

Borough Council of Wellingborough

Site Specific Proposals Development Plan Document (SSP DPD)

Meeting between the SSP DPD Working Party and Finedon Parish Council

14th June 2010, 7.00pm, Town Hall, Berry Green Road

Present:

Mike Haybyrne, Planning Policy Manager, BCW

Sue Bateman, Senior Planning Officer, BCW

Steven Wood, Head of Built Environment, BCW

Cllr Graham Lawman, Chair of Development Committee and Chair of SSP DPD Working Party

Sally Trowel, FPC

Gordon Swan, FPC

Emma Baker, Clerk FPC

John Bailey, FPC

Malcolm Ward, FPC

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Notes of Meeting

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. Copies of the presentation were distributed to those present.

A copy of the draft Proposals Map was also given to the PC in order to mark up any alterations that it considers appropriate before returning to BCW.

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

- There is currently a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the planning process. The new Government is introducing significant changes. These include abolishing housing targets in the RSS, 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.
- There are concerns about the lack of infrastructure to accommodate growth in the borough generally, e.g. medical facilities
- Generally the PC would like to see employment sites retained in order to prevent Finedon from becoming a dormitory settlement. Workers also spend money in the local shops. The possibility of 'Live Work Units' was referred to and was generally supported.

- The bus service is poor for journeys to work in Wellingborough. There is no bus back after 5.30pm.
- It was not felt by the PC that additional housing would necessarily support local facilities such as shops and pubs and prevent them from closing as other factors were also influential. For e.g. local pubs had been affected by the smoking ban and alcohol taxes
- The PC expressed concern about the number of flats in Finedon and the amount of rented property which is affecting the social character of the area.
- Site FN2 (Thrapston Road) – The site is an employment site and is the subject of a current planning application for 42 dwellings. Whilst concern was expressed about the loss of the employment potential of this site, and the PC expressed a preference for houses as opposed to flats, no overall objection was raised to housing development on this site. The principle will however be determined through the development control process rather than through the plan making process.
- Site FN16 (Milner Road) – This site could provide the residue of the need for affordable housing identified (6 bungalows) several years ago in the village needs survey. The PC was not opposed to housing development on this site.
- FN9 (Townside Farm) – The PC considers that the access off Sumerlee Road is unsuitable and the site provides an important open aspect to the rear of the recreation ground which should be retained. The PC would therefore not support development on this site.
- FN6 (Mackworth Drive) - The definition of this site has changed from brownfield to greenfield following the recent announcement by the Government on 'garden grabbing' and its ranking in the assessment matrix will, accordingly, be adversely affected. The PC would not support development on this site as it feels there should not be any development in this part of the village.
- Sites FN7, FN11 & FN12 – would not be popular, as they are greenfield/open countryside. They may also have been previously mined.
- FN13 – The PC is aware of complaints about noise from this site, so redevelopment for housing might be acceptable.
- FN17 – The PC believes that this area should be retained as allotments.
- FN10 – The PC feels that this is an important open area adjacent to the pocket park which ought to be retained.
- FN5 – This is a garage and workshop. As it is surrounded by housing the PC felt this could potentially be redeveloped for housing.
- FN4 & FN5 – These are in active employment and the PC feels they should be retained for employment purposes.

- FN1 – The PC considers that this site provides a valuable service to the community and should be retained.
- FN14 – The site currently has horses on it and may offer potential for housing
- The PC referred to the old Scout Hut. This is now unused and derelict and is somewhat of an eye sore. Redevelopment of the site would be welcomed. The site is owned by the Trustees of Finedon Schools. Suggested contact is Brian Foster (Secretary), Whitecoats, Avenue Road, Finedon
- The PC referred to the Tudor Gate hotel. This is becoming derelict and a repairs notice has been served on the owners. Ideally this would be returned to hotel use, but could be converted to housing with some additional housing to the rear. BCW has the owners contact details.
- There was a suggestion from some members of the PC for a need for a new building to accommodate youth groups (inc scouts, guides and youth club). There have been some problems with youths in the village. The youth club currently operates from the Chapel and residents in the vicinity complain about the noise. The proposal has not been investigated further by the PC

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 when the Parish Council can formally respond.

It was agreed that SB would supply additional copies of the draft Proposals Maps and the plan showing the housing sites that were assessed to the Clerk before the next PC meeting.

The PC agreed to consider the information provided to them and provide BCW with a response before the end of July.