

Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan Development Group

Notes of Meeting held on 4th September 2019

Present – Stuart Shepherd (In the Chair), Colin Bailey, Michelle Gunn, Colin Hyde, Sally Howard, Annie Murdoch, Jim Sainsbury, Liz Shepherd, Henrietta Van den Bergh, Scott Waldie, Tony Walker and Martha Covell (ECA).

Apologies – Bryan Ferriss, Matt James, David Westwood and Joy Norris.

164 Declarations of Interest – No new declarations of interest were received.

165 Notes of Last Meeting – The notes of the meeting held on 1st August 2019 were agreed as a fair record, and signed accordingly.

166 Housing Planning Policy – Martha spoke on the recently received Ilminster Housing Needs Assessment (not to be confused with the Ilminster Parish Housing Needs Survey previously discussed!). The Assessment provided important evidence on the mix of housing required, but still left work for the Theme Group to advise on the exact number and size of bungalows and three bedroom houses that needed to be provided. There was also reference to amending our draft housing policy to have an early review mechanism in 2022 following the outcome of the census.

Inevitably, interest almost immediately moved onto the selection of sites, and there was a preview of arrangements for both the walk about on 17th September, when as many as possible of the 14 most likely sites would be visited; and the study day on 26th September to which relevant landowners and developers had been invited. There was support for ensuring that the site selection workshops included identifying a specific site for a potential “retirement” development near the town centre.

167 Economy, Tourism and Heritage Policy – Although there was no general updating report from this individual Theme Group, their comments on cycle hubs, camp sites and accessibility to the town were clearly in accord with other Theme Group policies.

168 Environment and Leisure Policy – Much of the discussion centred on the definition of, and development of “green spaces”, whether they were referred to as “civic”, “recreational “ or “natural”. There was a strong case made for ensuring that green space development kept pace with housing development and increasing population. There was also concern expressed regarding wetland and flooding policy, and the need to follow up evidence from any relevant previous planning applications, (which matter was of course of equal concern to the Housing Group).

169 Transport (Access and Movement) Policy – Martha spoke on the draft Access and Movement policy (circulated prior to the meeting); and the Theme Group spoke of their further work on bus services, school runs, car parks, and increased traffic movements resulting from new housing developments (notes also circulated prior to the meeting). There was an informed discussion on developing the West Crescent site, and the potential consequences that this had for re evaluating the development of Shudrick Valley, particularly in terms of developing a cycle hub. Overall, we were probably looking for up to three potential cycle hubs to accommodate parked cars and bike rental. Possibilities also included the old station and a location adjacent to Swanmead School. The other important conclusion drawn from the meeting’s discussions, was the need to provide a bridge over the A303 at Southfields Roundabout for cyclists and walkers.

Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan Development Group

Notes of Meeting held on 4th September 2019

170 On Line Survey Consultation – The final report on the on line survey (153 responses) and the consequent analysis, as presented by Martha on the screen, was duly appreciated as an important document to carry forward.

171 Consultation with Schools – The full report was due to be finalised very shortly, but in the meantime Martha ran over some of the findings. Those who had participated in the consultation felt that it had been a very positive exercise.

172 Viewing Potential Housing Development Sites – 17th September – Referred to earlier in the meeting, arrangements were confirmed, with a starting time of 5pm prompt at the Council Offices.

173 26th September Workshop on Site Selection – It was appreciated that there would have to be alternative plans for running this event, depending on whether there was an attendance of 20 to 30, or 50 to 60. In order to aid planning the session ahead, Neighbourhood Plan Group Members were asked to let Scott know well in advance whether they would be coming (Michelle's apologies were noted!). It was agreed that Henny would prepare publicity for the event, but that replies to this publicity should be sent to Martha.

There was some further discussion on the site selection criteria circulated at the last meeting, particularly concerning whether all criteria should be scored equally, or whether they should be weighted in recognition of their relative importance. No firm conclusions were reached!

174 Use of the Logo – The approved logo was again viewed, and it was agreed that it should be brought into use on documents that the Group issued, including those originating from ECA.

175 Next Meeting – Thursday 6th October 2019 in the Council Chambers at 6pm.

Jsgw/5/9/19

Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan Development Group

Notes of Meeting held on 4th September 2019

158 Economy, Tourism and Heritage Theme Group – The Theme Group made no further report, although relevant references in Martha’s overall progress report were duly noted, as was the Theme Group “homework”.

159 Environment and Leisure Theme Group – Martha’s detailed draft policy document circulated prior to the meeting was noted and supported, although not discussed in any detail at the main Development Group meeting (as a theme group meeting had been held earlier in the evening).

160 Transport Theme Group – Notes of the last meeting of this theme group held on 23rd July having been pre circulated, were duly noted with interest, as the Group were clearly identifying their own homework.

161 Grants – The Locality grant of £9,000 had now been received, and application was still pending in respect of a further £8,000 grant vv “Housing Needs Assessment Survey”.

162 Strap Line – This proposal was now in abeyance.

163 Next Meeting – 5th September in the Council Chambers at 6pm, preceded by a meeting of the Transport Theme Group.

ss/ sw/03/08/19