

Borough Council of Wellingborough
Site Specific Proposals Development Plan Document (SSP DPD)
Meeting between the SSP DPD Working Party and Croyland Ward Associations
1st July 2010, 7.00pm at Swanspool House

Present:

Mike Haybyrne, Planning Policy Manager, Borough Council of Wellingborough (BCW)
Sue Bateman, Senior Planning Officer, BCW
James Wilson, Corporate Director, BCW
Cllr Graham Lawman, Chair of Development Committee and Chair of SSP DPD Working Party

P M Young, Croyland Residents Against Over-Development (CRAOD)
D Braithwaite, CRAOD
C Atter, CRAOD
E Allebone, CRAOD
A Young, CRAOD
M Flood, CRAOD
P Rickwood, Residents Against Wilby Way Estate (RAWWE)
M A Cassidy, (RAWWE)
M J Foster, Croyland Community Association (CCA)
P Foster, CCA
M Abbott, CCA
Cllr Lesley Callnon, BCW Councillor for Croyland Ward
Cllr Thomas Pursglove, BCW Councillor for Croyland Ward
Cllr Martin Griffiths, BCW Councillor for Croyland Ward

Notes of Meeting

An introduction was given by Cllr Lawman explaining that there is currently a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the planning process. The new Government is introducing significant changes. These include abolishing the Regional Spatial Strategy, changing the status of garden land, abolishing the minimum density and providing greater opportunities for local communities to shape the place in which they live. The implications of these changes are not yet understood and therefore BCW is progressing on the basis of the existing system whilst acknowledging that changes may be necessary later in the process. The Open Source Planning Green Paper suggests that 'if new local plans have not been completed within a prescribed period, then a presumption in favour of sustainable development will automatically apply'. BCW therefore needs to continue to make progress with preparing the Plan.

A presentation was given by Sue Bateman and Mike Haybyrne which explained the planning process, the work undertaken to date and the housing sites selection process. It also set out the planning history of the Windsor Road/Wilby Way Site and explained the outcome of a recent Planning Aid event. Copies of the presentation were distributed to those present.

A general and wide ranging discussion took place during which the following issues were raised:

- Residents are extremely concerned about traffic in the area. There are already significant problems, particularly at school times. Bad parking is increasing congestion and contributing to safety concerns. There is a fear that any additional development in the

vicinity will make these problems worse. Of particular concern is the proposal for a link road (in the existing Local Plan) from Aldsworth Close to Windsor Road, as this could become a 'rat run'. It was suggested that a more detailed examination of traffic in the area was required.

- There is a shortage of public transport in the area, there are only 3 buses a day and the last is at 2.00pm.
- The presentation concerning the planning aid findings referred to motor cycle access as a possible opportunity. The residents felt that this was not the case, there are existing problems with regard to motorcycle use in the area.
- Flooding problems in the vicinity were mentioned. 68 Windsor Road has had a spring appear in the front garden. This needs to be addressed as part of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
- Residents are concerned that there are not enough facilities and infrastructure to serve additional development.
- BCW explained that granting development is a mechanism for providing new facilities or improving the local area e.g. traffic calming. Without new development there will be very limited funding available for any improvements.
- Residents are concerned that Hampton Brook are not maintaining the area appropriately, the 'green' is not mowed frequently enough. The area once run down attracts antisocial behaviour such as graffiti. Roads have also still not been adopted. There was a feeling from some that no further development should be permitted until existing issues have been resolved.
- Residents queried why some houses remain in the ownership of BCW and were not transferred to Wellingborough Homes. BCW explained that at the time the decision was taken, because the site was allocated in the Local Plan, BCW needed to protect their asset by ensuring access was achievable.
- Residents queried why there is still the need for so many houses especially when there are a lot of empty properties. BCW explained that there is an Empty Property Strategy which seeks to bring properties back into use. Often there are complex reasons why properties remain vacant. BCW explained that there is still uncertainty over whether the targets in the Core Spatial Strategy will remain, but regardless of this there will be a need for additional housing to meet local need. The contribution that Wellingborough may have to make towards meeting the need for growth that can not be accommodated in other regions (such as the London area) is also unknown at this stage.
- Croyland Community Association explained the history of previous investigations into the provision of a new community facility with the S106 money that was available from the John Lea School site. It was concluded at that time that the community did not have sufficient resources to run a facility without support from the Borough Council or a similar body. Services that could be provided such as computer access for the community were now provided by schools. The main source of possible income was identified as a bar,

but this was not an option available. The money was instead divided between existing community facilities in the area.

- Croyland Road (old Swimming Pool Site) – A consultation event has previously been undertaken with regard to this site. BCW has resolved to dispose of the site for a mix of supported housing for the elderly, the provision of medical facilities and community and leisure facilities. Development proposals have not come forward due to current market conditions. There was no opposition to the proposed development in principle.
- Doddington Road/Spur Road – the draft plan is suggesting redevelopment of the site for approximately 35 dwellings. There was general support for development on the site as it was seen as a logical extension to the recent development of Butterfields. There was some debate about the most appropriate access point.
- Bourton Way – The draft plan is suggesting that the site could deliver approximately 60 dwellings. There is an outline consent for the site. The principle of development has therefore already been decided and was not discussed further.
- Windsor Road/Wilby Way – There was a lot of discussion about whether the site should be developed and if so how. There is still a feeling from some that there should be no new housing on the site, but there was an understanding that other facilities could not be delivered without some development. A general consensus was that the site should deliver as few houses as possible. The following key points arose:
 - Some old people's housing (bungalows) could be provided with access from Windsor Road and the existing culs de sacs.
 - The existing stream should be an asset in the design
 - Some housing development could be provided off Aldsworth Close (on land owned by Hampton Brook)
 - There should be no link road between the two housing areas – they should be seen as separate sites.
 - The sports field should be retained for sports use (football and cricket)
 - The site could deliver new allotments – Wilby Way and Doddington Road allotments are full and there is a waiting list of 26 people (held by Carol Atter)
 - Ideally a new built facility should be provided – including changing rooms for the pitches and a community room which could be used by local groups, a sports club, an allotment association, as a polling station and for police and councillor surgeries.
 - Opinions on the need for a shop were divided, some felt it would be useful for local convenience shopping, others were concerned about the possible problems it could cause, such as noise /disturbance.
 - Opinions on the need for a play area were also divided – it would need to be appropriately located so as not to cause residents disturbance.

The officers and the Working Party will consider all the issues raised before a revised Plan is considered by the Development Committee. Following this there will be a consultation period of at least 6 weeks.