

Blandford + Steering Group Meeting
Friday 15th September 2017 at 10:00am
The Community Room (BFTC)

Attendees:

Sara Loch (Chair)
Carol Tompsett
Malcolm Albery
Bobbie Church
John Stayt
Haydn White
Leani Haim – Assistant Town Clerk, BFTC

Apologies:

Roger Carter
Doc Addison

Notes

1. Election of new Chairman

Ms Loch explained that she expects that the group will require a chairman that will invest time and energy into securing what the public really wants. This commitment is not something that she can currently offer and therefore has made the decision to step down. Cllr White explained that it is important that the NP we designed remains as is and on hold. It was agreed that the Election of the New Chairman would be discussed at the end of this meeting if necessary.

The ATC explained that there are two great losses from the outcome of the examination, but the group should not lose sight of what has been achieved.

The plan has managed to secure:

- Land uses and green infrastructure for Land at Shaftesbury Lane (includes retail business and/or hotel uses, a landscape buffer, and a footpath and cycleway link to the bypass bridge);
- Land uses and design principles for Land at Salisbury Road (including saving the locally considered heritage asset building of Nordon, protecting mature trees, and a continued community service on site);
- Land uses for Land at Hunt Road (provides opportunity for a childcare service that is lacking in this part of the town);
- Land uses and design principles for Land at East Street/Langton Road (provides the opportunity for a visitor centre with ancillary childcare and retail use, protecting the number of car parking spaces and requiring improved access to the green infrastructure network and adhering to design principles);
- Land uses and design principles for Land at West Street (including ground floor commercial or community use maintaining the building line in West Street with design principles);
- Protection for community facilities (including the Corn Exchange, the Leisure Centre, Woodhouse Gardens and Pavilion, the Bowling Club, the Football Pavilion, the Cricket Pavilion, Larksmead Pavilion, the Skate Park, and Bryanston Estate Club);

- Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages, and protection of the number of parking spaces in the town centre;
- Development and improvement of the green infrastructure network;
- Protection of a number of local green spaces (including Diamond Way, Westbury Way, and Badbury Heights amenity areas, Davies Gardens, Land adjacent the Leisure Centre, the Trailway, Coppice and Badget Sett and Bryanston Hills in Blandford St Mary);
- Design principles for the Conservation Areas that is currently thought to be under threat;
- Supporting tourism uses in the area.

2. Next Steps

At the last meeting three options were discussed (see Appendix A of the minutes of 30.08.17). Option 3 was dismissed due to the uncertainty, risk and costs attached to this option (It is also known that Gillingham submitted their Submission Plan in July and is still waiting for a response from NDDC. Support from NDDC will therefore also be either limited or non-existent). Option 2 was favoured if Option 1 could not be achieved. Option 1 was taken off the table by NDDC. A further advice note was sent to the group by rCOH (see Appendix B of the minutes of 30.08.17).

Feedback was sought on the three initiatives suggested in the advice note.

1. Political Connections – None had yet been actioned. It was agreed that Cllr John Stayt would speak to Cllr G Carr-Jones and explain why it is important that Land North of Blandford Forum goes into the LP, unless of course NDDC is prepared to include it in the NP.

ACTION: CLLR JOHN STAYT

2. Correspondence – A letter has been sent to SoS, see Appendix A. At a meeting with other Town Councils and NDDC on the 14th September 2017 that the ATC attended, it was requested that NDDC respond to B+ criticism of the Examiner's report in writing and include why they maintain their principle objections to Policy 1 and the 5YHLS situation is not significant enough to force them to suggest to members that they are able to go against the examiner's recommendation, despite no obvious plan to deal with speculative applications or how to find land for a new school. NDDC also implied here that the tilted balance that the 5YHLS brings would not apply where there are other constraints such as AONB and CA. It was also confirmed that the Local Plan Review Issues and Options Paper will be consulted on November to January. Mr Gerry was alarmed when the ATC explained that the group could keep the plan on hold indefinitely, but agreed that it was possible, and confirmed that a NP that has passed examination, which this has, carries some weight. So, the policies that were approved still carries weight in future decisions even while the plan is on hold. CIL is being kept under review due to the government announcement that a new charging schedule is now being looked at, so this will not currently, or in the near future, affect any future potential money received from a NP.
3. Partnership working – A meeting with Wyatts, DCC and Savills was attended by the ATC on the 13th September. Minutes of this meeting is attached as Appendix B. An email sent to Savills from Wyatts regarding the Neighbourhood Plan has also been received, see Appendix C.

Suggested Next Steps

- Continue to work on political connections at NDDC and explain why it is important that Land North of Blandford Forum goes into the LP, unless of course prepared to include in NP. (until we hear from NDDC why they believe they cannot).
- Wait for a response from the SoS, and chase for a response if nothing has been received by the end of September 2017.
- Wait for a response from NDDC and chase for a response if nothing has been received by the end of September 2017.
- Continue to keep the plan on hold and write to NDDC to explain that the NP referendum decision matter is not resolved so no decision should be taken until the group has confirmed that it is satisfied that it is.
- Write to Savills and state the group's position based on the decisions made today and if supported by the Town Council and explain why it considers that doing so will not harm any schemes for the Land N and NE of Blandford Forum going forward. Best interest of our communities.

ACTION: CLLR JOHN STAYT & ATC

2.1 Press release

It was agreed that a press release would be published that contained:

- A brief history on the group formation and consultation
- Results of the examination;
- Factual inconsistencies of the examiner's report;
- SoS letter
- To look out for NDDC's consultation on the new Local Plan.

It was agreed that the current negotiations with NDDC would not be published as it is not considered that this would be helpful in making NDDC change its mind at this time.

ACTION: ATC

2.2 Council approvals

Expenditure approval has been confirmed from Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils for any consultancy support that may come up in the next few months. Blandford Forum Town Council would be asked to confirm expenditure authority on Monday 18th September 2017.

Approval for the group's next steps and the press release will be sought from Blandford Forum Town Council on Monday 18th September 2017. The reports will be circulated to Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Council to also seek approval.

ACTION: ALL

3. AOB

Ms Loch agreed that she would remain as Chairman of the group.

It was agreed that Sally would be thanked for all of her hard work for the group. The ATC would make arrangements.

ACTION: ATC

4. Future meeting date

The group would keep in touch via email and a meeting will be called after the Local Plan Issues and Option consultation has started.