

**Westbury sub Mendip Neighbourhood Plan Working Group**  
**Minutes 5 October 2023 8.00 pm**  
**Zoom online meeting**

**Present** - Chris Langdon [CL] (chair), Mick Fletcher [MF], Sue Isherwood [SI], Dave Maguire [DM] Ros Wyke [RW], Tony Westcott [TW] - joined at 8.20pm

1. **Apologies** Adamos Euripidou [AE]
2. **Minutes.** The minutes of meetings held on 10<sup>th</sup> August were noted and agreed
3. **Matters** arising – none not on the agenda
4. **Communication and correspondence** since the last meeting:
  - a. **Meeting at Shepton Mallet on 21 September with Somerset East Planners Nikki White (Senior Planner), Jayne Boldy (Conservation Officer), TW and DM re Brownfield Site.**
    - i. In response to request from Somerset C for landowners to bring forward additional land for 505 houses, CC have put forward brownfield site and remaining part of the green field site.
    - ii. NW said brownfield was likely to be rejected for housing.
    - iii. Proposal to convert 19<sup>th</sup>.C two-story Granary building and adjacent single-story stone barns to commercial use as community shop and PO was discussed and JB thought it would be a good fit. There was a strong concern about converting the other stone barns to residential use, even if replacing rental income from the flat over the existing shop and given that these barns had been extensively modernised.
    - iv. In response to proposal to site the new multi-use village hall in the NE corner of the greenfield site next the stone barns, JB said this would need site specific drawings and recommended employing services of a conservation architect.
    - v. No historic or heritage value in the modern steel barns, but replacement with any form of housing would have a harmful impact on the listed buildings.
    - vi. Parking, graveyard extension and allotments would need a site assessment.
  - b. **Meeting at St Laurence's Church on 26 September with CC and Litchfields,** attended by Sue Isherwood, Ros Wyke, Guy Timson, Maggie Beebee (Parish Council); Mick Fletcher, Tony Westcott (NPWG); Paul Hamilton (PCC); Joanna Loxton, Victoria Barrett-Mudhoo (CCE); Pauline Roberts, Caitlin Newham (Litchfields); Trevor Wright (Thrive Architects).
    - i. general feeling that the meeting mostly went well.
    - ii. SI asked for comments on CC's minutes before responding.
    - iii. RW noted that proposed attenuation pond was outside the allocated site
    - iv. CC's response to SC's request for additional housing land by proposing brownfield site, greenfield extension to the S and Bell's Close was unlikely to be added to the allocation

- v. CC's suggestion of sharing costs of brownfield clearance and based on a residential valuation was not accepted
- vi. TW had questioned the position of the allocated site boundary in the NE corner next the stone barns.
- vii. RW said Lichfields were wrong in suggesting that the Community space would need a Section 106 agreement as it was in the site allocation conditions
- viii. It was suggested that the attenuation pond should be on E side in the area which is subject to flooding
- ix. Access to the site remains a big issue.

#### 5. **Settlement Character – comment on Liz Beth's draft report**

- a. MF suggested it would have more weight if endorsed by the PC. Therefore final agreed version by 23 October, for review at December PC meeting. RW suggested that it would be unlikely for a revised CC proposal to be out for consultation before Jan/Feb 2024.
- b. Generally well-received, but some concern that the key distinctive characteristics of the village need more emphasis, especially in design statement, eg. "green wedges", street layout – not straight, houses not in blocks, low density, use of stone boundary walls & hedges.
- c. WsM character is not "medieval" like Draycott; plots larger, buildings of very different sizes – even when adjoining.
- d. RW suggested that street lighting in only 3 places was less than "sparing"; "limited" bus service was "very limited"; population stats need more specific detail; "little" commuting outside of village understates that of working population.
- e. CL emphasised the urgency of agreeing any further edits of text or improvements to diagrams.

**Action agreed.** All comment by email to MF by Sunday eve 8<sup>th</sup> Oct for collation and forwarding to Liz Beth for final drafting. **All**

#### 6. **Update on Facilities Survey & next steps**

- a. 83 responses to date – more required. Only 3 from 14-22 years; 8 from 22-45 years; 31 from 45-65 years & 41 from >65 years.
- b. Need more responses from young people; encourage 3-4 young people to spread message on bus & at school gate; QR code to online survey on school gate.
- c. **CL to organise Village Hall meeting + Zoom on 8/9 November**
- d. To progress Neighbourhood Plan, need to apply for Grant Support of up to £10k + technical support – **CL to progress application form by PC**
- e. Housing Needs Assessment not required for WsM as local plan attends to this detail, but **CL to progress Housing Needs Survey** of size of houses for downsizing, social rent & affordable, to be done by independent survey – check with Andre Sistani?

#### 7. **Next steps in relation to Brownfield site**

- a. Prepare business plan – needs separate group from WG, with Project Manager, finance, legal and property expertise.
- b. **MF to set up separate WhatsApp group** to identify members of separate task group and thereafter progress for reporting to next NPWG meeting

## 8. Next steps in relation to Greenfield development site

Notes issued and agreed post meeting to summarise actions as follows

Location of Community Space (0.1ha) allocation

1. We agreed that the survey needs to collect more responses – particularly from younger population, that the results need discussing at public meeting being held on 8th and 9th Nov (Zoom and Village Hall) at which a consensus on agreed preference can be communicated for PC to respond to CC
2. Following meeting with CC we are expecting a submission of an application early in new year. We should consider the following:
  - a. Are the CC going to consult the village as they have promised to do before submitting an application. The PC should push for this as it is what community is expecting and it is part of the process for effective community consultation
  - b. We have been gathering evidence in order to respond on key elements – Settlement Character Report, Transport / Highways safety and Alternative proposals for development of greenfield.
    - i. Settlement Character Report needs to be finalised and signed off by NPWG for issue to PC in time for PC Dec meeting (deadline 29 Nov). Written comment on draft 2 to Mick by Sunday 8th please
    - ii. Scoping report for transport / highways safety is ready for issue to planners and to highways- we agreed that this would be done a month or so before we expect the application to be submitted so that it is fresh for officers to note. It is ready for issue.
    - iii. Jenny's alternative proposals docs are under review.
3. We note the CC comments at meeting held on Sept ref Brownfield site was that they don't think policy means pedestrian crossing and that highways views are "nothing can be done". We should not let this view be "carried". Our discussions with planners and with highways concluded that the policy means a safe pedestrian crossing is required. The transport scoping report also sets out a number of alternative safety actions (not just 20mph) that need to be considered to install safe crossing. We should make sure CC and agents are aware that their current view not accepted and that this will be a key policy and community issue. Is it worth distinguishing between a safe pedestrian crossing which may have a very specific meaning and a safe crossing for pedestrians which is a common sense term. We can ask for the latter even if legally denied the former.

### Action

**SI to communicate** community space area location after Nov meetings.

**CL and MF to agree text** of email for SI to issue to CC and Lichfields ref item 3 above

## 9. Review **communication** strategy

- a. Send comments on CC meeting minutes of 26 September to SI
- b. SI to respond to CC minutes with comments**

## 10. AOB

None

**11. Date of Next Meeting: tba**

END!