

LONGHOUGHTON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEERING GROUP

CONFIDENTIAL

Minutes of meeting held 10th September 2020 at the Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre

- 1 Present: Adrian Hinchcliffe, Brian Ellis, Chris Thomas, Andrew Willmott, Carole Green.**
In Attendance: Jo-Anne Garrick

Apologies: Ayshea Lewis, Rob Naples, Peter Bromley

- 2 Progress Statement** – Members noted the statement which will be kept up to date and reviewed at each meeting of the Steering Group.
- 3 Minutes of Previous Meetings** – The minutes of the meetings held 3rd September 2020 were approved as a correct record.

4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5 Housing – Evidence of Housing Need

Housing was to be the focus of the meeting to try and bring things together so that Members of the Steering Group were clear on where the Group is with this important topic and what evidence has still to be obtained.

CAN Report July 2019. – This report focused on the existing population of the Parish. Its main findings were:

- 11 households (34%) expressed a housing need and were interested in buying on the open market with a discount..
- 10 households (31%) indicated a desire for affordable rented homes from the Local Authority with 5 households (15%) expressing a similar desire for affordable rented homes from a Housing Association.
- Buying on the open market was the preferred option for many households expressing a housing need (56%)
- The largest demand is for two-bedroom bungalows (13 preferences) followed by three bedroom houses (8 preferences). Demand is also expressed for three bedroom houses (6 preferences), four bedroom houses (5 preferences) and three bedroom bungalows (5 preferences).
- 55% of respondents, who indicated their household income and expressed a housing need, indicated an annual household income of less than £25,000. 32% could not afford more than £400 per month for their housing and 22% could not afford a deposit of £1,000.

AECOM Report Summary July 2020 – This report focused the level, type and size of affordable housing that could be needed in the Parish. It also considered mechanisms

for ensuring that any new housing could be prioritised for people with a local connection.

Key points from the Report are as follows:

Tenure –

- The rate of home ownership in the Parish is low by comparison to Northumberland and England but this is due to the distortion caused by the RAF private rented accommodation.
- Boulmer has a lower rate of full-time occupancy due to the level of second homes and holiday lets (38%)

Property types –

- There is a high level of detached and semi-detached than other areas in Northumberland and England.
There are an adequate number of bungalows however, there is an overabundance of large bungalows.
- The absence of one-bedroom bungalows suggests there may be a need for smaller bungalows to meet the needs of those living alone.
- The Parish has a larger proportion of properties with 8 and 9 rooms than elsewhere.
- The Parish has a lower proportion of smaller properties with 3 to 6 rooms.

Demographics –

- The Parish has a younger population when compared to national and local trends. The 25 – 44 age-band represents the single largest group in the Parish with 10% more people in that age group compared to Northumberland. This is clearly a distortion caused by the RAF families and other demographic trends can be put down to the same reason.
- In May 2020 approximately 19% of households were RAF families.
- Since 2001 the most significant growth has been in the 16 to 24 age group.
- The Parish has a high proportion of family households.
- Between 2001 and 2011 families with non-dependent children grew at a much higher rate than elsewhere suggesting that young people cannot afford entry-level housing in the area.
- By 2036 it is suggested that dwellings should be more focused on one to three bedroom dwellings with larger properties expected to be less in demand.

Affordable Housing –

- The income required to buy an average market home for sale is higher than those on average household incomes can afford.
- Approximately eight households in the Parish are unable to access affordable rented homes.
- 89 households may be interested in affordable ownership ie, they may prefer to buy rather than rent.
- There is a greater need to provide affordable routes to ownership compared to homes for rental and that a 40% discount could be appropriate.
- Shared ownership at the 50% and 25% levels could be appropriate to meet the needs.

Northumberland Estates

Northumberland Estates had stated that they have substantial evidence to support housing need in the Parish. This was requested recently but they have now indicated that the information they have is based on enquiries for affordable housing at Chancel Place. They have also stated that they are to undertake a survey of the need for affordable accommodation in north Northumberland including Longhoughton Parish.

It was agreed that the Steering Group needs more information on the survey that they are doing and whether NCC is involved **Action JG and AH.**

Other sources of Evidence

NCC is another source of housing information that the Steering Committee has not engaged with recently. It was agreed that a copy of the Housing Needs Assessments would be sent to Ian Stanners and a meeting requested for discussion.

Action - Adrian

6 Summary of Housing Need

Property types, tenure and affordability

The Housing Needs Assessment Reports clearly indicate that there is a need for

- Affordable accommodation to purchase and rent including shared ownership
- Bungalows and houses of one to three bedrooms
- That affordability should be related to average household earning which may require a discount of 40%.
- At Boulmer there was a need to for new properties for sale to be restricted to a provision of permanent occupancy.

Target Numbers of House to be built.

The NCC Local Plan target is a minimum of 88 houses from 2016 to 2036. With Chancel Place, Longbank Farm, Seaton Point and Pondfield the numbers now built, approved or in the pipeline is 87.

After discussion it was agreed that the Steering Group should not set a target but to put forward the needs of the community for affordability, tenure and the type of properties to be built to be focused on the existing population and known population trends over the duration of the plan period.

7 Potential Housing Sites

The meeting looked at potential housing sites in Longhoughton and Boulmer and considered the response from Northumberland Estates: At this stage it is purely discussion with nothing having been firmed up. It is essential for the Group to go through this process in a confidential setting to enable potential sites to be identified. At a later stage there will be a full consultation on the sites putting forward the evidence that the Group will have compiled.

Jo-Anne Garrick has produced a Housing Site Assessment Methodology and it was agreed that we should use this as a tool for assessing the sites.

Longhoughton

Pondfield (part of SHLAA site 0044)

NE are still talking about 4 houses but acknowledge that the Community aspiration for this area can be met.

Old Recreation Field. SHLAA Site 0279

Basically agree with the proposed uses of this land for housing, recreation and car parking. As the site is within the AONB, given the number of units that could be built, the proposed development is likely to be considered a major development. It was noted that all housing developments of ten or more properties in an AONB is that which has the potential to have serious adverse impact on the natural beauty and recreational opportunities provided by the AONB, by reason of the scale, character or nature.

Cunningham Road

Whilst the Estate own this land there are difficulties with adopted County Council highway land and third party land. Also they state that the site is underlain by a number of drains which makes constraints on providing an attractive layout. It is also in the AONB.

Station Road (SHLAA Site 9316) Not on our list of sites given to them

They consider that this is a good site with easy access to bus-stops and pavements and could improve the entrance to the village.

South of Boulmer Road (SHLAA Site 9318). Not on our listing of sites given to NE.

NE put this forward as being deliverable and for 35 dwellings. Yet this is within the AONB so has the hurdle of 'major development'. BE commented that Boulmer Road in its present state is unsuitable for further development until the road and pavements are widened and the road made safer.

South of Station Road and west of South End. SHLAA Site 9317. Not on our list given to NE.

Not considered suitable by NCC due to lack of access but NE argue that access is possible on their land from South End

Johnnie Johnson Site – Burnside – Not commented on by NE

This site is owned by NCC. The Steering Group needs a dialogue with Ian Stanners of NCC about this site being for affordable housing and possibly Community Led Housing.

Land owned by the Crown on the RAF Estate

This was awaiting the meeting with the RAF.

Boulmer

NE proposed a site at the south end of Boulmer village next to Bowmere. They would suggest the provision of permanent occupancy housing along with affordable housing.

Howick

The Steering Group was concerned that there are no proposals from Howick Estates. It was thought necessary that the Chair and Vice Chair meet Mr David Baring who is now running the Estate.

Action Chair & Vice Chair

8 General Discussion on Housing and Housing Sites

It is clear from the proposals put forward by NE that it is going to be essential to use the Housing Site Assessment Methodology . This will draw out the suitability of each site and it should be possible to identify a sequence of sites that are suitable for deliver throughout the plan period and beyond. It was stressed by members that for all sites we, as representatives of the community, insist that sites are only developed once all the necessary infrastructure and access issues are dealt with along with the environmental changes that are coming through the NDP in terms of heritage and the design code work.

Jo-Anne Garrick also pointed out that the use of a logical approach to site selection will give support to the Strategic Environment Assessment.

Members were concerned about the definition of 'affordability'. They considered that affordability should be calculated on local data such as house prices and the earnings of local families. All agreed that we need to retain young people in the community and make it possible for those who have left due to not being able to afford housing in the Parish, to come back and live here.

Members also considered the possibility of dedicated sites for affordable housing but there was an opinion that such housing is better integrated into mixed estates.

9 Government Consultation on Planning Reforms.

The White Paper, 'Planning for the Future' is out for public consultation. The reforms may mean that neighbourhood plans have a much more slimmed down approach. The implications for neighbourhood plans are:

- Neighbourhood plans would be able to continue to include design guidance and codes to shape development.
- May not be able to allocate sites for development (including housing) and it is not clear if they will/will not be able to categorise land under the categories of growth, renewal and protected.
- May not be able to include development management policies (ie policies that planning officers take into account when deciding on planning applications, for example policies that seek to protect the vitality of the high street.

Also the following views were expressed:

There are concerns that whilst the White Paper says very little about neighbourhood plans, what it is trying to do is significantly water them down. The reading of it, is that NPs will basically be a local design guide and all of the allocations will be done through the Northumberland Local Plan. NPs have a really important role in allocating sites, both for development and protection e.g. where would the local green space allocation happen, will NCC really be able to engage with the local community to capture information on spaces that are important to them? Also there are concerns that the proposals are very top down and will result in urban dominated Development Management policies and design codes.

Adrian offered to put together a draft response for the consultation that would be circulated to Steering Group Members and the Parish Council for agreement.

10 Communications with Residents

It was agreed that we should keep residents updated on the progress achieved. It was suggested that we use the Newsletter to give a description of the process that we are going through and where we are in that process.

11 Date of the next meeting

It was agreed that the Chair would circulate members for a suitable date once further progress has been made. It was expected that Jo-Anne would be updating a number of Background papers and when received they will be circulated to members.

Duration of meeting 1 hour and 50 minutes.