

## **Report on Village Transport Statement**

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have recommended that there would be value in commissioning a “village transport statement” that would evidence core highway and transport issues that developers, local authority planners and highway departments would need to consider when assessing a future application (and Neighbourhood Plan). The statement would be used to both within the response to imminent development proposals for allocated land (existing local plan) over the next twelve months and also as evidence for a Neighbourhood Plan that would follow.

### **Key Points:**

1. An outline planning application is due imminently for land allocated in the Local Plan. There are likely to be mixed feelings from the village, those wishing to stop the development whilst acknowledging the site is allocated for housing
2. Further investigations of traffic impacts, safe access to the A371 and safe pedestrian links to the core of the village are required.
3. There are long standing concerns about pedestrian safety, traffic speed and volumes, but also lack of parking spaces and lack of active travel alternatives to car use.
4. The Steering Group would like to seek strategic advice on which issues are most likely to have traction in the planning process and how best to pursue them to assist in responding to any imminent application for the housing on allocated land and also to inform development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

A report, written by a qualified professional, that appraises the key highway evidence and presents a strong case as to why the highways safety requirements identified in the local plan must be upheld.

The report would focus on the following issues: -

- Effective pedestrian safety. Can it be done? What mitigation on a minimum? (Pavements, crossing of the A371, slowing traffic down).
- Safe vehicular access onto the A371 within visibility parameters. Can it be done? If so, what might be the best layout (taking full account of actual traffic volumes and types of movement)
- Protection and increased provision for public parking to protect current spaces / enhance to allow use of local services (Shop, School, Pub, Church).
- Consider sustainability of Westbury Sub Mendip as a primary village given existing limited bus service and the need for multi user path links to local towns.

## **Quotes for the Village Transport Statement**

Below are four quotes but the Steering Group have requested a budget of £5,000 for the Village Transport Statement.

The Steering Group have requested that part of this is covered by match funding with the Parish Council matching £1 for £1 up to a maximum of £2,500 but there could be a possibility the Parish Council is asked to cover the full costs before the fundraising amounts are received.

The VAT elements can be reclaimed but the Parish Council would need to cover that element first.

## **Company A**

The concept of the Village Transport Statement is to evidence identifiable highway and transportation issues that will assist and inform the Parish Council in its consultation responses for forthcoming development proposals. The Transport Statement would also further assist the Parish Council in its evidence base for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

A Transport Statement will need to consider the following matters

- Review of all transport and highway related policy relevant to the locality
- Review of existing highway / transport conditions in the vicinity of the site
- Review of the potential site access options
- Transport sustainability and accessibility to local facilities
- Parking requirements in accordance with current standards
- Estimation of all trips (with emphasis upon vehicle trips) generated by the proposed development
- Consideration of potential transport impacts arising from the proposed development.

Given the prominence of current central and local Government policy towards alternative modes to the private car (*in particular the Department for Transport Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN1/20) emphasising the need for good practice and inclusive design and accessibility*), detailed consideration needs to be given in regards for alternative modes such as walking and cycling.

Production of the Transport Statement **£6,750 + VAT totalling £8,100.00**

This is also excluding costs for surveys, accident records, highway records, attendance at any meetings or public consultation events (these would be charged at the company's normal staff hourly rates).

## **Company B**

This consultant would like to meet so the appropriate document / documents could be formulated.

A Scoping Report would be produced and this would include data already collected. This would help the Neighbourhood Plan in forming a useful basis for stating the problems in the village which will need to be addressed by any future planning applications.

This company would help to address the pedestrian safety / access / other issues directly with their scoping report, plus advice would also be given in responding to the potential planning application.

The fee would cover all stages of the work outlined in the proposal and would be phased as 40% Scope Report, 40% specific response to the potential planning application and 20% further report for Neighbourhood Plan evidence.

**Fees £3,125 + VAT totalling £3,750.00**

## **Company C**

This company would start with the national policy as set out in the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) as the key relevant policies relate to development in rural areas, cumulative highway impact not being severe subject to safety considerations and sustainability.

They would undertake four elements

- A Safety Review and Risk Assessment of the routes to the village centre and around the village including consideration of church, school, pubs, post office / shop, children's play area etc. This would make use of the gathered background traffic data
- A Transport Sustainability Appraisal of the village and maybe a comparison with similarly designated villages.
- Specific comments on the current allocation site, such as viability issues at the junction with the A371 and how the pedestrian improvements as part of the site should be framed, including crossing the A371 to the north side to the school, post office and pub.
- Village Transport Statement including input into the Neighbourhood Plan. This would build on the work undertaken and identify the transport constraints on the village, transport sustainability, potential mitigation, and improvements to the village, car parking requirements.

They have stated the following are essential

- A Safety Review and Risk Assessment £2150
- A Transport Sustainability Appraisal £1050, this would omit the comparison with other villages, if included this would be an extra £200
- Specific comments and advice on the allocation site £650
- In terms of the Village Transport Statement, they could highlight what information should be updated into the Neighbourhood Plan from the two reports and reorder as necessary. This would reduce the fees for this element to £500 or omitted altogether.

In the first instance the fees would be limited to a maximum of **£5,000 + VAT, plus third-party expenses**. This would cover the first three core elements. Expenses are additional and charged at cost. For budgeting purposes a suggestion of £500 for expenses which would include the purchase of accident data, Ordnance Survey mapping, travel costs, etc. An additional £750 is suggested for vehicle speed readings in a couple of locations, although they would be happy to lend the Parish Council a vehicle speed gun. The third-party expenses would be agreed in advance. A price for the Village Transport Statement would be an additional £2400.

These costs could easily creep up to £8,500.

### **Company D**

This company can provide advice to land owners, developers, residents, and planning / highway authorities on the transport implications of development and other proposals. They provide a high-quality highways and transportation service to the development industry, local authority and private clients.

Price would include two meetings on site and prepare a report for a fixed fee of **£3250 + 5% admin fee to cover expenses + VAT totalling £4095**. Other virtual meetings would be possible within the total fee of £3412.50.

### **Recommendation**

The Steering Group have recommended company B

Recommendation from the Parish Clerk would be to wait for funding to be in place before committing funds. The advice received from the consultants is that it is difficult to oppose traffic issues and as the land is already within the local plan as allocated housing, realistically there is a low likelihood of effectively changing the outcome. This would need to be taken into consideration before allocating public funds.