

Draft minutes from Local Plan Part 2 Meeting on Thursday 19th November at School Hall, NSP

Working party present: David Smallacombe (DS), Michael Walker (MW), Rex Eastment (RE), Vivienne Bolton (VB), Alistair Bell (AB), Katrina Bell (KB) Ian Hasell (IH), Linda Oliver (LO)

Apologies: Deborah Allen (DA) and Nicola Duke (ND)

Prior to the start of the meeting some 50 confirmations were received from households to be on the Parish Council website, collect by RE and VB on the door. An estimated 105 parishioners were in attendance at the meeting which commenced at 6.40 pm.

Evening was opened and introduced by DS who mapped out what the PC had done so far, reiterated the main focus of the evening to discuss the PC's draft response to the MDC's Issues and Options Response Form and to encourage people to complete their own individual forms.

LO set the context and background of the LPP 2 and the increase in numbers of housing over and above predicted requirement. Whilst MDC have a shortfall of 455 houses to meet their target, NSP should have had 45 homes built and instead 108 were approved, most of which have been built. MDC have a 5 year rolling supply of land and developers will continue to target NSP. The LPP2 provides an opportunity for us to stay safe until 2029. However, whilst MDC are saying 'no' to further development where there is an identified need for low cost/ social housing, road improvements, a village hall requirement and/or parking, we are still vulnerable so we need to be aware of the risks.

KB began the next section concerning the **PC's proposed responses – Local Distinctiveness and Character**. Running through each question at a time and on the basis that the PC's assumption that we do not want any more housing.

KB highlighted:

1. Local distinctiveness & character – what makes NSP special
2. Specific areas to be protected
3. Future development – any areas where they should be located? Developers will be challenging five year rolling supply of land.

Ian Mills - Small point, maybe it should read, areas in village where they should be located or avoided?

KB replied: response will be 'No' by PC otherwise we could be hostage to fortune.

Roy – Concerning local distinctiveness & character - Likes lack of light pollution in the village – it's worth preserving.

This prompted a comment from another villager (unnamed) who argued that there was huge danger in walking down the High Street..... He was interrupted by someone suggesting he buy a torch! This prompted a stern reprimand that he hadn't finished talking and he went on to say he was not advocating lots of street lights but that there have been injuries because it was so dark.

Steve Harrison – West of village – integrity of green environment with countryside and housing

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David Scarrow – question? Is the MUGA still in Fortescue's Land bank owned by Lochailort?

Andy Linager – Rebuttal of appeal amplified the rural nature – Question, whilst we are putting 'No' to development, what chances are there that MDC will still say go ahead?

Voting response to the PC's comments on Local Distinctiveness and Character of NSP:

- **99% positive support, 2 late arrivals and 3 abstentions.**

PC's Proposed Response – Housing

KB confirms the response to MDC's question saying that the PC supports MDC's view that no further sites for housing should be identified in Local Plan Part 2.

Chris Scully - Are you saying that the PC are actually promoting more housing, surely no PC would do that? Both LO and KB reiterated that was not the case but there are some PC's locally who are saying they would like specific housing for a particular category of house purchasers.

Neil Pollard – Freshford requested more affordable housing in a prosperous village.

Rob Lewis – Mendip could come up with different housing mix (?)

Kevin Mallone – No further sites – what does it mean?

Voting response to the PC's comments that no further sites for housing should be identified in LPP2:

- **99% majority – 2 abstentions**

PC's Proposed Response to land put forward by Landowners

KB runs through the five parcels of land put forward by landowners shown on the map as NSP 001, 010, 012, 013 and 014, and confirms the red line is the development limit.

Re: NSP001 – Alice Tollworthy – believes this was the land owned by the property development company and is not the school playing grounds. She thinks that it refers to the land purchased by Foma (?) with the transaction of the bungalow site which is partially grass and woodland area. Ashford homes haven't advertised this plot with the housing already erected.

Tony Nash – one of the school governors – he is in agreement with Alice it is probably that piece of land and it is only 0.22 hectares.

Action Point – PC needs to get to the bottom of ownership of this piece of land to be clear which plot NSP001 refers

NSP014/NSP013 – Fortescue Fields land – MDC should not be considering these plots in LPP2 as the inspectorate turned them down when LPP1 was in place.

NSP014 – Shepherds Mead – the paddock did get through with outline planning for 33 properties

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Nigel Saviour – We need to carefully read the document Shepherds Mead shows additional housing across its entirety – that means all the land!

Proposed PC response is to agree with MDC that four of the sites nominated should be excluded as potential sites. In the case of the fifth parcel of land known as Shepherds Mead the PC response is a simple 'No' with supporting reasons. KB talks through the reasons noted to date.

Rodney Beer – List actual fact outside Development limit is an absolute true point.

LO responded that she had a meeting about the incorrect details in the MDC document and especially about the development limit. MDC says it needs to be extended to include the recently planned housing.

Will Martin – Possibly some of the applications received from the landowners have since expired?

Voting response to the PC's comments for this section:

- **99% majority + 2 abstentions**

PC proposed responses to any potential sites that could be offered up for housing

Comment from the floor – Re: Q NSPA4a can we just say 'no' rather than 'not at this time'?

KB continues with NSPQ4b re: what type and the answer proposed is 'not needed'. Any identified in Local Plan 2005 have all been met and MDC needs to stop referring back to this document.

Comment from the floor – why not scrub it and say 'no'?

Marion (?) – With the return of the response forms, should it be one per person or one per household? If it was one per parishioner it would magnify the response considerably. If people needed more forms go to NSP PC website

Action – PC to establish exactly the MDC's requirement in relationship with one per household or per parishioner.

Voting response to the PC's comments for this section:

- **99% majority + 2 abstentions**

PC's proposed responses to potential employment opportunities

KB confirms the PC says 'No' there were commercial sites to be made available but there was no interest, with the exception of the shop. KB goes on to say the PC also says 'No' to additional land being made available.

Technical question from the floor – if three commercial units are now houses does that mean are total has been increased from 108 to 111?

David Scarrow – We are identified as a Primary Village if we lose the shop would that change the status and the number of housing we were required to have?

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KB/LO the answer to this is No, it would only be a difference of five and the village wants a shop.

Multiple discussions took place regarding the implications of having a shop and whether it makes it easier for developers to develop. KB responded by saying only if we were struggling to get 45 houses would it make it easier for developers to build. Further discussions took place about the point system such as GP surgery is one point.

It was also suggested we vote on who wants a village shop but it was felt by DS & LO that this meeting was not the appropriate time to go into the ins and outs of the village shop.

Gilly Beer – We already have an excellent village shop – Farleigh Road its so near and needs to be factored into the consideration.

Question from the floor – what are the PC's view about encouraging employment in the village, shouldn't we be doing more to offer opportunities?

LO – Examples of local work opportunities where no one from the village applied. Many people work from home and run businesses

Same person – Wellow Trekking centre runs a thriving business and is a good employment opportunity locally also, doesn't Bell Hill recruit locally?

Question - In principle would the PC support these things?

Val Fox – Employed up to 13 people but only one came from the village, I tried to keep it going but it eventually broke us down.

Teresa McGill – Bell Hill Garage made someone redundant after 22 years.

Other comments were made about farming businesses and the garage which unfortunately I was unable to hear clearly.

Gilly Beer – The chicken factory burnt down which was in the end a blessing as there was a lot of industrial disruption – it was a big commercial footprint and we need to take the consequences of that if we choose to vote for more employment opportunities.

Pip Gardener – if we don't have a shop will Locharlort convert is to houses?

Voting response to the PC's comments for this section:

97% majority vote with 1 against and 6 abstentions

PC proposed responses to the development limit

KB – presents the development limit as per the slide and the responses proposed. She added that the development limit should reflect the village as it is now and not inclusive of the 33 houses that were planned south of Longmead Close as the PC doesn't want to legitimise any expansion outside the current limits.

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Question from the floor – matter of fact ‘No’, matter of opinion ‘Yes’ something about Shepherds Mead not reflecting the development limit despite the fact it does respond to PC views (???)

Another comment from the floor – Can we stop them before they start work? LO and KB talk about the plans to move the compound and how it would affect the composition of the meadow which will be difficult to replace. Also a discussion took place about village green application versus phase development of 15 houses outside the development limit.

Ian Mills – With regard to the village green application, what was the thinking behind its acceleration? LO talked about how it was at the bottom of the pile and MDC only attempted one a year and we needed to stop the development re-siting the existing compound onto the paddock which would block/redirect footpaths.

Voting response to the PC’s comments for this section:

99% majority vote with 2 abstentions

PC proposed responses to infrastructure/facilities

Question from the floor – Didn’t Hugo Haig promise these before? What if the answer is no we don’t want additional housing but we are happy to accept the offer of money to build car parking etc.? The PC’s response infers there is a need for further infrastructure but without housing is that correct?

Mark Lee – a proposition is needed but it might be opposed

AB If you say ‘Yes’ in any form it is very unlikely that money will be offered without strings attached so is it worth saying ‘Yes’ and taking the risks? KB further substantiates AB’s comments by adding we are making very sure not to open a trap door for more housing. LO also added that MDC took 2005 plan and put it forward as an exception site.

Alice Tollworthy - We can fund raise if we want additional facilities and we can identify and purchase land if we have an open mind to do so – we do not need to be reliant on developers

Anna Nixon – If we were to follow Alice’s point, would we be turned down if we said ‘No’?

George Hitchens – Money could be raised by National Lottery

Ian Hasell – Occasional sites put forward by villages where local landowner has put land up for sale and is subsequently built on even though it is outside the development limit.

Voting response to the PC’s comments for this section:

98% majority vote with 2 against (Asked PC to provide an unqualified ‘No’) plus 2 abstentions

Local Green Spaces – led by Ian Hasell

IH introduces all 6 OALS and has a special mention for Lyde Green Traingle which is in the oldest part of the village and a very important focal point. Also to acknowledge OALSNP006 which is part church and church yard and part Finlay’s paddock that the Finlay’s have been kind enough to extend the use of their land for a number of years to support the church and families in the parish with a

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marquee or parking for wedding receptions and overflow parking. However the land is connected to the historical church landmark. IH goes on to discuss the PC's proposed responses to the first three questions in this section.#

George Hitchens re: Q12 Fortescue Fields – would suggest Laverton Triangle as a verdant edge softener to the Fortescue housing. Laverton triangle is also promised under section 106 a 15metre tree line to replace the TPO's that were taken down to build the houses. He quoted a four year old inspectors report that mentions the Laverton Triangle gives impression of openness and is part of countryside rather than the village. He also added that the drainage pond site was also a possible LGS as it is now well used by walkers/runners etc..

Gill – Understood drainage ponds were designed to take heavy rainfall and it would be very stupid to develop around them.

David Scarrow raised the question about the land next to Church Mead – that perhaps we should consider it?

George Hitchens – responded that he had considered that particular plot but it was clear from the last planning application relating to the land that it was unsuitable and would never be built upon.

Gordon McIntyre – Old Hopyard OALNSP001 – He wanted to clarify what restrictions there would be if LGS were to be applied to him putting up a shed or conservatory? LO not necessary to have this plot as an LGS within the boundaries of a conservation area and the development limit. LO said MDC would find it difficult to establish as an LGS as it doesn't fit the criteria and it is protected by default from English Heritage and being in the curtilage of a Grade II listed building.

Gordon McIntyre – Didn't contradict this – we may have 26 different species of bird come into his garden but it doesn't mean they live there!

Alice Tollworthy – OALNSP006 – Concerned about the LGS proposal for Mum & Dad who are in India – stabling in the paddock is at least 45 years old and we might at some stage wish to update it but don't want to be stuck with the bureaucracy. LO replied that this piece of land does fit the criteria and could impact a historic setting. West site – there is justification to apply for LGS there.

Rodney Beer – Application was in for north end of the Old Hopyard.

Vi – What about the strip of land that runs down the length of Bloody lane – can we take a look at that?

IH says that would be unnecessary as there was a planning application for this strip of land 25 years ago and it was rejected because it provided a soft edge to the village.

Voting response to the PC's comments for these three questions:

98% majority vote with 1 against plus 1 abstention

DS asked IH to talk through the land at the back of the Catholic Church as a possible green space allocation.

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IH then went onto discuss the last four questions and the PC's proposed responses.

Tony Sanderson – raised the point that we mentioned earlier MDC had made a number of mistakes in the material provided about NSP – what were they? LO lists the footpaths on Shepherds Mead were quoted as two rather than three, no mention of village green application or the shop and references back to the needs in local plan 2005 to give a few examples.

Other question from the floor – would we be doing another consultation like the last survey and DS said no but there would be a revised version of the PC's responses based on the feedback received and that would be discussed at the wash up meeting on Monday 23rd November with a view to having the final agreed version posted up onto the website by the end of the same week.

DS thanked the people involved and wrapped up the evening.

Last question from the floor was a reminder to the PC to provide a definitive answer regarding the response forms – whether it should be one per household or per capita. DS said that would be stated on the website at the same time as the PC responses.

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm