

BOTESDALE AND RICKINGHALL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – Steering Group Meeting Minutes

Monday, 10 January 2018

The Bell Inn

(Actions in italics.)

- 1) Welcome – sign in attendance and apologies for absence.

Present – Sue Coe, Clive Matthews, Di Maywhort, Phil Schofield, William Sargeant, Leeann Jackson-Eve (Parish Clerk), David Jackson-Eve (Consultant) and Ian Poole (NHP Consultant).

Apologies from Robin Brown, Des Bavington Lowe, Jordan Fox and Lucy Bishop.

- 2) Llanover presentation at Botesdale PC meeting on 8 January.

It was reported that Susie Philips of RE Philips & Partners (a firm of Chartered Surveyors) had attended the meeting representing the Llanover Estate. This had come at the request of the Clerk following contact with Ms Philips about land at Redgrave. This had originally been handled by Bidwells, the Estate's local land agent but following community concerns about proposals for development on the playing field in Redgrave, the Estate had given responsibility for the land to Philips & Partners. Botesdale had likewise been handed over to Philips & Partners and Ms Philips had apologised to the community for the way the application for up to 69 houses on Land South of Diss Road had been handled – particularly for the lack of consultation prior to the planning application. It was noted that the Estate felt that it was too late to withdraw the Diss Road application and it was unlikely that the access location could be changed. However, the Estate was very receptive to working together on the detailed application in due course and this first step in collaboration was welcomed.

Ms Philips had confirmed that Llanover had looked at the possibility of access onto Mill Road North (MRN) but had been told by Highways that the road was too narrow.

Members suggested that the proposed access road could be continued through to Mill Road North to echo the existing pattern of linear development and that it might be more acceptable to have access onto MRN if it was a secondary access.

Leeann to check what stage the application for Land South of Diss Road was at and enquire whether building could take place inside the cordon sanitaire which ran across the site.

- 3) Heritage Character Assessment.

An update on this was given and it was explained that this would be an objective and freestanding appendix to the NHP, broadly following the form of the Conservation Area Appraisal produced by MSDC in 2009. It would, however, have a broader sweep to include areas beyond the CA and would have a lot more detail. The bulk of the document would be descriptive and would identify main character areas within the three settlements, with a summary of character – the difference in which buildings and spaces related to the street – at the end of each section. The archaeological and landscape context would be included, as well as an appendix of Listed Buildings and historically interesting unlisted buildings.

There would be sections on boundary walls, commonality of materials, significant trees, and views and approaches and where they did or did not reveal the historic edge of the settlement. There would not be much detail on individual buildings as that could be found in the List descriptions.

The final section would deal with what policies might come out of the assessment and might include issues of the legibility of the historic settlement, gap sites and infill, and large sites such as the one behind the White Horse PH, which had the only remaining space on the south side of The Street which opened directly onto open countryside and illustrated the historic separation between settlements.

Members noted that the land behind the White Horse PH was county-owned and it might therefore be easier to influence its use. It was agreed that it was logical to describe views within the assessment and then decide whether to hold onto them. For example, when standing on high ground at Snape Hill, the village laid in a hollow, almost unseen. This was a quality that could be lost with growth closer to the bypass but development close to The Street could preserve that effect.

Smaller areas such as Allwood Green would be considered as part of the larger swathe of landscape, not necessarily in detail.

The HCA group was hoping to circulate something for review at the end of January.

4) Landscape Assessment.

It was agreed that the content looked excellent and the findings made a lot of sense. The conclusion was that small-scale development was appropriate but should take place below the 42-44m contour line as it would otherwise impact on views.

Diana and Clive to proof-read and make any corrections needed. Diana to send her corrections to Clive to mark up and then forward to Leeann.

5) AECOM Final Report.

This was agreed.

6) Discussion of NP content.

Ian explained that a key aim would be to make sure that the NHP didn't repeat things in the Local Plan. He suggested some additions to the Plan:

- Open Spaces: the NHP could identify Local Green Spaces, a designation used "where the land is not extensive, is local in character and reasonably close to the community; and, where it is demonstrably special, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife." (NPPF) If not in public ownership, permission would be needed from the landowner. Failing that, it could be designated as an "important open Space" but would have less protection. It was agreed that the green space in front of The Chestnuts was a potential site.
- Community Actions: This could be a shopping list for Community Infrastructure Levy funds but would need to relate to the process of developing the plan, i.e. in the preparation of the Plan "this" was discovered and as a result the community wanted/needed to do "this". An example was the issue of traffic/speeding – a community action might be to investigate appropriate traffic calming methods.
- Strategy for Detailed Applications: The NHP might include concepts for each ongoing planning application site and allocated sites, with diagrams, landscaping and other details.

Ian recommended that site allocations include only those sites with planning permission, with other identified sites to be held in reserve for future need.

He confirmed that the NHP would hold no weight until it had been examined and that weight would not be significant until after a successful referendum.

Ian to populate the Contents list (circulated for the previous meeting) a bit further.

Leeann to purchase Parish Online for mapping.

Phil to send Ian the details of planning applications and permissions.

Sue to find out about the ownership of the green space at The Chestnuts.

7) Budget.

The update on the budget was noted. There was £3,609 left of the £16,000 in grant funding available from Locality. This would have to be applied for before 1 March or in the next tranche of funding. The PCs had each allocated £2,250 in their budgets.

Ian confirmed that Government had allocated further funding for NHPs of £20m over the next five years and the contract to run the scheme had been advertised. It was likely to be made available after 31 March.

8) Any other Business.

It was noted that someone had offered to do the desktop publishing, and Ian confirmed that this was likely to be needed around the end of March.

Sue to clarify which DP software would be used.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – Ian confirmed that once the plan was ready for consultation, MSDC would carry out screening of the plan to see whether it was likely to have a significant effect on the environment, in which case an SEA would need to be carried out.

9) Date and location of next meetings.

Steering Group – Tuesday, 30 January at 7.30pm, The Bell Inn.

Forum Meeting – Wednesday, 21 February at 7.30pm, Botesdale Village Hall.

Next agenda: Community Land Trusts and agricultural change of use applications (brought over from the last agenda)

Meeting closed at 10.25.