

# SHERSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

Notes of meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> of February 2014

at 7.30pm Sherston Village Hall

PRESENT:

Mr J Matthews (JM) - Chairman

Mrs Sarah Wood (SW) - Admin Support

Representatives of the following Groups/Organisations

Mr Freeth (NF) Sherston Churches

Mr Llewellyn Palmer (ML) Sherston Pre- School

Mrs Curson (JC) Green Square

Mr Johnson (MJ) Sherston Old School Committee

Mr Price (AP) Sherston Youth

Mr Johnson (RJ) Sherston Businesses

Mr Thomson (JT) Wiltshire Council

6 members of the public were at the meeting.

Definitions: "NHP" means Neighbourhood Plan

## Item

### 103. Apologies for absence:

Mr John Knight, Mr Chris Minors. Mr Steve Harvey, Mr Graham Morris, Tolsey Surgery , Mrs H Quirk and Mr Kevin Smith

JM welcomes Claire Hamilton and Robert Hart representatives from Charles Church/Persimmon Homes and four other members of the public.

### 104. Approval of notes from last meeting

Minutes were approved, and introductions were made.

### 105. Update so far

JM explained to the group that some sort of headway was made at the last meeting in the autumn, however due to Christmas and other events progress had stalled. JM and MJ have driven the progress up to this point and if the NHP is to develop further more help is needed both from professional sources and within the steering group. At the September meeting Katherine Woolf from Good Homes Alliance attended the meeting had offered assistance to the group and despite presenting the group with a question toolkit she has not come back with further help or advice. Due to the lack of progression the Steering group will not be pursuing this course of action.

### 106. Update on the analysis of potential sites

At the last meeting the potential sites were discussed after an analysis was carried out, however to get to the next stage of SAE we need to revisit and reevaluate these sites with expert help. There is approx £ 18,000 in funding available to the group which would fund professional help in progressing successfully through the next stages of SAE.

JM reported that a community of similar size in Sussex has had its Neighbourhood Plan thrown out by the inspector. The failure was that its SAE was not adequate and that the plan was compiled despite its local Authority Sussex not having its Core Strategy in place. MJ went on to say the reason why its SAE was not adequate was that its scoping report wasn't carried out correctly, they didn't look in enough depth at reasonable alternative sites . MJ went on to say this is one of the reasons why the Sherston Steering group would benefit from external view of site analysis and further expert help to avoid similar problems.

ACTION- MJ JM to talk to CM at WC to ask where best to seek external professional help.

JT reported that the inspection of Wiltshire Core Strategy went well, a few issues need to be resolved about housing numbers but overall the inspector feels the Strategy is basically sound and once these matters have been addressed it will go to consultation. One of the issues the inspector was challenging was the number of affordable housing in the county and if the sites allocated for this housing were deliverable.

The question was asked about the Dyson expansion and what impact will it have on Malmesbury housing, JT explained

that it was great news Dyson were expanding and current workers at Dyson come from all over not only Malmesbury, JT thinks it's more infrastructure such as traffic which might need to be looked at, in its NHP Malmesbury recommends more houses than suggested in the Core Strategy.

### **107 - Transport**

The question of the future of public rural transport came up, JT explained that WC are currently looking into alternatives to the current bus system, options being looked at are community buses and car share schemes. When AP consulted the scouts they recognised the positive aspects of living in Sherston however criticised lack of transport, safe cycling and inadequate public open space. JM said that all these issues are important to consider with the compilation of the NHP and more thought and work will be needed to think how these can be included.

### **108 Housing**

The question was asked by a member of the public about the potential numbers of new houses within the village and questioned the figure of up to 80 houses that was suggested at the March workshop in which over 60 people attended. JM and MJ explained that it is not up to the steering group to state the number of houses, the participants of the workshops suggested this figure not the steering group. Those who came to the workshops rightly or wrongly perceived benefits from possible developments and showed this in the number of houses they suggested.

JT informed the group that the NHP is not about stopping housing but about control and the challenge is to keep the right balance of society; a mix of young and old people is needed to sustain a community. JC explained that currently families are being separated due to lack of affordable housing the children of families simply can't afford to live in the village where they grew up. At the first meeting the question was asked what does the village need to be sustainable?

A member of the public asked what the key drivers were; MJ explained that the Core Strategy is one of the drivers which give a figure from Wiltshire Council regarding the amount of housing expected in the Malmesbury Area. Housing is not the only driver. Others include a site for a new surgery, high speed broadband and improved sporting facilities. These drivers were defined at the workshops and will need to be redefined. All the reports from all workshops and events are available on the website. JT suggested once plans are a bit more advanced going to the community to test plans/ideas before the NHP is inspected. It only strengthens plan to consult continuously.

Discussion took place about how to phrase the question regarding housing. A member of the public previously wrote to JM asking if questionnaire could begin with a specific question to identify the quantum of development residents would like - otherwise he believes their subsequent answers would lack context and be uninterpretable (or at risk of being misinterpreted). A suggested wording was proposed which will be discussed with Wiltshire Council.

JT suggested that once the further work outlined in 106 above has been completed a survey should be conducted to look at the options of various numbers of potential housing and other land uses.

### **109 - The Vicarage**

JT informed NF that if the church were in a position to progress with its plans on building a new vicarage he will start getting the ball rolling with WC. The steering group all agreed that it is the best interest of village if the vicarage scheme moves forward and does not wait for the compilation of the NHP. NF will talk to Diocese/Church and JT to move to the next stage of proceedings.

### **110 - The Wiltshire Core Strategy**

A member of public then asked JT for clarification regarding the amount of new homes specified in the Core Strategy for Sherston. After some discussion JT explained that the figure of approximately 135 new houses to be split amongst villages within the Malmesbury does not get broken down equally due to the fact that some villages such as Alderton are not sustainable so an exact figure can't be given. JT reported that if a village doesn't have a NHP then decision taken on more development will be judged on the Core Strategy. The question was asked how many new developments are already being built or being planned in the village, SW will look into this.

### **111 - The next steps**

After hearing from one member of the public who did not know much about the NHP that despite constant Cliffhanger articles, website, and workshops and events the information doesn't seem to be getting out there. JC explained that in her experience in dealing with the public it is only when alarm bells ring that people start paying interest. It was agreed to seek

professional help to progress further, the Design Council who facilitated the last workshop could be approached again for further assistance. MJ mentioned that once the site analysis has received professional assistance the steering group then has a serious set of options to be put to the village.

**112.Future Actions**

JM and MJ to contact CM about obtaining external professional help and advice on going forward.

JM and NF to talk further regarding Vicarage scheme

**113. AOB and Questions**

A member of the public asked if he could be put on a mailing list to receive agendas and notes of meetings. SW agreed and will ask MR to publish something in the Cliffhanger.

**114.To confirm date for next meeting**

The next meeting will be confirmed asap with JM.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.Notes were taken by Sarah Wood, Admin Support to the Steering Group.