

Coombe Bissett and Homington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting

14th October 2019

CC's private residence

Present: Steering Group - Christine Cooper (CC), Alastair Lack (AL), Des Hobson (DH). Amy Burnett (AB, DinT). Observer – Pippa Crosthwaite (PCr).

Apologies: Pauline Cullis (PC), David Parson (DP), TM (Tim Mynott).

Actions highlighted in **bold**.

Housing Needs document to approve for release to PC

The group discussed the amended (and simplified) Housing Needs consolidated Evidence Base review document, which collates and discusses the evidence gathered thus far and provides an indicative housing figure for the parish.

The AECOM Housing Need Assessment suggested that there is a need of 10 optional older persons dwellings, which needn't be built entirely within the parish. The group felt that where possible, older people in the community should be afforded the opportunity to stay in the village. The group all considered that there was a big difference between AECOM's suggestion of an and/or dwellings or bed spaces for older people. AB also suggested that using AECOM's phrasing of bed spaces could also translate to five 2-bed dwellings (i.e. if a couple shared a property), or cohousing options could be an avenue to explore increased density yet retain living independent with some shared facilities.

It was agreed that going forward the plan should refer to dwellings, not bed spaces. The release of specific sites for older persons' accommodation and/or relevant housing mix is to be considered as part of the neighbourhood plan process; however, houses suitable for older people need **not** be 'retirement' properties but could be ordinary, smaller dwellings suitable for downsizing.

The turnover in the existing housing stock (i.e. those freeing up larger properties and downsizing if smaller properties were built) is likely to mean there is no need to extrapolate the responses to the Community Questionnaire to account for those who didn't respond i.e. the numbers do not require inflating to account for non-respondents within the parish.

Meeting the identified need of those seeking self-build plots should also be explored within the plan.

AB to amend Housing Need document; CC to send to PC (Debbie) for the PC to agree with a working figure of approximately 15 dwellings over the plan period at their next meeting (together with the site assessment consolidated document - see next agenda item – and a proposed list of points for the PC meeting). AB/CC to prepare a list of 'asks' of the PC for their next meeting.

Update of WC housing allocation

There is currently a shortfall in the number of deliverable sites in the Wiltshire Council Housing Market Area, which may mean that proposals for development adjacent to the settlement boundary may be seen more favourably (depending on other planning constraints, i.e. AONB). The impact of the shortfall on CB is currently unknown, but by assessing available sites and their suitability for development through the Neighbourhood Plan process this should mitigate risks associated with any requirement to provide dwellings.

Discussion of sites

CC shared the draft site assessment report with Wiltshire Council. The previous Link Officer, Anna McBride, has changed roles and is no longer supporting the CB&HNP. A colleague has commented on the site assessment report and noted that additional assessments on the quality of agricultural land may be needed. He also suggested that any development within the AONB may contravene the importance to conserve and enhance the AONB, as enshrined in the WC Core Strategy and national policy. The CB&HNP seeks to extend these protections into the spirit of the plan, and the steering group is keen to explore whether sites deemed by AECOM as suitable or potentially suitable (subject to addressing minor constraints) can result in a net enhancement to the AONB, particularly on brownfield sites.

AB to share the consolidated evidence base on site allocations for group review. All to meet during half-term as a working meeting to agree document before it is shared with PC (c. 4th November or beforehand). A tentative time of Wednesday 30th 3:30pm -5pm was proposed. AB/all to confirm.

Engagement with the AONB

CC spoke to Richard Burden (RB) from the AONB to elicit his views on the sites assessed. Due to existing commitments, he is unable to respond on the site assessment report until November. The group are keen to ensure that the views of the AONB are incorporated into a general approach for community consultation and the finalisation of the report; thus any sites the AONB may object to are known prior to any further engagement with the community or with landowners on the sites put forward for consideration and comment. **RB to comment and CC/AB to incorporate feedback into the engagement strategy and plan content going forward.**

RB also commented that he wishes for the plan to consider the AONB's initiative to achieve Dark Sky status and consider guidance for light installations available on the AONB's website. AB has policy wording from other plans that can reflect these concerns. RB also wants to review the design guide and any other documents arising from the process thus far. **CC to share further documentation with RB.**

Community Engagement

The group discussed how the community could provide feedback on the sites assessed, with the constraints clearly listed. Clarifying people's need for self-build and preferred types of housing on each site can also be explored. The sites could then be shortlisted to be potentially allocated in the plan. NB: no assessment of sites can be made until RB has responded (see above).

AOB

AL was unsure whether there was a discrepancy between the number of households the Parish Plan questionnaire was distributed to compared with the Community Questionnaire. It may be that the Parish Plan encouraged responses from individuals rather than by households. **AB/CC to investigate.** However, all households on the electoral roll received a copy of the 2018 Community Questionnaire and the response was by household.

DH mentioned that the PC was currently preparing the budget for 2020. Should there be a need for additional funding for CB&HNP CC to make a proposal to the PC. **CC to liaise with the PC.**