

Eynsham Futures Steering Group Minutes July 2015

MINUTES of EYNSHAM FUTURES STEERING GROUP MEETING

7.30pm WEDNESDAY JULY 22nd BARTHOLOMEW ROOM, EYNSHAM

Present: Richard Higgins(RH), Mike Nightingale(MN), Sue Chapman(SC), Sue Johnson(SJ), Steve Parrinder(SP), Posy Parrinder (PP), Rolando Medina(RM), Nina Turner(NT), Richard Andrews (RA), Charles Mathew(CM), Peter Emery(PE), George Smith (GS), Jane Osborne(JO), Paddy Coulter(PC).

Apologies: Jane Baldwin, Eleanor Chance, Ian & Cecylia Harvey, Angie Titchen, Marion Sheppard, Dennis Stukenbroeker, John & Christine Dowling

Correspondence: Emails from Ros Kent about the cycle path into Oxford and from Ian Harvey about the Kemp & Kemp proposals on land west of Thornbury Rd were noted.

- 1. DECLARATIONS OF ANY PERSONAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None
- 2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** It was agreed that the public would be welcome to contribute to discussions throughout the meeting. Paddy Coulter & Jane Osborne attended representing the Eynsham Partnership Academy; CM for OCC; PE for WODC
- 3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 16/6/15** were accepted as an accurate record
- 4. MATTERS ARISING**
 - Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan (**ENP**) Logo - awaiting final version of the logo
 - Change of date for August meeting. It will be on 25/8/15 at 7.30pm

5. UPDATE ON SITE OPTIONS-

LAND WEST OF THORNBURY ROAD- The meeting with Kemp & Kemp was cancelled for tonight, due to the possibility that this may be seen as favouritism. Their planning application is expected in September. CM suggests OCC Highways may have objections. Link to their consultation display boards is on Dropbox.

FRUITLANDS & LAND WEST OF STATION ROAD- Currently both applications are going to appeal. Will be a public hearing for the latter in the Autumn.

GARDEN CENTRE- Detailed OCC Highways objection to the proposed road access in the refused Planning Application has now been received by WODC.

BARTHOLOMEW DETACHED PLAYING FIELD- The attendees from the Partnership Academy pointed out that now the secondary school is an Academy, they have a 125 year lease on the detached playing field on the Witney Road making it more difficult for it to be used as part of any proposed development, despite its' owner being OCC.

GENERAL- It was suggested that we should either organise one meeting for all interested/potential housing and business developers or alternatively a small group of us could meet informally with each of the developers. The latter was preferred.

The aim would be to present the issues that are emerging from the community and to consult on the developer's views and response rather than discuss their individual applications.

We need to be very clear that our meeting them should not be construed as our having given our opinion on their individual proposals. The group would then report back to EFSG.

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We could have the same “script” for each, along the lines:- “These are the issues raised through our community consultations so far..... What possible solutions can you offer?” PP will explore possibilities.

THE WODC LOCAL PLAN- going for Independent Inspection/scrutiny in the Autumn and this could have impact on the amount & location of housing development in the district as a whole. Inspector’s preliminary comments, timetable & arrangements for the public hearings in Dropbox.

6. **PROJECT PLAN – Draft Scoping Report** (available in the Drop Box): RA is drafting this comprehensive report which looks at the sustainability of the ENP and now it requires other people to look at the report and make comments or suggest alterations/enhancements. At the next meeting we must discuss which **issues/options** - such as site selections, size of developments, how to get necessary infrastructure - to put forward for further consultation in the Sustainability Assessment Scoping Report (RA is using CABE guidance). These **issues/options** will take into account the **Community Engagement analysis**. Angie Titchen is finalising this.

7. REPORTS OF TASK GROUPS

History & Heritage - SP presented a review of WODC’s draft Local Plan proposals in this area (in Dropbox). There is lots of “general stuff” about heritage and the need for conservation. Policies give a lot of “let-out clauses”. The updated WO Design guide is in preparation and is supposed to flesh it out.

Education – useful meeting with primary and secondary school. There is a problem with building infrastructure in both schools in the village: both have buildings in great need of refurbishment/renewal. The heads are making an effort to address this by applying for additional funding. Both schools are expecting to be full for new school year starting Sep 2015, so capacity for expansion is very limited. Full report of the meeting is available in the Drop Box.

Transport Committee –RH has added the carnival comments to the transport themes. Meeting arranged to look at OCC’s Local Transport Plan (see Dropbox for outline) including ‘Out of Oxford’ Park and Rides, A40 junction improvements, bus lanes on A40 and from village to Tollbridge. PE says that no traffic surveys, modelling or analytical analysis has been undertaken by OCC as to why one should be put near Eynsham. A joint EPC/EFSG response is proposed.

Parking – there is an upcoming review of off-street parking in West Oxon by WODC. People are encouraged to send in their views on parking in Eynsham

Housing –there have been 2 recent meetings discussing housing (notes in Dropbox). The committee members were reviewing census data which will need to feed into the **ENP**. Areas looked at included:

- Low levels of affordable housing
- High number of pensioners living in under occupied homes, but lack of suitable places to downsize/extra care housing
- Need for key worker housing

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- Very few flats available to rent or buy in Eynsham
- Houses needed for young professionals and economically active families

Businesses –PP had a very useful meeting with Scott Roberts, from Polar Technology for an exchange of ideas. They are a group of 3 high tech engineering companies. 70% of what they produce is for export. They have plans for expanding the workforce, making local apprenticeships available, and building new premises. They currently own the old rail track land and want to expand in that area (full report available in Dropbox).

It was suggested that similar meetings with other local businesses are pursued. VSL land agents have been contacted by RA and Joan Stonham has offered to do a one-off mailing to everyone in the Eynsham Directory. PP will pursue the latter.

-Possibility of a Care Home at Pinkhill House, Southfield Rd- currently offices.

Design and Landscape- Nina is happy to lead on this. Meeting being arranged to discuss designating Local Green Spaces in ENP (can potentially give same protection as Green Belt subject to some strict criteria) and to review the WODC Design Guide.

8. **CARNIVAL REPORT** – the ENP stall was well attended with 127 visitors. We had similar comments to those received at the ENP launch. One new issue raised was of disabled access around the village in particular the poor state of the pavements. Access to buildings was recently reported on by Nic Lewis (also disabled) for Eynsham News. Another review may be required.

The Chair asked for thanks to be recorded to Rolando Medina, Richard Higgins, Angie Titchen and Sue Chapman for all their help and support in running the stall all day.

9. **GRAVEL UPDATING – update from GS.** OCC is producing a new Minerals and Waste Strategy in 2 phases: Stage 1 – Core Strategy; Stage 2 –Specific Strategy (Site Allocations). It is a 6 week consultation starting on 19/8/15 finishing 30/9/15, so all comments on Stage 1 MUST be in by end September 2015.

Link to the OCC website page is on Dropbox.

GS said the plan was radically different to the one consulted on last year including the proposal of a large number of new sites, including one in Eynsham. Current suggested site in Eynsham is smaller than before but stretches from Eynsham Mill off the Hanborough Rd to North of Cassington Lane leaving the Cricket/Croquet ground untouched. OCC has not conducted a new consultation on these radical changes. Previous draft targets have been binned and new larger ones made. Annual production is important from the village's point of view.

GS suggested that ENP should include a policy to resist extraction to the South of A40 as it will have too great an impact. All current plans involve digging on land below water level and this may have the impact of increasing the flood risks. Also, remediation post digging needs to be done via a secure & independent body/fund. Money to pay for it MUST be put in bond before the start of any extraction.

EFSG/EPC joint response suggested. PP will approach EPC.

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10. REVIEW OF MEETING WITH WODC ASTRID HARVEY – The notes from this meeting are in the Drop Box. AH had not had time to study the draft Scoping Report. She suggested doing the ENP in 2 phases:

- **Phase 1** – Outline the plan : Timings, Infrastrucure, Housing; designate Local Green Spaces; address pressing need for Traveller Site on a Rural Exception Site (RES) for people with a strict Eynsham connection, and affordable extra-care housing on a RES for the elderly with an Eynsham connection
- **Phase 2** – could then address other issues (housing education businesses) and site allocations

There was no support from the meeting for these ideas with as it could be fraught with difficulty, 2 sets of formal process, referenda etc. It was thought best to deal with LGS and site allocations for all other forms of development together as a coordinated whole.

AH said that Eynsham Futures meetings need to have a regular item called “Official Process Item” for discussion of all the possible options for development and it must be minuted. PP will make it regular Agenda item.

The next meeting with AH is in the last week of September. Jane Baldwin to arrange.

11. DRAFT LETTER TO LOCAL COUNCILS/MP – There was discussion about writing to David Cameron (**DC**), and other local councils appealing for sensible time scales to develop the ENP. We need time to investigate, develop ideas and consult with the local community. A letter has been written and it was agreed this was excellent, and a good starting point (in Dropbox- “Beset on all sides”). Need to book a slot with **DC** at one of his regular Friday surgeries in Witney, and suggest that this is an opportunity to use Eynsham as a pilot for trying to integrate transport/housing/business/education etc. The letter must come from EPC and although it may be futile it could be viewed as a symbolic attempt to publicise the pressures we are under from all sides- could do a press release. RA agreed to put it to EPC.

12. OXON RURAL COMMUNITIES COUNCIL MEETING – PP attended. They were not able to give a lot of help but can point us in the right directions. Contact made with Hanborough reps considering a NP.

13. AOB – Response to Chipping Norton Neighbourhood Plan which has reached independent Inspection stage. WODC has made a formal response to this plan, which is the first Neighbourhood Plan to have been received by them. They were generally supportive of the plan which was felt to be succinct, well written and it sets out a clear strategy for the future.

14. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 25th August 2015 7.30pm in the Bartholomew Room. SP will do minutes.

Sue Johnson
July 29th, 2015