

## **BURWELL MASTERPLAN WORKING PARTY MINUTES**

Minutes of a Meeting held at Mandeville Hall, Tan House Lane, Burwell on Wednesday 27 June 2012 at 6:30pm.

### **PRESENT**

District Councillor Peter Moakes (Chairman)  
County Councillor David Brown  
District Councillor Lavinia Edwards  
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  
Adrian Scaites-Stokes - Democratic Services Officer

25 members of the public were in attendance at the meeting

#### 54. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

A question was received from Mr Barry Garwood:

It has been said that 30%-40% of the housing will be social housing. As ECDC has offloaded all its Council housing to a housing association, exactly what will this consist of?

The Chairman replied that was the normal rate. Burwell had housing from at least 5 housing associations and they all provided different services.

Another question was received from Mr Barry Garwood:

How will the Masterplan be able to adapt if the number of new homes is not enough to sustain the indigenous population growth?

The Chairman stated that the Masterplan could be reviewed. Its purpose was to gauge what growth the people of Burwell wanted and how this could be done.

A question was received from a lady resident:

I believe you said 280 homes had been built in the last 20 years and also that if more houses were built in Burwell extra facilities may be forthcoming. My question therefore is what facilities have been provided for the village with the last 106 money from the builders?

We still have minimal sports facilities so that residents use either Bottisham or Newmarket while other much smaller and 'countrified' villages have excellent tennis courts with floodlights, squash courts, etc. Public transport seems to run

when it suits Stagecoach and not when it is required – woe betide anyone who wishes to work or to make hospital visits on a Sunday or in the evening.

The meeting was informed that the 106 money had gone towards the sports centre, Mandeville Hall, outside football, play equipment and the Information Technology suite at the school. Some of the money had also been used for secondary education and some had been earmarked for Highways. Burwell had not received the total amount as some had gone to neighbouring villages.

A further question was received from Mr Barry Garwood:

Can the Council give any examples, other than the ones in Dorset, where CLTs have been a success?

The Chairman would get back to Mr Garwood about Community Land Trust examples.

The following was received from Mr Gus Jones:

Before the Burwell Master Plan was started the core strategic plan was to build 100 houses at Burwell apparently without consent from the parish.

At present we are at a stage to choose between a development of 100 or 350 domiciles with possible traffic calming for the main streets through Burwell.

This sort of development gives no benefit to Burwell when 100 houses are to be built at the Fordham end of Soham and there is a potential expansion of the industrial developments at the Fordham end of Newmarket. There is also a potential development at Exning to be considered.

If Burwell Parish really has the power to plan its future on the green fields surrounding the village, it must give maximum benefit to old and new inhabitants. The number of houses to be built then becomes irrelevant.

What possible benefits could a 20 year master plan give to the Parish: -

1. New playing fields, modern changing facilities and sufficient off road parking for users and spectators.
2. Extra commercial/industrial units.
3. Ensure that the abandoned factory site can only be used for development of commercial/industrial units for this and any subsequent master plan.
4. A link road between junction of Newmarket and Isaacson Road and the Fordham end of Ness Road with sufficient housing along this road to make the building of the road viable.

At present the proposed development areas are just red blobs on a map. For a Master Plan to be successful detailed plans of location of individual houses, roads and play/recreation areas should be shown to the public before any commitment is made to allow development on green fields. This would stop developers cramming as many houses as possible in a given space and it also allows phasing of the development.

The Chairman noted that most of the points just made had been picked up by the Masterplan and the future for the village was the purpose of the Masterplan. The Principal Sustainable Development Officer reminded the meeting that the Masterplan was not supposed to be a detailed plan.

Mr Barry Garwood had submitted another question:

How is the Council going to address the fact that it is currently grossly negligent towards provision of affordable housing?

The Chairman replied that the Council insisted affordable housing was provided for every development and this worked reasonably well.

A statement had been received from Cheffins on behalf of a landowner:

Land adjacent to Cornfields, Burwell:

We submitted representations at the consultation stage of the Burwell Masterplan in March 2012 for the above site to be included for a small residential development of retirement bungalows. To ascertain the likely level of demand from people within Burwell for such a development an open letter was placed in the June edition of "Clunch" magazine explaining the proposals and asking people to contact the owner of the site if they were interested in such a development. To date the owner has received six very positive enquiries for the proposed retirement bungalows, in most cases from people in Burwell wishing to 'downsize' from larger properties that they currently own. This would have the added benefit of releasing larger properties for local families to buy, or for other families wishing to move to the village. In another case a local person was actively looking for a small retirement bungalow for her mother, so she could move to the village.

We believe that this response, which is only from one small article in the local magazine, is very encouraging and demonstrates that there is demand for this type of development within the village.

I would be very grateful if you could take the above into account when considering whether to include this site in the final Masterplan and make mention of this to Members at next weeks Working Party meeting.

A statement had been received from a landowner, land off Low Road:

In response to site appraisals findings it is not correct to say there are no footpaths in this area and the road is a full two lane road it is certainly not "very narrow" at all as far as the high street. I am not clear why you say it is adjacent to Flood Zone 3 as the area I proposed for development leaves a buffer between the flood zone shown on the plan I submitted and the development proposal.

I am not sure what is the significance of saying that development of Low Road is frontage only as the site you prefer in Newmarket Road is not developed at all. However, on Low Road there are developments already far back from the road including Murton Close and the houses towards the southern end of Low Road. It seems to me the reasoning is misconceived and I would ask you to refer it back with these comments.

55. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

56. **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.

57. **MINUTES**

It was resolved:

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

58. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made no announcements.

59. **POTENTIAL MASTERPLAN GROWTH IMPLICATIONS**

The Burwell Masterplan Working Party considered a report (M30 previously circulated), and presentation by the Principal Sustainable Development Officer, Infrastructure and Projects Officer and Infrastructure Programme Manager, on research to confirm the infrastructure requirements and implications of levels of growth for Burwell.

Employment

Currently there were 1100 jobs in the village but 72% of people commuted out to work. There was strong support for provision of more work in Burwell, so a target of 630 jobs had been set. The D S Smith site, a site which has an existing employment use, could provide around 300 jobs and the proposed allocation of Reach Road site could also provide around another 300. There was also likely to be future demand for more home working.

Councillor David Brown agreed that the D S Smith and Reach Road sites should be maintained as employment sites but a traffic management scheme would be needed.

Following a query from the public, it was acknowledge that D S Smith could not be forced to develop their land for employment purposes, and achievement of this was dependent upon their objectives and the price they asked for the site. As things became more expensive in Cambridge this could encourage use of cheaper sites elsewhere.

It was resolved:

That the employment sites and jobs targets proposed be agreed.

## Green Infrastructure

The green space around and in the village was very important and could be used for cycleways, footpaths and possibly a marina site. The results of the consultation had highlighted looking at the river to get it tidied and improve access to it. Consideration should be given to creating heritage trails for walkers, a new circular link road for walking and cycling around Burwell via the Newmarket Road site. The Exning bridge had to be improved to make it safer and access to Burwell Lode cycle bridge should also be improved.

Councillor David Brown informed the meeting that Burwell Lode bridge had already got planning permission. The Principal Sustainable Development Officer noted that it was important because of its links to Wicken Fen. Councillor Hazel Williams thought that the village could benefit from these links as they would encourage people to visit the village.

Councillor Pat Kilbey agreed about the importance of these links but suggested that the Exning bridge be given priority. Councillor Peter Moakes agreed that this should be given a higher priority and the Working Party agreed.

A member of the public queried the idea of a marina, as it would be a big development. At the moment the area was very quiet, which people enjoyed. There was concern that as the proposal was vague this would open the way for a big development.

The Principal Sustainable Development Officer explained that the whole area around the river would need more detailed work but at this stage only general principles were being considered. It should be expected that there would be some development of facilities, but the Masterplan could specify that this should be in keeping with the character of the Wicken Fen area and not take the form of a large commercially based development.

A member of the public contended that angling had not been included in consideration of the river but should be so. The Principal Sustainable Development Officer consented to take on board the comments made about fishing.

Another member of the public asked whether a cycleway could be put along the old railway line. The Infrastructure Programme Manager could check that with the County Council but believed there were ownership issues with that land.

It was resolved:

That the Masterplan should include the five green infrastructure schemes as priorities, with special priority given to the Exning Bridge.

## Education

The current school was on a good site. Generally speaking it would be better to have one school in the village rather than two. The County Council had assessed its capacity to see if it could accommodate more children when more houses were built. Councillor David Brown stated that this detailed assessment had concluded that the school had the capacity for expansion.

Councillor Peter Moakes accepted that though primary schools should not go over 2 forms there would be cost implications for that. The focus would be on the growing population but this would need careful management.

It was resolved:

That the preferred approach to expand the school on the current site in order to accommodate additional pupils from either growth option be agreed.

### Community Facilities

There was a need for an outdoor sports space, 1 large space for multiple sports. The District Council had a standard of provision that developers would have to adhere to. A quick assessment of Burwell had shown a small deficiency in sport facilities available. If 100 houses were built this would trigger demand for 0.2 hectares more provision, whereas 350 houses would require 0.95 hectares. The developers could be asked for green space instead. Developments should be used to maximise the opportunities to improve outdoor sports provision as part of any chosen growth option.

Councillor Hazel Williams stated that the current recreation ground was not deemed good for adult football because of its location, as it was very wet and had cost a fortune to maintain. The Parish Council had listened to complaints about the ground and had moved play equipment elsewhere in the village. She was all in favour of moving the football pitches to a new location but this would also need provision of a new pavilion.

A member of the public advised the Working Party that there was currently only a small bowling green in the village. This did not encourage more players to play. If a new location was found for sports facilities then a new bowling green should be considered.

It was resolved:

That opportunities should be maximised to improve outdoor sports provision as part of any chosen growth option.

### Transport

Building either 100 or 350 new houses would increase transport trips. The Focus Groups had looked at parking provision in the village and had deemed it sufficient to cope with this increase, so there was no need for any more. There were also no capacity issues with the current roads. However, impact assessments would have to be undertaken for developments of 50 dwellings or over. It would only be desirable to have a link road through, should 350 houses be built. With development it was expected that new walking and cycling routes, as well as new bus stops, would be provided.

The Masterplan should also, however, promote public transport, cycling and include ways to make it easier to move around Burwell.

Councillor Hazel Williams cautioned the Working Party that the County Council did not look at the accumulative effects of development. This should not be allowed to happen in Burwell, as Highways should conduct assessments to account for all the houses built. The Exning situation should also be considered.

Councillor David Brown agreed with those comments and highlighted the A14/A142 junction capacity at Quy as being a real issue.

The public raised concerns about the extra predicted 3000 traffic movements and that the numbers had not included for emergency and other service vehicles to homes.

Councillor Pat Kilbey was concerned that transport issues and traffic issues were different matters and should be considered separately. Traffic had not been mentioned in the presentation but the Parish Council thought traffic management would be needed with the developments. So Councillor Kilbey proposed amending the wording of the officer's first recommendation by replacing the word 'transport' with the word 'traffic'. This was agreed.

It was resolved:

- (i) That any development would require a Traffic Assessment and potentially site specific improvements to roads/junctions;
- (ii) That the Masterplan should promote public transport and cycling and include ways to make it easier to walk and cycle around Burwell.

### Site Appraisals

The appraisals had considered a range of factors including accessibility, environmental impact and physical constraints. The North Street and Low Road sites had been deemed unsuitable, as they did not meet required criteria. The Ness Road, Cornfields, Heath Road and Isaacson Road sites were furthest from the main village facilities and therefore the Newmarket Road site was recommended for housing.

It was resolved:

That Newmarket Road be agreed as the most suitable location for future housing development in Burwell.

### Infill and Housing Mix

The Local Plan figures had to be used, along with some outstanding commitments, windfall estimates and the potential for large sites, when gauging potential infill sites. All were within the development envelope except for a rural exception site. Housing mix had also been considered and, though there was demand for 2 or 3 bedroom houses, it was estimated that a mix of 1,2,3 and 4 bedroom houses should be provided including affordable housing.

Councillor David Brown thought 5 bedroom houses should not be ruled out.

Members of the public made a number of points: an influx of young people could be expected so this should be used to influence the proposed mix of housing, single storey dwellings would be good, there were not enough 1 bedroom properties in the village, self-build figures should be higher as a target of 5% was unambitious, and the number of proposed 2 bedroom houses should be increased at the expense of 4 bedroom houses.

Councillor Hazel Williams thought the changes in the benefits system would mean that some people would look for 2 bedroom dwellings, but there were none in the village. It was hard to agree to the proposed indicative figures, as there was no way to predict the housing demand in the future. So these should be left out of the Masterplan. This was agreed by the Working Party.

The Working Party agreed to leave the housing mix proposals out of the Masterplan.

### Design Aspects

The conservation areas had been considered and there was a distinct local building style. More recent developments had not reflected this style but this should be picked up in any new developments. The design should be in sympathy with the character of Burwell and the building materials previously used. A Burwell Design Code could be used as a planning tool and should be included in the Masterplan to ensure future sympathetic design.

It was resolved:

That the inclusion of planning tools such as a Burwell Design Code in the Burwell Masterplan to ensure sympathetic design be agreed.

### Level of Growth

Two growth scenarios were suggested for consideration. The main differences between the two related to provision of community facilities, transport and traffic issues and the housing mix, as illustrated by the previous discussion.

Members of the public were concerned about the capacity of the village to accept more houses, the problems with bus services, issues over big developments and housing requirements after the 20 year period covered by the Masterplan. The question of a link road was raised and the meeting was reminded that a connecting road could be provided in the 350 dwellings scenario, although this would not be a bypass. The County Council would have the responsibility for negotiations relating to any possible link road.

The Working Party favoured the 350 houses option, though Councillor Hazel Williams noted that this development had to be phased. Councillor Peter Moakes reminded the meeting that when the Masterplan was adopted it would indicate policy for the future of the community.



It was resolved:

That the Burwell Masterplan include plans for 350 homes (17.5 per year) over the next 20 years.

60. **BURWELL MASTERPLAN - DOCUMENT PRODUCTION**

The Burwell Masterplan Working Party received a report, M31 previously circulated, updating on progress with writing the draft Burwell Masterplan.

The Infrastructure and Projects Officer asked Members of the Working Party for any comments or amendments to the early draft of the Masterplan. Members asked to email their comments instead and this was agreed.

It was resolved:

That the Working Party Members would email any comments to the Principal Sustainable Development Officer.

61. **BURWELL MASTERPLAN WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Burwell Masterplan Working Party received a report, M32 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 8.45pm.