

BURWELL MASTERPLAN WORKING PARTY MINUTES

Minutes of a Meeting held at Mandeville Hall, Tan House Lane, Burwell on Thursday 2 April 2012 at 6:30pm.

PRESENT

District Councillor Peter Moakes (Chairman)
County Councillor David Brown
Parish Councillor Pat Kilbey
District Councillor Hazel Williams MBE

OTHERS

Shirley Blake – Principal Sustainable Development Officer
Sally Bonnett – Infrastructure and Projects Officer
Jane Thompson - Infrastructure Programme Manager
Katie Child – Principal Forward Planning Officer
Oliver Cook – Housing Development & Enabling Officer
Phil Rose – Community Land Trust (CLT) Development Manager for East of England
Tracy Couper – Principal Democratic Services Officer

Approx 60 members of the public were in attendance at the meeting

46. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

A written statement/questions was received from Ms Chris Stolberg and read to the Working Party by the Chairman. The Chairman stated that many of the points in the statement/questions would be addressed during the evening and that a formal written response would be sent to Ms Stolberg (a copy of the written response to the questions raised is appended to these Minutes).

2 questions were submitted by Mr Barry Garwood as follows:

‘How is the Burwell Masterplan to be informed by the newly published changes to Government Planning law and the criteria for sustainable development?’

‘How will the Burwell Masterplan address the need for employment opportunities in the village, particularly the demand for workshops, offices, or shops?’

The Chairman stated that the first question would be addressed in the presentations during the evening. Shirley Blake, Principal Sustainable Development Officer, replied that with regard to the second question, a balance needed to be struck in the Masterplan on the provision of employment opportunities, community facilities, infrastructure, etc, to support housing growth.

A statement was received from Burwell Parish Councillor Gus Jones proposing that the Masterplan for Burwell should consider building 350 houses on the field at Newmarket Road and giving the perceived advantages for the District/County Council and Burwell Parish Council and the disadvantages. The Chairman stated

that this would be included as part of the consultation feedback on the Burwell Masterplan options.

47. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lavinia Edwards.

48. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

As declared at previous Burwell Masterplan meetings, County Councillor David Brown declared a personal interest in the matters to be discussed, as he was both a County Councillor and District Councillor.

49. **MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the Burwell Masterplan Working Party meeting held on 2 February 2012 be confirmed as a correct record.

50. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made no announcements.

51. **PRESENTATION: COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS**

The Burwell Masterplan Working Party received a presentation on Community Land Trusts (CLTs) by Phil Rose, CLT Development Manager for the East of England from Foundation East. Mr Rose explained his background in the field as a surveyor in the industry for 20 years, predominantly in housing projects. He was also part of the national CLT Network.

The presentation covered the following areas:

- What is a CLT?
- What do they do?
- Benefits of CLTs
- CLTs in Cambridgeshire

Mr Rose explained that CLTs were not-for-profit bodies established and run by volunteers to further the social, economic, environmental interests of a community. They own and manage land and property in perpetuity for the benefit of the community. This could take the form of affordable homes/housing for local needs; small employment units/workshops; community assets; renewable energy. Examples in Devon included 40 homes and 6 workspaces, open space/playing fields and a community centre. A Trust in Cumbria also had built houses and was proposing to take over a pub that had closed and build a post office on the site. The benefits were that the community could influence local Planning decisions, mobilise local skills and partnerships, to address local needs. Active citizens could then create positive long-term community outcomes, which could include affordable properties for local people. In Cambridgeshire, a pilot project was being progressed in Stretham and Wilburton to form a Trust to develop 20-30 CLT owned homes. ECDC Core Strategy also included a 'community led' policy and it was proposed that

mixed tenure 'exception sites' would be additional to Plan allocations as part of ECDC policy.

The following questions/comments were made by members of the public and the Working Party, which were responded to as stated:

- Would CLT affordable housing be available to local people? – Yes if that was what the CLT wanted.
- Is a CLT separate to the Parish and District Council? – Yes, the only involvement of District Council might be to give Planning permission.
- How would trustees be appointed/come together? – Usually from small steering group of interested people and first step is usually to hold a public meeting to assess interest, then form a steering group to discuss how you want to set up Trust and what you want it to do. Membership of the Trust would be open to all members of the defined community and they can then elect the Trust Board.
- Who pays for the land? – Depends on the circumstances of the Trust. In Wilburton/Stretham it was proposed to use private land with some element of market housing on the site as well. Grants are available from Central Government to CLTs.
- Why talking about a CLT? – Want to make people aware that it is an option that can be pursued, if there is local interest.
- How would a CLT fit with one of the proposed growth options of 100 houses? – Might form part or all of the affordable homes provision. But any market housing would still be subject to CIL.
- How would the properties be let? – CLT would decide on the local lettings policy and this would be signed-off by ECDC.
- Who owns the land? – CLT would own the land in perpetuity.
- How is a CLT different to a Housing Association model? – The CLT could be run by the Trustees, or work in partnership with a Housing Association.
- We have a strong Council and strong Development Plan, so don't need to pursue CLT route although an interesting concept.
- Currently the only control local communities have over who gets local affordable housing is if there is building on 'exception sites'. A CLT is another way of getting the housing that local people need and want.
- More relevant for small communities where developers do not want to build, possibly not so relevant for Burwell.
- Would still need to address infrastructure issues such as sewerage and traffic for such developments.

Mr Rose left information literature on CLTs for any interested people.

The Chairman thanked Mr Rose for his attendance and presentation and stated that this meeting had been a good opportunity to inform the Working Party and local people of the potential benefits of CLTs.

52. **BURWELL MASTERPLAN OPTIONS CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

The Burwell Masterplan Working Party considered a report (L325 previously circulated) and presentation by the Infrastructure and Projects Officer on the findings from the Masterplan options consultation process. The Infrastructure and Projects Officer thanked everyone who had attended the four public exhibitions and had

responded via the questionnaires. 450 people had been recorded as visiting the public exhibitions and 253 questionnaires had been completed and returned, representing a 9.2% response rate. It was highlighted that the response rate from young people was very low. The Infrastructure and Projects Officer referred to the fact that there was no overall clear option favoured from the 5 options presented, but that options 1 and 2 each representing 100 homes plus infill over 20 years had generated the most support.

The Infrastructure and Projects Officer reported that the reasons for not including a 'no growth' option in the questionnaire had been explained and agreed at the November meeting of the Working Party. The 2011 traffic survey also had not shown a significant increase in traffic movements from the 2003 survey. Five alternative development sites had been put forward by respondents as part of the consultation process and the Infrastructure and Projects Officer indicated these on a map of the village displayed at the meeting.

Therefore, the Principal Sustainable Development Officer stated that, in the absence of a strong preference from the public consultation process, a steer was needed on a realistic level of housing growth to enable Officers to undertake further research on.

The Chairman then opened the meeting up to responses from the public present, and the following comments were made by the public:

- The consultation responses had indicated that people didn't like infill but each of the 5 options was a figure plus infill.
- Not sure how got to a preference for 2 options of 100 houses plus infill from consultation results.
- Agree need to engage with young people to find out their views, as may change results.
- Affordable housing is technical term used by Planners. People like to own their own house, even if it is a small house. So need more small houses. Councillor Williams commented that lots of young people would not be able to afford the deposit for a house, which was why affordable housing was also required.
- No preferred option at all from consultation.
- Very low response rate overall of 9.2% and no definite finding, so no real mandate to progress on. Need to get more people to respond and engage in the process.
- 100 houses over 20 years will only result in 2 per year for affordable housing
- Need mixture rented/shared equity houses and small houses, not just big houses.
- Do we know how many young people want to stay in village?
- Newmarket Road best site option, but don't know what needs will come up in the next 20 years, so how can we say that only need 100 houses over next 20 years?
- More houses should result in benefits for Burwell residents
- Previous Plan damage limitation exercise and resulted in Felsham Chase development.
- 5 houses per year based on 100 over 20 years, far less than current average construction of 28 per year. So does this constitute sustainable development and would it be defensible against developers?

- Need to decide on infrastructure want/need and then decide on number for housing growth to achieve this.
- I am a resident of Baker Drive and one of potential development sites adjacent to this. There are a lot of elderly residents in this area and development would have an adverse impact on them. This needs to be taken into consideration. The residents of Burwell should take the decision on level of development not the Council.
- Based on current growth of 28 houses per year, proposed reduction to 5 houses per year will increase house prices and be counter-productive. Also would limit number of affordable houses available.
- Submission by Burwell Parish Councillor Gus Jones proposing that the Masterplan for Burwell should consider building 350 houses on the field at Newmarket Road and giving the perceived advantages for the District/County Council and Burwell Parish Council and the disadvantages read out by Chairman.
- No prospect of bypass for Burwell as part of any of the growth options. 350 houses may get new primary school, 400 houses may get new secondary school. Not helpful to suggest potential benefits from growth that may not be delivered.
- Current growth rate of 28 houses per year equates to 560 houses over 20-year period. All 5 options much less than this.
- Big houses bring commuters, as local people can't afford to buy such properties. This then creates a dormitory village.
- Increase in population will not necessarily prevent loss of local amenities like pubs, shops, butchers, etc.
- Constant use of word 'sustainability', but if build on farming land limits availability to grow wheat for local baker.
- Primary school already over-subscribed, but will 350 houses justify a new primary school? County Council needs to address school numbers issue, as school already too large for a primary school.
- Need to decide number of houses before we decide type of houses.
- Can't it be done the other way around – need a larger proportion of smaller houses and housing for the elderly?
- Pick large growth figure of 500 houses and then do more work on this.

The Chairman emphasised that throughout the Masterplan process so far there had been full public consultation and involvement. This had always been the Council's intention. The Principal Sustainable Development Officer stated that the Plan was an iterative process and Officers needed a steer on specific growth options to be pursued further, particularly in terms of infrastructure. However, Councillor Williams stated that whatever option was pursued, a group of people would be unhappy with the outcome and disagree with the decision taken. The Chairman commented that sites could be developed at any time over the 20-year period, but the Principal Sustainable Development Officer reported that there could be recommended phasing within the Masterplan.

Councillor Williams acknowledged that more opportunities needed to be created for local employment. The Principal Sustainable Development Officer reported that the Masterplan could include linked targets for housing compared to employment created.

Councillor David Brown stated that the County Council was addressing the current bulge in pupil numbers in the reception class that would translate through the form entries in future years.

A member of the public asked how the issue could now be progressed, as it seemed that the wrong questions had been asked and no clear view had been obtained. 'No development' did not appear to be an option, as this would be unsustainable. Whatever option was chosen, the key consideration was the impact on residents living around the development sites selected. There was no indication that the village was declining and the primary school was over-subscribed.

In response to a question by a member of the public Oliver Cook, Housing Development & Enabling Officer, reported that tenants currently had lifetime tenancies in social housing, but the Localism Act would enable fixed term tenancies for new tenants. A member of the public also queried the likely impact of the provisions relating to Planning in the National Planning Policy Framework published this week on the Masterplan process. The Principal Forward Planning Officer and Principal Sustainable Development Officer reported that the implications of this still were being considered but would be taken into account as part of the process. However, ECDC had a Core Strategy from 2009 that was being updated, so it did not have the same risks as Councils without a sustainable Plan.

A member of the public commented that the aim of greater levels of growth was to provide more facilities, but that there was no guarantee that the funding would all come to this village.

In response to all of the comments and questions, the Chairman reiterated that a decision needed to be taken on the options to be developed further and the Working Party wanted to be guided by the public present on this. Councillor Williams emphasised that although Burwell was the smallest Parish so far to go through the Masterplan process, it had generated the greatest level of public involvement. Whilst not a perfect process, the people who had wanted to be involved had been given every opportunity to do so.

A member of the public questioned what the growth figure for Burwell was in the previous Plan. The Principal Forward Planning Officer reported that the Newmarket Road site was identified for 100 houses in the current Core Strategy. A member of the public asked the level of infill development that had taken place compared to Plan site developments. The Principal Forward Planning Officer agreed to provide these figures.

A member of the public suggested that the Working party could not go against the overall consultation responses, so one option that needed to be pursued was the 100 plus infill growth figure. Therefore, it was proposed that the growth option poles of 100 plus infill and 350 plus infill be pursued.

It was resolved:

- a) That the feedback from the Burwell Masterplan Options Consultation be noted.
- b) That further research be carried out on the options of 100 homes plus infill and 350 homes plus infill over 20 years, to confirm the

infrastructure requirements for these levels of growth as the preferred level of growth for the Burwell Masterplan.

- c) That further research to be carried out into the Ness Road, Newmarket Road sites and other sites identified as part of the consultation process, and the implications of development of each of these for Burwell and its infrastructure.
- d) That, as part of this further research, some further Focus Group consultation be undertaken, one with young people and one with Burwell Parish Council, specifically on site issues.

53. **BURWELL MASTERPLAN WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Burwell Masterplan Working Party received a report, L326 previously circulated, detailing the revised work programme for the development of the Burwell Masterplan.

It was resolved:

That the work programme be noted.

The meeting concluded at 8.40pm.