

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Neighbourhood Steering Group Meeting held at Methodist Church Hall, Mortimer on Tuesday 15 October 2024 at 19:30

Attendees

Doug Overett – Meeting Chair (DO); Graham Bridgman (GB, draft minutes); Neil Kiley (NK); Tennant Barber (TB); Bob Coe (BC); Nick Carter (NC)

Apologies

Joanne Emberson-Wines (JW); Amanda Marsden (AM); Sabina Netherclift (SN)

Declarations of Interest

None

Minutes of Last Meeting

Not available.

Group administration

GB said that there was an idea regarding cover for Ana whilst she was unable to deal with meetings etc, but he needed to speak to JW.

Action: GB & JW

NDP - Reserved Land

Nothing to report.

AECOM/Locality

BC reported regarding his and TB's discussions with AECOM.

Housing Needs Assessment

TB and BC had held a meeting with AECOM (lead - Kerry Parr) on 2 October.

The HNA output will include a 'traffic light' table regarding housing products/affordability, population profile, housing composition etc. The parish will be benchmarked against the WBC area and the UK.

It will take 8-10 weeks for a draft report (ie before Xmas), followed by a January 2025 NPSG meeting to review.

The final version will go to Locality for sign-off.

Policy Themes

TB and BC had held a meeting with AECOM (lead – Jesse Honey) on 10 October.

AECOM have an application with Locality, which is due to go to HMG on 16 October (ie tomorrow), and expect a response within about three weeks. This piece will slot in with that.

The work will be done in two phases:

- Phase 1 is a monitoring review of the impact (or not) of NDP policies against a sample of 10 planning consents, which we need to identify – GB to deal.
- Phase 2 would be post issue of the final version of the NPPF and develop our policy themes into robust statements.

TB and BC need to pull together PowerPoints of our five bullet point themes for Phase 2.

Action: TB & BC

TB/BC to identify where NPSG needs specific technical support/advice (eg regarding the flood risk issue) as AECOM advise this will require a facilitation package at cost.

Action: TB & BC

GB referred to an issue raised at the SMPC meeting on 10 October – can the NP impose a requirement for solar panels on new development? TB – also, can we force greywater provision? Becomes a question of reasonableness of planning conditions and viability? Probably not?

Action: GB

Masterplan

AECOM are reviewing the potential for the NP to include a masterplan for the village centre, funded through Locality.

The NP will principally be a reactive document, so as to be able to respond to potential proposals. A masterplan would act as a positive planning tool, in that it would set out how the centre of the village might look in 15/20 years time, encouraging future developments to fit in with that strategy (a reminder - the community consultation identified that 70% of respondents would like to see a more cohesive centre, with more food options, EV charging, measures to encourage walking etc).

Decided to clarify why we might need a masterplan – TB and BC to discuss and draft enquiry.

Action: TB & BC

Design Codes

Introduction

TB and BC had held a meeting with AECOM (lead – Jimmy Lu (JL)) on 18 September, followed by a walk around the village on 7 October (TB and BC with JL and Lavenya Parthasarathy (LP) from AECOM).

AECOM had produced “Stratfield Mortimer Design Guidance and Codes” for discussion – email from LP dated 9 October, seeking feedback following this meeting.

NPSG will have two weeks to provide feedback on draft report, with a Locality deadline for receipt of the final signed-off report of January 2025.

Discussion

TB and BC suggested that everyone took a look at the work AECOM had done for Sherborne St John on design codes (see: <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/page/83822/SSJ%20Neighbourhood%20Plan%20including%20guidance%20and%20design%20code%20May%202024.pdf>).

TB and BC had raised queries regarding the area types identified on the map within the document - why define a ‘planned village’ or only certain estates, which are themselves landlocked. Should we focus on design codes in the areas that are likely to be developed?

The general discussion questioned whether the map was specific enough – the NDP identified a number of different areas of the village with different design – further, was the intention to seek that new development followed the design of surrounding/adjacent development? That might work in some areas, but in others did we really want adjacent design to influence new design (College Piece, Stephens Firs, etc)? (*Nb, this map identifies four areas – the Sherborne St John one identifies nine.*)

An important aspect that the map fails to include is the settlement boundary.

If there is proposed development (eg if WBC backtrack on zero housing requirement for Mortimer because of (eg) HMG's housing number), would we require a design brief?

Questions needed to be asked about the hierarchy of design – TB and BC to go back to AECOM and raise issues – we need to impose on them what we want out of the exercise.

Action: TB & BC