

Eccleshall Parish Neighbourhood Plan Group

June 26th, 2014 – Eccleshall Community Centre at 6.00pm.

Present were:- David Pimble, John Baldry, Peter Thompson, Gordon Dale, Cheryl Hyland, Peter Bertram and Chris Heelis

Apologies were received from:- Brian Mason, Keith Weston and John Allen,

It was noted that subject to a six week High Court challenge period, the Plan for Stafford Borough had now been adopted. Until a Settlement Boundary was identified there would be little defence against any planning applications submitted although the Borough Council may attempt to delay processing applications until the Boundaries had been finalised.

Copies of the Draft Policies had been forwarded to Raj Bains and Bob Keith and the group considered various amendments proposed by Mr Keith including:-

- Reference to the as yet undetermined amount of land available for development:- Mr Keith stressed that the methodology used to choose some sites for potential development over others was required and the group was already preparing documentation to substantiate the sites for inclusion in the Settlement Boundary.
- Agreement was to be reached with Stafford Borough to determine the numbers of houses to be allocated to Eccleshall, if no number was defined then the group would continue to work towards the identification of sites to accommodate around 200 new dwellings in total.
- The views of key stakeholders were important as part of the evidence base:- The group considered that the residents of the Parish who had expressed their views through the consultation process should be reflected in the Policies of the document. However, Mr Keith had suggested deleting a reference to the provision of bungalows to meet the needs of the elderly and infirm as this was not commercially viable.

It was agreed to arrange a meeting with Alex Yendole (Planning Policy Manager SBC) and Raj Bains before making any amendments to the document.

Cheryl indicated that the consultation responses should be used to inform the policies which would facilitate the integration of new development into the community, which Eccleshall had successfully achieved in the past.

David referred to amendments to the Policy document that made reference to the sites, which had been surveyed by group members and the Key Considerations used to define Policy requirements.

- Site 1 – This was land by Eccleshall Castle, including the Meadow and land at the rear of Holy Trinity Church. This site was within the recently reviewed Conservation Area and therefore not suitable for development.
- Site 2 – was the land between the brook on the Eccleshall side of the Castle and the River Sow – this area was considered to be too far from the town centre to be used for parking and was adjacent to the Conservation Area.
- Site 3 – This was the site at the rear of the BT exchange, Meadow close and Gas Holder Site. It was proposed to include a small portion of this site within the Settlement Boundary allowing for the development of approximately 15 dwellings. An appropriate access would need to be discussed with Highways. The inclusion of this site was a matter for discussion with Mr Yendole.
- Site 4 – This site was not available as the Landowner did not wish to sell.
- Site 5 – This site had been identified previously as suitable for affordable homes. It was proposed that a small portion of the site was included in the Boundary suitable for a further 15 dwellings.
- Site 6 – It was proposed to preclude this site from development as there was no access and the land was highly visible with the bottom corner being adjacent to the sewage works.
- Site 7 – The Catholic Church wished to retain the land immediately behind the Church but had expressed an interest in selling the adjacent field, which could provide a link from Stone Road through to Stafford Road if the Richborough Estates application received approval. It was estimated that this site could potentially cater for 20 houses.
- Site 8 – This site was unavailable as the landowner did not wish to sell.

- Site 9 – This site was considered too far outside the perimeter of the town, was one of the few remaining examples of an original Medieval Field Pattern and site access would be problematic.
- Site 10 – The Neighbourhood Plan Group and Parish Council supported the application which would soon be currently submitted by Richborough Estates for 130 houses on this site. The proposals were for low density housing and would meet some of the community aspirations identified during the consultation process, including open space and play areas / facilities and traffic calming on Stafford Road.
- Sites 11, 12 & 13 – It was considered that Green Lane provided a natural boundary and site 11 could have a potential problem with drainage. These sites were included in the SHLAA as developable
- Site 14 – Was undevelopable as it housed an underground water storage tank.
- Site 15 – A Public Consultation was to be held July 14th and 15th. J-Ross was developing plans for 80+ homes on this site. It was suggested that in principle the site could be reduced to allow for the development of approximately 25 homes
- Site 16 – Lonsdale First School. The land on the old school site on the opposite side of Shaws Lane has Planning permission for 82 houses.
- Site 17 – It was considered undesirable to develop on Shaws Lane and the land could be subject to drainage issues as the level was lower than the rest of the town. It was not known whether the owner wished to sell the land. This site was not included in the SHLAA.
- Site 18 – Land owned by Lichfield Diocese and Gladman Company were reported to be submitting a planning application. It was considered that Footpath 13 from The Washpits to Shaw's Lane provided a natural boundary with open fields to the west. Additional traffic would cause an issue being adjacent to the school and land off Shaw's Lane was not considered suitable for inclusion in the Settlement Boundary.
- Sites 19 & 20 – These sites were within the Conservation Area and views from the sites were detailed in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

The group discussed Aspirations that had arisen from the consultation process and were to be included in the supplementary documentation. Peter B. referred to the existence of a Bowling Green on land owned by the Catholic Church off Stone Road and suggested that the parish Council made enquiries into the possible reinstatement and acquisition of this facility as a Bowling Green had been identified as a priority need for Eccleshall.

Figures to show how the existing green space and recreational facilities in Eccleshall compared with National Standards of provision were required to substantiate the policy for Green Space provision.

Some analysis may be required of the traffic data collated for Richborough Estates and also of the most recent data provided by the Highways to substantiate policies on Traffic and Jobs and Employment and highlight why traffic was a major factor for the town together with capacity details of the main routes / roundabouts.

It was noted that Chris had contacted BT regarding possible use of the space for car parking. This was not likely to be allowed as vehicles were reportedly being inconsiderately parked obstructing access to the site for engineers and sometimes had been locked in overnight.

The next meeting would be arranged following a meeting with Mr Yendole and Raj Bains - possibly in three weeks' time – July 17th, 2014.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm