

SHERSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

STEERING GROUP

Sub-committee

Notes of Meeting

Thursday 25th November 2015 at Pinkney Park @7.30 pm

Present:

Mr John Matthews (JM), Mr Mike Johnson (MJ), Mrs Sarah Wood (SW), Mr John Knight (JK), Mr James Pyle (JP), Mr Graham Hayman (GH).

1. Apologies

Apologies were given from Mr Harry Stevens.

2. Update since last meeting on October 15th

JM and MJ have met up with Wiltshire Council (WC) and spoken with Georgina Clampitt-Dix (GCD). She basically advised that if Sherston did not prepare and publish a draft plan early next year, the village NP process will be taken over by events, with WC having to include Sherston in their Housing Site Allocation Plan (incorporating one or more sites in the village) as they are under pressure from the government to deliver additional land for new housing.

Mrs Clampitt-Dix advised that there is not really any time for undertaking an additional round of consultations and that the village will have to have its say when the draft NHP is put for referendum. She urged us to go ahead and publish a draft NP asap.

As agreed at the October meeting, JM and MJ asked GCD if there was a master plan for the site proposed for the elderly units and Surgery. No plan existed that could be shared at the present time. She was also asked whether the plan could be set for beyond 2026? The answer was "no" - the NP needs to be in accordance with the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy which only runs until 2026.

When the whole steering group last met in 2012, the numbers being put forward by WC for a village like Sherston was 16. This was derived from a complicated method involving the draft core strategy and an analysis of village population size. WC now recommend that this figure be changed – to take into account the latest analysis of the residual housing requirement (116 dwellings) and the simple assumption that each of the five "Large Villages" in the Malmesbury Community Area is expected to deliver a similar number of dwellings – i.e. in the region of 23 homes. The big question is how many homes should we be planning for in the NP- 16, 20 or more?

3. Sopworth Lane, land behind school - Elderly Units/Surgery Site update

Site (1A): - WC is currently in negotiations with the land owners about the site behind the school which is potentially the prime site identified for a new surgery, elderly and other housing units. There is an issue with the original agreement between WC and the landowners. JT informed the parish council however that all parties are working towards an agreeable solution.

Site 1B. West of site 1: this site previously was not put to the village as a high priority for potential development at the village consultation. The reason being that when the land was scored by Foxley Tagg, it scored less well than some other sites and it wasn't considered necessary to identify additional land for housing development (given that other sites were being considered instead) - so was disregarded. Since then of course a number of the other sites that were being considered (notably Sites 17 and 4) have had to be dropped. Consideration may well now have to be given to including this land in the equation.

JK raised concerns about access and traffic regarding this site as the road near the school already becomes very congested and more cars would only compound the issue. JM answered that because the site is more central it would mean most people would walk, unlike if the new homes were further outside the village boundary. MJ pointed out that this site would be right next door to the new school and proposed surgery site – and hence more sustainable than possible alternative locations elsewhere.

Information on this land is vital for the NHP to progress as it is such a prime site and JM will contact JT for more information prior to the next meeting

4. Football Field Site

Previously this was one of the favoured sites for development as it is land owned by the Parish Council. However after looking at the original deeds there is a covenant that would make the possibility of any new build housing (or other) development on this site very complicated and unlikely, even if the sports facilities were moved to another site. WC could be asked to consider removing the covenant or doing some sort of deal to share the potential asset value- however this would take time and time is what the NHP does not have. Had the site been chosen for development of some kind it could potentially have funded vastly improved sports facilities elsewhere. MJ explained that the existing sports field could nevertheless be improved by possible developer's contributions if new homes are built elsewhere in the village (via CIL contributions or some sort of direct linked requirement on say an adjoining housing allocation).

If the NP is going to include a proposal to improve/enhance existing sports/leisure facilities in the village it is essential that a more detailed analysis of what is required be prepared. MJ asked whether anyone was willing to take on this task – which would need to be done fairly quickly. GH offered to do this.

ACTION – MJ will speak to Foxley Tagg to do a study of the site and how it could be improved and possible cost. GH to prepare a report on the sports /leisure requirements in the village asap.

5. Site 6, North of Sandpits Lane

The owners of this site initially indicated that they were only interested in purely residential development. However they have since got in touch with JM and indicated that they may consider a sports field development with a few houses on the site frontage. If the sports field is unable to be relocated here, this site is not considered ideal as it has no mains drainage, is accessed off Sandpits Lane, has no obvious development limits, and comes below Sites 1a and 1b which are more central and not as far outside the village boundary.

6. The Vicarage Site

Plans are to renovate the vicarage (not demolish it), build 2 new houses and create extra land for cemetery.

7. Site 3 Paddock West of Sports field

This was sold in the spring. There was not enough time for the parish council to make a bid or funding available. The owners have not been approached regarding the future of the land. If site 4 (sport field) was to be improved it may be sensible to approach the owner to clarify the situation.

ACTION – JM will try and contact the landowners to clarify the situation.

8. Future Actions – The group need to do/consider the following before the next meeting :

- How deliverable is site 1A and 1B? If so how many new homes?
- Where are the research documents on these sites? WC have details.
- Who owns access road to Water tower on Knockdown Road?
- Contact owner of land and paddock west of sports field.

- Look at ways to improve existing sports field.
- Prepare report on sports/leisure needs in the village.

9. Site 14 Adjoining kennels

The owners of Site 14 have approached JM with an offer to make land available for the erection of a new village hall and the proposed new GP surgery. A plan was tabled showing this. The sub-group considered that this site was not suitable for any of these proposals. It is too far out of the village. Access via Knockdown Road for pedestrians would be problematic. There are better sites for all of these development options already identified that would meet these needs (except for the Village Hall – which is not something that has been identified as a priority in any case). This proposal would nevertheless need to be put before the Steering Group for proper consideration.

10. To confirm a date for next meeting

SW will check hall availability for either 14th or 15th December. Once venue is booked, e mails will be sent out to steering group.

Meeting finished at 9.15pm.

Notes taken by SW.