

## **Eccleshall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Group**

**April 15<sup>th</sup> 2014 – Eccleshall Community Centre 10.00am.**

### **Present were:-**

David Pimble, Gordon Dale, John Baldry, Brian Mason, Peter Bertram, Cheryl Hyland, Keith Weston, Barry Apps, Sue Sanders, Chris Heelis and Bob Keith from Planning Aid.

**Apologies:-** Mac McCoig, Paul Snape, Luke Serjeant, Bob Osbourne, John Allen and Peter Thompson.

David gave a brief resume of progress to date and explained that an update had been included in the March Parish Council newsletter. The group was anxious to progress as rapidly as possible as approaches had been made to the Parish Council by developers and Richborough Estates were proposing a development of 130 homes and had already held a public consultation session.

David asked what the chances were of a planning application being approved if the site had been excluded for development in the Neighbourhood Plan. Plans indicating 3 possible options for a settlement boundary had been circulated to members, showing possible areas for development.

Bob stated that the fact the emerging Local Plan did not define the number of houses each Key Service Village was expected to absorb, created a dilemma for the Group, as the boundary could not be drawn so tight that no development could be accommodated but if it was too wide this would present an opportunity for significantly more development than the community desired. Bob suggested that the base date for the housing requirement to commence needed to be extracted from the Local Plan to clarify whether development that already had planning permission would be included as part of the total allocation required. It was noted that until a settlement boundary was in place there would be limited ability to refuse planning applications.

Cheryl referred to the consultation results, which had identified limited local need, inadequate infrastructure and lack of green space and stated that excessive development would alter the demography of the town.

Bob was asked how basic principles could be included in the Plan requiring improvement to drainage, Highways and sewage facilities.

Bob replied that it was important to have discussions with Severn Trent, the Environment Agency and Highways. Decisions on potential development sites would have to be justified and based on robust evidence, gathered through an assessment process to ensure that there were no grounds for a legal challenge. Although the majority of residents preferred small developments, this was one of many material considerations and small developments would not provide benefits for the community. Once a Community Infrastructure Levy had been adopted by Stafford Borough Council then local communities would benefit financially from developments with additional benefits for those Parishes with Neighbourhood Plans.

Bob indicated that the Plan should only consider those areas on the periphery of the town as development in outlying areas would be allowed for in the Local Plan under a separate Policy. Bob referred to a process and methodology to assess each site and agreed to forward details and templates to Chris.

- 1) Relevant Planning history  
TPO's, Listed Buildings  
Land identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment  
Suitability  
Sustainability  
Deliverability.
- 2) Flooding and other issues  
Other stakeholders  
Pollution, contamination, mineral deposits, Public Open Space  
Archaeological remains, legal constraints

- 3) Visit and assess all sites and note location
  - Natural features
  - Bio diversity
  - Buildings
  - Important views and settings
  - Impact on skyline and neighbouring uses.
- 4) Local Services
  - Availability, capacity, quality
  - Liaise with service providers – doctors, schools etc.
- 5) Suitability
  - Constraints
  - Viability
  - Costs and benefits
- 6) Deliverability and timescales

The Neighbourhood Plan could only stipulate policies within the Neighbourhood area. Members suggested that a proposal could be included to require a new access to the M6 to be created at Yarnfield. Bob suggested that traffic surveys could be commissioned for use in the evidence base.

Bob agreed to:-

- Liaise with Raj Bains regarding the numbers of houses allocated to each Key Service Village and the establishment of Settlement Boundaries. Ascertain progress with the adoption of a CIL.
- Forward details / templates for site assessments and methodology, a checklist and advice on writing the Plan and Policies, together with examples of policies.

Chris was to contact Raj to obtain contact details for other agencies – EA, Severn Trent etc and enquire about meetings with representatives of County Highways, which Raj had undertaken to instigate.

It was agreed to hold the next meeting at the Community Centre at 6.00pm on Thursday May 1<sup>st</sup> 2014.

Bob Keith was thanked for his attendance and help.

The meeting closed at 11.40am