

Stevington Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (SNPWG)

Minutes of Meeting held 22nd May 2017

Present: Graham Read (GR); Andrew Lockwood (AL); Linda Penney (LP); Heather Eadie (HE);

Apologies: Mary Morris (MM); Tricia Lennie (TL); Lucy Meakin (LM); Pat Olney (PO)

1. The Minutes of 6th April were approved.
2. The changes made to the Bedford Borough Council (BBC) draft Local Plan 2035 have a material impact on the NP. As a Group 4 village, Stevington is no longer required to make provision to accommodate the number of houses proposed under the previous draft Local Plan.

The emerging Local Plan puts forward 5 large sites where development can be sited, with further allocations in Group 1 and 2 villages. The Local Plan will not specify any development on a site which can accommodate fewer than 5 houses. Stevington's NP is sufficiently advanced to influence the Local Plan. According to the responses of the village, organic growth in Stevington is preferred and will deliver the level of housing development required, without identifying specific sites where these could be built. This means the Parish Council will be able to determine where any development occurs and that this must be supported by the majority of all village residents. Current advice is to use the policy wording written in the emerging Local Plan and to use this in the NP; this meets the requirement that the NP must not conflict with the Local Plan. The SNPWG expressed their thanks to AL for all his hard work on this.

West End does not have a SPA; this means there is complete protection against unwanted development. Any growth will be accommodated within Stevington SPA.

Action: AL to discuss these points with Dave Chetwyn (DC) to confirm policy wording.

It is vital that our NP policies are robust and can resist challenge, so a revised draft of aims and policies will be sent to DC to ensure they meet NP criteria.

3. GR has been in discussion with BBC regarding their rejection of the Green Spaces listing sent some time ago. Sites with existing protection under legislation need not be included. Other sites included in the NP which residents and the PC support probably will have protection.

Action: AL to seek advice from DC about spending Green Space list in Aspirations Appendix.

4. PO has passed information about the Highways survey that Oakley carried out. GR will survey road widths in Stevington; 7.5m is the critical width. Areas where there is no footpath will be identified.

Action: GR complete survey.

5. Once completed, the draft NP will be put out for consultation: copies will be available in the Village Hall, the Community Shop and the website, with displays and discussion over several evenings in the Village Hall. Target date is early September after the main holiday period. Funding for printing and other associated costs will be sought from the PC and the NP grant.

Action: GR to initiate funding approval.

6. The Local Plan consultation period ends on 9th June. Residents have been strongly encouraged to respond. SNPWG members will respond individually and LP will coordinate a response on behalf of the group.

Action: all respond individually to BBC; email responses to LP by Saturday, 3rd June if you wish points to be incorporated into group response.

Date of next meeting to be advised.

Linda Penney
24th May 2017