

MINUTES OF EYNESHAM FUTURES STEERING GROUP MEETING HELD AT 7.30 pm on TUESDAY 19th JANUARY 2016 IN THE BARTHOLOMEW ROOM, EYNESHAM

Present: Dennis Stukenbroeker (DS), Richard Andrews (RA), Nina Turner (NT), Posy Parrinder (PP), Charles Mathew (CM), Marie Mills (MM), Jon Bright (JBr), Eleanor Chance and Rolando Medina (RM) taking minutes.

Apologies:

Sue Chapman (SC), Jane Osborne (JO), Jane Baldwin (JB), Steve Parrinder (SP), Paddy Coulter, Scott Roberts (SR)

PP stated that George Smith has resigned from the EFSG due to personal/work reasons. All meeting participants agreed that his contribution would be missed very much. It was agreed that an email should be sent from EF to George thanking him for his contribution to EF's work. In addition, Marie Mills (MM) was introduced by PP to the group as an interested resident.

Action01: PP to send a thanks email to GS on behalf of EF

Action02: PP to ask MM if she wants to become involved or be kept informed of meetings.

1 MINUTES FROM EF STEERING GROUP MEETING OF 15 December, 2015

Approved

2 MATTERS ARISING

Posy stated that the letters to the business & community groups has not been sent yet due to it being the Christmas period.

Action03: Posy to send these letters

3 WODC - report of meeting on Thursday 14 Jan with Barry Norton, Leader of the Council & Planning Officers

PP reported on EF's meeting with WODC. The meeting was productive and focused. The WODC outlined their current position with WO local plan(LP) which has been inspected by the Planning inspector who had not been happy with the justification to reduce the county wide "Strategic Housing Market Assessment" (SHMA) quota by 2700 dwellings to 10500 dwellings over the 15 year period. Further planning hearings with the inspector have been suspended for now.

During the meeting the WODC stated that they plan to respond to the inspector by week 4 of January 2016. They can either modify their plan and accept the SHMA figures or proceed with further work to justify the lower figures. Furthermore, DS stated that a recent WODC newsletter stated that the local plan examination would be suspended for about 12 months reconvening in early 2017.

Additionally, the inspector thought that WO local plan would have a longer shelf-life if it was to provide sites for WO District Council quota for Oxford's unmet housing needs (sharing a total of 15k dwellings with 3 other district councils); the precise allocation details for unmet housing needs will only be known by August 2016.

PP also commented that the preliminary inspector findings criticized the way in which the strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA) sites were treated by the local plan by saying that they were de-facto site allocations without the clarity of proper allocations; they should either be fully allocated to support the 5 year delivery of supply of building land or otherwise they should be treated the same without comments about the nature of their suitability. This is something that affects Eynsham's neighbourhood plan. They also commented that Vale District Council is in a similar position to Eynsham

with regards to Oxford's unmet housing needs although they have already accepted the SHMA figures (and so have the other Districts).

Another important point raised by the Planning Inspector is that you can't require additional technical standards above building regulations on developments on LP/NP allocated sites. RA thought that anything outside the allocated sites can have additional technical standards (e.g. "green" housing).

RA commented that the National Planning Policy Framework requires development to adopt environmentally friendly design aimed at reducing climate change. In contradiction the government has scrapped the Code for Sustainable Homes as it thinks it was stopping house building from going ahead on grounds of cost. He thought this does not make much sense around Oxfordshire given the ratio of the cost of land versus extra eco-building costs and that EF steering group would approach David Cameron in writing regarding this issue.

Action04: RA to circulate letter for comment

The WODC meeting participants agreed that it was realistic to carry out a referendum in May 2017 as planned but that given the present uncertainties it was recommended that EF steering group and WODC should work closely and in parallel. Hopefully the WODC Local Plan should be made ahead of the EF Neighbourhood Plan as it will set the housing targets for Eynsham's Neighbourhood Plan.

The idea of publishing the Neighbourhood plan in advance of WODC Local Plan with some form of contingency site allocations to cater for possible scenarios was discounted as too risky.

WODC is interested in working closer with Eynsham Future's group. Planning officer Janice Bamsey (expert on eco-standards) from WODC and RA from Eynsham Futures (EF) have been assigned as the contact "points" between the WODC and EF to establish a closer liaison on planning strategic site allocations. WODC reps were keen to see the draft NP documents we have produced so far..

Action05: RA to send working NP documents to Janice Bamsey and to arrange a meeting between her and EFSG reps.

RA commented on the possibility that closer cooperation with WODC could lead to the WODC making the Eynsham site allocations. EFSG meeting participants agreed that this could be explored but the issue of whether this would be to the advantage of Eynsham and/or aligned with Eynsham community's wishes for their future is an important factor.

WODC were pleased that the community and business in Eynsham seemed to be engaged on several levels. They were interested in our consultation in Eynsham News- see 5 below.

Finally, PP commented that the allocation of local green spaces (as part of new developments sites or from existing valued open-spaces) was considered a very good idea and worth pursuing soon.

Action06: PP to include green-spaces in the next EF's meeting agenda

Action07: EFSG members and other participants to bring ideas on green-space to the next EF meeting

4 CORRESPONDENCE- none

5 PROJECT PLAN

The Eynsham News (Issue 17) article should be out by the end of week commencing 18th January 2016. It explains issues we have been working on, such as the community's needs and aspirations for the right infrastructure to support new homes/businesses and options for minimal or larger housing targets in order to realise them. RA explained we had been given the opportunity to put in an insert for people's opinions. We hope to get good response as it goes to every home and business in Eynsham. Boxes to collect responses from the community are being placed at appropriate locations.

Latest NP Documents– RA explained to the group that he has introduced version control on the EF’s document store in Dropbox where we can access drafts of – Issues and Options Report, Project Plan chart, ENP Policies, ENP Basic Conditions doc, Survey Analysis, SA Scoping Report, Thematic Cross Reference, Draft Vision Statement. There is some confusion regarding Dropbox good practice.

Action:08 Review in the next meeting if everybody is comfortable using Dropbox. If necessary provide additional training to remedy this issue

PP and RA stated that comments on style or content of the published documents are welcome; specifically “Draft issues and options” report (site options), Policies, Scoping report.

Action: All to provide comments on draft documents

CM requested printed copies of the documents.

Action09: RA will send documents by email to EFSG and interested parties to download/print

Employment of professional help at this stage? There was some discussion.

RA said he wouldn’t mind someone casting an independent professional eye now over the documents he has drafted so far.

JBr thought later on we might need more professional help with additional community surveys. The government is keen for communities to use the £8000 pot. We could apply for say £4000 at a time and use it to buy 2 weeks of consultant time say in half a day slots.

PP suggested using time at the end to check that we have covered the Basic Conditions.

RA added it could prevent us missing something that could catch us out.

It was agreed that a first step would be to invite Community First Oxfordshire’s Tom McCulloch, LDA’s David Bell, Louise Thomas (Pauline Ulijascek’s contact) to present their experience developing Neighbourhood plans and how they could contribute.

Action10: PP will to invite the 3 candidates to the next 3 meetings

6 POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Meeting discussed 4 draft site option assessments for the area comparing their pros and cons.

1. West. Considers a new link road from A40 to the Stanton Harcourt Rd and could provide up to 800 homes and an additional Primary School.
2. West. Assesses the possibility of using SHLAA sites with existing limited access. Only 230 homes and no new roads or school as developer contributions would be insufficient.
3. West. Looks at the intermediate option with more homes than 2, a shorter road accessed from A40 only, taking cars away from the village centre and fewer dwellings than 1. No new school as lower housing numbers would not raise enough developer contributions.
4. North. Could offer 800 homes with an additional Primary School. Measures to integrate it well with the rest of the village. Allows for various A40 improvements suggested in OCC’s public consultation. No vehicle access onto/off A40 but via a new roundabout on the Hanborough Road instead.

Savills Eynsham North of A40 proposal: Not all participants had been able to read the proposal in Dropbox (NB– try <http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1268876/98-Corpus-Christi-Savills-01-Appendix.pdf>). It was explained that Savills propose 1200 homes on a larger area with a new village centre and Primary School. Drawbacks include–

Poor foot/bike/buggy connections with Eynsham centre. They propose road level crossings with lights which would slow down A40 traffic and mean long waits for people who are crossing.

Their proposal moves the proposed Park & Ride to the Hanborough Road/A40 roundabout end of the proposed site.

Inevitably the furthest dwellings would be very detached from the rest of Eynsham and facilities such as secondary school, churches, shops and pubs.

Lively discussion about various options including Savills proposal and associated transport challenges, It was agreed that the results of the consultation in the "Eynsham News" will have to be taken into account when considering these 4 options further.

Action 11: *EFSG to study & comment on draft options which are being updated frequently*

Planning Applications/Appeals update– PP/DS/RA updated the meeting– for information only.

Thornbury Road– The planning application is still pending. Kemp & Kemp are in discussion with OCC Education and the Eynsham Partnership Academy over provision of school places.

Litchfield, land west of Station Road– Appeal hearing is set for 15 March

Fruitlands– Appeal Hearing today was cancelled due to illness and is rescheduled for 13 April.

DS advised us that EPC has applied to have the wood declared an "Asset of Community Value".

Garden Centre– Appeal hearing is set for 21 June.

(All Appeal hearings start at 10am at WODC if anyone wants to go.)

7 REPORTS OF GROUPS

Community Engagement– the Eynsham News consultation insert was set up. On-line survey is ongoing.

Business– Polar proposals. Scott Roberts has met with Historic England officer about Polar's expansion plans using a small portion on the Scheduled Ancient Monument. Still awaiting his decision.

Transport– Planning the A40 Science Transit Improvements.

We would like a meeting with Beverly Hindle OCC. Charles Matthew says he will try and arrange. He added that Highways were getting engineer reports on the options aiming at consultations in Sep/Oct 2016. That could be too late for us as all our options impact on the A40 and we need to engage at an early date with OCC.

Housing– The group met on 18 Jan. and discussed–

- a) Planning Advisory Service Guidance on Housing Needs Assessments for NPs (sent by Astrid Harvey and reviewed by Helen Brooke). It suggested useful documents, such as SHMA and SHLAA, that we should check– many already done. DS indicated that it was advisable not to contradict SHMA/SHLAA. Well founded justification for any deviations would be required. More work is needed on Dept. for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) household increase projections, using pro-rata percentage increase 2001 - 2011 to estimate Eynsham's future household requirement projections
- b) Planning Inspector's Preliminary Reports on WODC LP2031. The housing target & SHLAA issues were dealt with at paragraph 3 above. He questioned WODC's consideration of affordable housing provision. He criticised the lack of attention to Travellers needs. Do we need to consider provision in our NP?
- c) WODC draft Design Guide. We thought it might be worth sending an EPC/EFSG response to the consultation that closes on 22 Jan regarding specific areas where Eynsham does not necessarily conform to the norms described in the Guide. DS to circulate suggestion to EPC. He may draft a response.

Action 12: *DS to canvas Parish councillors and may send response to consultation.*

Action 13: *PP to send full notes of the Housing meeting to RA.*

Next Housing meeting will look at issues from a) above.

Landscape & Design– Ideas for Public Realm projects and for Local Green Space will be an Agenda item for next meeting. Suggestions to be requested from EFSG and many other interested community members.

Those present suggested– landscaping and/or seating at various locations such as Bartholomew School frontage, approaches to village via Hanborough Rd & Oxford Rd, Hawthorn Rd– small piece of grass on corner behind Beech Court, Mill Street shops, Spareacre Lane shops

***Action 14;** PP will email all interested parties for suggestions for Local Green Space designation and for Public Realm Projects.*

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 16th February 2016. NB:- Jon Bright has since volunteered to take the minutes.