

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held on 14^h September 2009.

Present:

Andy Beavan Nick Wright (NHH)* Andrew Cavanagh

Debbie Ealand Alan Davey

* For item 1 NHH sites

Apologies:

Martin Lawrence Andy Godman David Charlton Rory Stracey

Copy to: Mary Caldwell, Tim Neill, Katie White

1. Site specific issues	
North Hertfordshire Homes Sites	
Milestone Road (Play Area) Hitchin - New scheme (disposal).	
Completion of Phase 2 delayed as Three Valleys Water have allocated a dry main. Now due for completion October 2009.	NW
£30,000 in 2009/2010 capital budget to be claimed by NHH on practical completion.	NW
Dark Lane, Sandon – New scheme (disposal).	
£144,000 in 2009/2010 capital budget for acquisition and start on site. NHH need to have acquired the site and commenced site clearing in order to claim the grant by March 2010.	NW
Further development work will be delayed as Great Crested Newts have been found on site and as a protected species will have to be relocated accordingly.	NW
Radwell	
Parish council housing group meeting met on 21 st August. Full parish consultation to be undertaken prior to submission of planning application.	NW
NHH ready to exchange contracts in respect of land acquisition, subject to planning and council would prefer this to occur before the end of the financial year.	NW/DC/RS
Debbie will continue to keep Cllr Young updated on proposals.	DE

<p>Cade Close, LGC</p> <p>Planning permission received, subject to S106 Agreement. SE sent instructions to LA solicitors. Expect to start on site in October 2009.</p>	<p>NW</p>
<p>Limekiln Lane, Baldock</p> <p>Barratt's bid for Kickstart 1 funding was unsuccessful. All planning obligations/contributions have been waived with the exception of the affordable housing and Primary and Secondary Education contributions..</p> <p>S106 has been signed finally.</p>	
<p>Pixmore Avenue, LGC</p> <p>All social rented and Intermediate Market rented properties let.</p>	
<p>Woolgrove Road, Hitchin</p> <p>Slightly smaller development than anticipated, to include bungalows, flats and houses. MD to provide Debbie with a plan.</p>	<p>MD</p>
<p>Westmill, Hitchin</p> <p>Planning application submitted, with report to October or November Planning Board? NHH need to purchase part of compound owned by NHDC. Start on site expected in March 2010.</p>	<p>NW/AD/DC/ RS</p>
<p>Probyn House, Kimpton</p> <p>Initial community consultation carried out. Consultation on revised plans will need to be done before submission of a planning application</p> <p>£1.75m valuation agreed for the land owned by NHDC. Can exchange contracts subject to planning.</p>	<p>NW</p> <p>DC/RS/NW</p>
<p>Barkway</p> <p>NHH have commissioned Vincent & Goring to draw up some plans following their meeting with the parish council and will send NHDC a copy when received. The parish council also want a community facility for the benefit of the village on another site.</p>	<p>NW</p>
<p>Ashwell</p> <p>Howard Cottage and NHH are working in partnership with the parish council to deliver affordable housing on the two preferred sites; both on Station Road to meet needs identified in the HNS.</p>	<p>HC/NHH</p>
<p>Ivel Court regeneration/development</p> <p>The planning permission – resolution to approve subject to the S106 is still on the council's books. As McCann Homes are the applicant only they can formally withdraw the application. Nick will mention this to McCann's.</p> <p>NHH will look at the possibility of a new scheme/application for the site in</p>	<p>NW</p>

2010.	
<p>Ashwell Common, Graveley</p> <p>To review potential scheme progression at above at a later date subject to availability of capital funding.</p>	DE
<p>NHH Cain Court, Royston – payment of commuted sum/grant request</p> <p>Legal response received from Rory circulated prior to the meeting – no legal obligation to pay NHH the commuted sum, if and when received. May be a moral obligation to pay, but insufficient funds in the capital budget. Although Crown Site Lilley scheme not proceeding so opportunity for council to consider paying NHH half the £260,000 budget shortfall for Cain Court. Debbie has emailed Andy C separately to seek approval for this.</p> <p>McCarthy & Stone hoardings now up on Ling Dynamics site in Royston and therefore indication that McCarthy & Stone will build out their scheme. The commuted sum of £262,500 is not payable until 50% of the units have been occupied so it could be 2 years or more before the money is received.</p>	AC
<p>Cooks Way, Hitchin</p> <p>NHH looking at purchasing this site, subject to planning.</p>	NW
<p>Icknield Way, Baldock</p> <p>Site currently allocated for employment use, although land allocation consultation closes today; 14th September. Will wait till 2010 and outcome of land allocation consultation.</p>	AB/NW
<p>Former Cinema site, Royston</p> <p>Martin sent a letter dated 27th July to NHH to confirm support for Extra Care scheme on this site. and NHH will undertake local consultation on this provision in the autumn</p> <p>Nick will contact McCarthy & Stone regarding their site at Ling Dynamics which is also an Extra Care scheme.</p>	NW NW
Sites with other RSLs/ unallocated	
<p>Burleigh Park, Great Ashby</p> <p>Still no advice from legal about whether Affinity Sutton are in breach of the S106 Agreement if nominating shared ownership units at Great Ashby to applicants outside the NHDC administrative area, although all the units now appear to be let finally and future schemes considering intermediate market rent rather than shared ownership.</p>	KW
<p>Walsworth Road, Hitchin</p> <p>Issue hi-lighted that any instructions for Deed of Variation need to come from Head of DC as only she and Director of Planning have authority. Head of DC has issued instructions in this case.</p>	MC

<p>Clothall Common disposal</p> <p>Nick has got plans and is talking to David re valuation. Looking to submit planning application in the new year and can exchange on land sale subject to planning.</p>	<p>NW/DC/RS</p>
<p>Jubilee House</p> <p>Martin, Andy C, Alan, Rory and Les Pateman from Aldwyck met on 13th August. It was agreed that NHDC would support Aldwyck's proposals to provide specialist young person's supported accommodation for 16-25 year olds.</p>	<p>ML/AC/AD/RS/Aldwyck</p>
<p>2. Strategic planning update</p>	
<p>West of the A1 (M)</p> <p>Still no decision from the Secretary of State. Unilateral Undertakings are now being quickly signed by developers and landowners. Although some Options Agreements (between Landowners and Developers) are now known to have expired, it is thought that the consortium of developers and landowners are now very keen to get the legal documents signed so that the Secretary of State can grant planning permission before the General Election. These may be to do with the content of the letter sent to all authorities by Caroline Spellman, the Shadow Secretary of State.</p>	<p>AB</p>
<p>Regional Spatial Strategy</p> <p>The current published East of England Plan (May 2008) suffered a blow when the High Court Action brought about by HCC, supported by NHDC and St Albans, threw out the increased housing numbers in the Central Herts area (Welwyn Hatfield/St Albans/Dacorum) that appeared for the first time in the final EoE Plan. This decision, however, has little bearing on North Herts.</p> <p>The East of England Plan development scenarios to 2031 was published for consultation on 2nd September 2009. Representations can be made up until 24th November 2009. It is currently expected that a Draft Plan will be agreed for public consultation in March 2010. This will be followed later in the year by an Independent examination with publication by the Government anticipated in 2011.</p> <p>There are four growth scenarios included in the current consultation and three strategic sites included for comment in North Herts (as a result of the previous call for sites to developers that took place last year). These sites include 10,000 houses South West of Hitchin, 2,500 around Knebworth and a similar amount North East of Stevenage (NES4).</p> <p>A new settlement study is being undertaken by EERA, but early indications are that one is unlikely to be included in Hertfordshire.</p> <p>East of Luton</p> <p>Luton's draft preferred options for 5,500 units east of Luton (in North Herts area) has not changed but another site has now come forward for 5,500 units in a different location; west of Luton. We have objected that the land east of Luton is not suitable and that land elsewhere in Luton and Central Beds is</p>	<p>AB</p> <p>AB</p>

<p>more suitable. Public consultation on the Core Strategy Preferred Options finished on 12th June 2009. Of the 9,000 representations received by Luton BC, some 7,000 related to the expansion of Luton Eastwards into North Hertfordshire. It is anticipated that Luton BC will go out to Pre-submission consultation in the Spring 2010.</p>	
<p>Gypsy's and Traveller's site – consultation.</p> <p>EERA Single Issue Review on G+T provision was published by the Secretary of State in July 2009 after the official consultation period on the Secretary of State's proposed changes finished on 22nd May. NHDC still to provide 15 extra pitches by 2011 and a further 13 additional pitches by 2011. Planning are now considering where in the SNAP area the pitches could be provided and a study is being produced. In addition a transit site for 10 units in Northern and Eastern Hertfordshire Study Area (Welwyn Hatfield, Stevenage, North Herts, East Herts and Broxbourne) is also required. A separate study will be required to undertake this work on the location of the transit pitches.</p> <p>MBDC* have withdrawn their preferred option for a Gypsy and Traveller site (4 pitches) alongside the A507 to the east of Stotfold, along with all other sites pending another full review of their requirements in the District.</p> <p>* Mid Beds are now part of the newly formed Unitary Authority – Central Beds</p>	<p>AB</p>

<p>Local Development Framework</p> <p>The water cycle study working party have received a draft report, but the final report has not yet been received. Need to know from Thames Water and the Environment Agency that the level of development proposed can be accommodated. Thames Water appear to have overcome their problem with the publishing of sensitive information in the public domain.</p> <p>The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is currently being updated jointly with Stevenage Borough Council. This should be completed in October. Further discussions with Stevenage Borough Council on update to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).</p> <p>Following detailed discussion between officers in Housing and Planning sections, it was decided that the wording of the new Core Policy on Affordable Housing was worded in such a way as to make the need for an Affordable Housing SPD unnecessary.</p> <p>The final report has been received from Adams Integra on small site viability assessment work and the affordable housing policy in the Core Strategy is being changed accordingly. NHDC will receive commuted sums for schemes below the Core Strategy 5 units threshold. Karen Allen will also be reviewing the CIL/S106 SPD after Easter. The government guidance on how CIL would be implemented, that was expected in September this year, is now believed to be delayed until next Easter.</p> <p>LBC had a visit from planning inspectorate and they were advised that the Luton Core Strategy should be heard at the same time as NHDC Core Strategy. SBC were also advised the same when they were inspected. Andy B asked for a critical friend from the planning inspectorate to look at our Core Strategy in view of the advice given to LBC and SBC.</p> <p>SBC have now received written comments from the Inspector who had a look at SBC's Core Strategy before Pre Submission. North Herts had a similar visit in April but still await written comments.</p>	<p>AB/AD</p> <p>KA</p> <p>AB</p>
<p>3. Strategic housing update</p>	
<p>Capital Programme</p> <p>Affordable Housing Spreadsheet circulated with the agenda. The Crown site Lilley will not be progressing at this current time and future progression remains unknown. There is a capital allocation in 2009/10 budget of £224,000 which will not now be spent.</p> <p>Subsequent to the meeting Debbie emailed Andy C to request that £130,000 of the £224,000 be paid to NHH (half the NHH budget deficit) in lieu of the commuted sum amount expected from McCarthy & Stone. See also Cain Court above.</p>	<p>AC</p>
<p>Affordable housing Land Contributions</p>	

<p>A programme of rural housing needs survey (HNS) priorities has been identified for 2009/10 in Hinxworth, Kings Walden and Preston.</p> <p>In addition Newnham parish council have contacted the council to express an interest in affordable housing in the village so have been added to the list. Pirton parish council have also contacted Howard Cottage HA expressing an interest in affordable housing. CDA will be unable to undertake five HNSs this year and it is therefore likely the programme will be reviewed favouring parish councils that are keen rather than those that are not.</p> <p>For 2010/2011 the priorities for rural HNS has been identified in St Ippolyts, Weston and Therfield.</p> <p>Council owned land in these villages could be sold for the provision of affordable housing subject to identifying a proven local need.</p> <p>See also notes above re: Dark Lane, Radwell, Barkway, Kimpton and Clothall Common.</p>	DE
<p>London Commuter Belt</p> <p>LCB has secured £8,000 from the Regional Housing and Planning Partnership to develop a bespoke training/ project opportunity for the LCB. A working group from Development Officers group has devised a questionnaire to see what the priorities are in terms of training for LA housing and planning teams and training will be arranged accordingly.</p>	
<p>Homes & Communities Agency (HCA)</p> <p>A significant proportion of the 2008/2011 NAHP has been allocated – much of this via the package approach. Priority for remaining funds are for schemes which complete this financial year or the early part of next financial year to maintain delivery targets.</p>	
<p>4. Any Other Business</p>	
<p>Nick mentioned earlier in the meeting that Herts County Council's Supporting people budget is running out of money . This issue has already had a detrimental affect on NHH's scheme for people with mental health and is likely to have an impact on any future supported housing schemes. NHH's original scheme was for 25 units but it is likely that the scheme will now only comprise 10 units, including 6 move on.</p>	

5. Next meeting date

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 14th December 2009 in Andrew Cavanagh's office, 1st floor Town Lodge at 2.30pm.

ALL