

Attendees:

Sara Loch (Chair)
Carol Tompsett
Roger Carter
Malcolm Albery
Bobbie Church
Doc Addison
John Stayt
Jon Dowty (RCOH)
Sally Gardner (minutes)

NDDC Guests:

Hilary Jordan
Ed Gerry

Apologies:

Haydn White
Linda Scott-Giles

Meeting notes

Hilary Jordan briefed the group on the current situation regarding the North Dorset 5 Year Housing Land Supply.

The 5 Year Housing Land Supply shortfall (now at 3.42 years, a deficit of approx. 700 houses) has serious implications on the way planning decisions will be made in the future. NDDC will be unable to give as much weight to planning policies, and will have to give greater weight to developers proposals. Applications cannot be automatically refused.

Sara asked when did NDDC first know there was a Land Supply shortfall. Hilary responded that NDDC always knew it was a risk due to the very low rate of housing completions last year, as well as not meeting building completion targets for previous 3 years.

Ed stated that NDDC did not know about the shortfall during the examination process, and only became aware when the Land Supply data was firmed up - around time of press release.

Hilary was unaware that Savills have a Developer Partner on-line and are therefore ready to proceed. She commented that if Savills were to put forward an application for housing without infrastructure then NDDC would negotiate for the infrastructure as laid out in the NP e.g. the school etc.

Sara asked if Policy 1 could be reinstated for the NP referendum. Ed responded that the legal advice they had received for other Neighbourhood Plans in the area implied that NDDC's 'wriggle room' to go against the examiner's recommendations is very limited.

Jon Dowty questioned Ed further about the legal advice NDDC had been given about going against the examiner's recommendations. Jon said that based on experience, there is scope within 1990 Act for NDDC to take a different view to the examiner (Schedule 48 section 13.4 talks about examination). Jon agreed with Hilary and Ed that RCOH would set out step by step for NDDC what the regulations allow in terms of NDDC going against the Examiner's recommendations, providing examples. NDDC would then take this into consideration regarding next steps.

Jon asked Ed directly if, due to the change in circumstance (i.e. the Land Supply shortage), whether NDDC would be prepared to re-consider Policy 1 as it could help ease the shortfall, and Ed re-iterated that NDDC would need to take legal advice. Ed's concern was that the examiner has ruled that Policy 1 does not meet basic conditions, but Jon countered by saying that the 5 year land supply shortfall changes the circumstances.

Sara & Roger briefed the group on the meeting held with DCC last week to discuss future pupil placement and school provision following on from the Examiner's rejection of Policy 1. DCC reiterated at this meeting that there is no other site suitable for a new 2FE school, and that current schools would reach maximum capacity in 2 years. Richard Dodson stated that funding for the school would come through the normal S106 channels. Ed Denham agreed to supply B+ with a statement saying that Pimperne School would not be affected by the provision of the new school in Policy 1.

ACTIONS AGREED:

RCOH to draft a letter to NDDC (on behalf of B+) citing the 'change of circumstance' that the announcement of the shortfall in the 5 Year Land Supply has brought about, and the danger this now brings for future development around Blandford. The letter to emphasise the benefits that re-instating Policy 1 of the NP would have towards addressing the situation.

RCOH to set out step by step what the regulations allow in terms of NDDC going against the Examiner's recommendations, providing examples if possible.

The letter to inform NDDC that (as agreed with Ed & Hilary today) B+ will arrange a meeting between B+, Neil H, Savills, Savills' Development partner and NDDC to discuss possible future plans.

- *Neil or Jon to chat with Cliff Lane re arranging this meeting.*
- *Neil or Jon to contact DCC to find out if they would also like to attend*

The letter to inform NDDC that B+ would like to postpone the decision to Cabinet until the avenues above have been fully explored.

The finalised letter to reach NDDC before the end of August.

Neil or Jon to brief Cliff Lane on the discussions before 11am Monday.

Sally to chase Ed Denham for statement about Pimperne School

IF we can't reach an agreement with NDDC then the next step may be writing to the Secretary of State.

Press / Comms

Niki Brown asked to attend the meeting but was declined. If asked, please say we are having ongoing meetings with NDDC to explore and (hopefully) agreed a way forward, and will communicate to B+ residents as soon as we are able.