

Eccleshall Neighbourhood Plan Group

March 20th, 2014 – Eccleshall Community Centre 6pm.

Present were:- David Pimble, Gordon Dale, Keith Weston, John Baldry, Brian Mason, John Allen Peter Thompson, Peter Bertram, Barry Apps, Luke Serjeant, Bob Osbourne, Chris Heelis and Raj Bains (Neighbourhood Planning Officer SBC).

Apologies were received from:-, Sue Sanders, Paul Snape, Mac McCoig and Cheryl Hyland

David Pimble reported that two developers had approached the Parish Council and presented proposals for developments on land off Cross Butts and Stafford Road / Badgers Croft. Proposals for the land off Stafford Road / Badgers Croft were well advanced and a public consultation was to be held on April 2nd, 2014 at Eccleshall Methodist Hall.

David asked Raj for advice on tackling this situation and how these proposals for new developments would affect the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. It appeared that there were proposals to develop other areas of land around Eccleshall yet to emanate.

Raj replied that it was advantageous that the Neighbourhood Plan was in the process of being prepared and referred to the Local Plan, which would not be deemed as emerging until it was finally cleared by the inspector. The Borough Council had endeavoured to delay the submission of impending planning applications and was encouraging potential developers to liaise with Parish Councils in order to ascertain the aspirations of the communities.

It was important to focus on the developing Neighbourhood Plan together with the Vision and Policies for the Parish, and submit it for examination and adoption as soon as possible. The principles and objectives contained in the Plan could then be used to influence developers and require them to demonstrate how they proposed to achieve the aspirations of the community.

Bob queried the mandate of the Group, who were not elected. Raj stated that the Localism Act required developers to consult with and establish community needs and that the Parish Council had overall responsibility for the Neighbourhood Plan. Gordon Dale pointed out that non-councillors had been invited by the Parish Council to help prepare the plan.

It was noted that a Neighbourhood Plan could not restrict the numbers of houses to be built as part of any development, however, policies could be worded to show that development would be encouraged and what requirements should be in place to achieve this – ie the protection of green space, preserving the village atmosphere, sustainable and least impacting development.

Policies could be interlinked, for example Housing Policies could indicate that any development should have regard to local transport and require a transport assessment.

It was agreed that some discussion with Highways would be beneficial regarding the proposals for road improvements to facilitate the expansion of Raleigh Hall and the effect of development of the traffic through Eccleshall. Christine was asked to send Raj a copy of the letter that the Parish Council had resolved to send to Nick Dawson regarding additional traffic that would be generated at Raleigh Hall.

Raj agreed to approach Bus Network Providers, Highways and other designated officers to attend a meeting with the group to discuss policies and these would then be subject to screening by the Borough Council.

Raj referred to the following documents that could be referred to in order to promote the unique selling point of the Parish, the vision for what the community would like to protect and shape the type of development:-

- Conservation Area Appraisal
- Housing Needs Survey
- Flood Risk Assessments

Open Space / Recreation Strategy – which highlighted that better play, teen facilities and a bowling green were required in Eccleshall.
Biodiversity Sites and SSI's

If specific areas were identified as appropriate for development in the Plan then agreement from the Landowner would be required and the Borough Council would undertake a screening exercise to ascertain the suitability of the site. Alex Yendole had indicated that he would liaise with the Parish Council regarding the creation of Settlement Boundaries and it was agreed that an indication was required of the number of houses Eccleshall would be required to facilitate.

Christine was asked to arrange a further meeting with Bob Keith and another meeting of the group. Members would be notified accordingly.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm