeting individual aspirations of the Neighbourhood Plan upon which WC comment will be awaited with interest.
- Reference had been made to the underwriting of £700k of funding for the GP Surgery, would this sum be as a gift or a loan? AOG advised that it would not be as a gift.
- Viability. ZM advised that their consultant, in part, had used information from the Steering Group's Viability Assessment. JM and others restated the requirement of AOG for provision of the fully detailed Viability Assessment supporting their proposals seeing this to be of prime importance within the current discussions.

## **7. Conclusion/ Way Forward.**

JM closed the meeting thanking all for their interest and attendance, and particularly ZM and her Group. A number of issues had been raised needing further consultation with WC and others and until this has happened JM advised that the establishment of further meeting dates was not possible. At this stage though it will be hoped that it will be possible to establish a full programme of key dates leading to the completion of the project.

Meeting finished at 9.03pm.

