

# **Brailsford & Ednaston Parish Council**

## **Notes of Neighbourhood Plan Meeting 21 March 2016 held at The Yew tree, Ednaston**

1. 17 members present including 2 new attendees.
2. Meeting chaired by H Stevenson, Brailsford & Ednaston PC
3. Four items tabled for discussion:
  - a. Feedback and Follow-up to Special Council Meeting 16.3 16
  - b. Completion of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP)
  - c. Finance to support a and b above
  - d. Communication

### **Feedback from Council Meeting**

4. Notes prepared by the PC Chairman had been circulated to all members of the Neighbourhood Planning Group and had been posted on the Parish Council's website. These formed the basis of the discussion.
5. A motion tabled by Cllr A Jenkins raising points discussed at the last NP meeting – particularly the exclusion of the site to the east of the Village (Throstlenest Way) from the draft Local Plan – had been defeated by 17 votes to nine. The basis of the vote was that the Council had still not identified sufficient land reserve to meet the required housing needs and if a Local Plan was not prepared it was possible that the Government (Dept of Communities and Local Government) would deem the Council to be 'failing' and organise remedial action with potential for Councillors to be penalised.
6. The draft plan had been approved to proceed to statutory consultation stage. The consultation will open on 7 April. A public exhibition will be held at Ashbourne Leisure Centre from 14- 19 April, with Council Officers in attendance on 19 April from 1400-1730h followed by a Public Meeting at 1900h.
7. The consultation stage is the primary point at which objections can be raised. All objections have to be considered by the District Council and will form (along with the earlier submissions from the village) part of the documentation reviewed by the Planning Inspectorate when any finalised plan goes to formal review. It was stressed that effective objections must be 'evidence based'.
8. Eight points had been identified from the discussion as potential areas of objection:

- a. Basis of the new Housing Needs Assessment which determines the number of new homes for which the District Council needs to make a land allocation. This route being pursued by Hulland Ward.
- b. The identification of sites in the smaller villages of the southern Derbyshire Dales, their examination for suitability for development; and the related allocation to the Tier 3 sites (as identified by the District Council's 'settlement hierarchy'), while few allocations had been made to the Tier 4 – smaller local villages although some of their PCs had identified that new homes were needed. Brailsford is a Tier 3 settlement.
- c. The recognition that up to 50 new homes could be approved in Brailsford on windfall sites - how had these been factored into the District Council's allocations
- d. The 'tipping point' – the optimum size for a settlement to retain coherent village status and beyond which there should be no further development
- e. The rationale for the inclusion of the 'Throstlenest Way' site when it has been dismissed as unsuitable on two previous occasions.
- f. Decision-making relating to the assessment of landscape sensitivity (based on the Council's own Landscape Assessment report).
- g. The application of accurate traffic assessment and highway considerations – the PC had commissioned an independent traffic and highways assessment to provide evidence for the objection. Finance had been obtained for this from an application to the official Government funding arrangements.
- h. Lack of employment in the village making additional housing 'unsustainable' as all residents would have to travel to work. An application for housing has been made for the village's only employment site (the Old Cheese factory).

9. Additional points were made :

- That Derbyshire Dales District Council has taken too local a view and had not adequately explored the wider economic aspects of development with its neighbouring authorities, together with the opportunity for these authorities to provide some of the projected housing requirement. It was noted that the latter point had been a reason for the previous draft plan to be withdrawn. However it was explained that the current legislation requires the Planning Authority to manage its own economic growth, likely employment provision and associated housing need. Derbyshire Dales had identified employment land opportunity in Ashbourne, Wirksworth and Matlock and not in the rural villages although some growth in home working was anticipated and should be accommodated with improved broadband provision etc.
- To be successful the Village campaign needs to identify suitable land holdings to replace those allocated to the Village as part of its campaign
- There should be further pressure on the District Council to urge villages in the Peak District National Park to take an allocation. Indication had been given to one member present that Tissington was prepared to take up to 100 homes. More information is also needed about the W Sussex judgment a challenge relating to development in the newly formed S Downs National Park.

### ***Further Professional Support***

10. The Parish Council proposed that an expert Planning Consultant should be commissioned to examine a-f above, provide the detailed evidence and the relevant objection statement. Additional monies were required to finance this – hence the establishment of the ‘fighting fund’. The meeting Chairman had been pursuing this route but reported that many consultants were reluctant to take this brief as their ‘bread and butter’ was working with developers. Two suitable candidates had however been identified.
11. Some members felt that legal representation (barrister) was required at this stage and a recommendation was given of a possible candidate. After discussion it was generally felt that while this level of support could be required at a later stage, i.e. the Planning review, it would be far too expensive for the village to support at consultation stage.

### ***Next Actions***

12. The PC had submitted formal questions relating to a-f above to the District Council via Cllr Angus Jenkins. Responses were awaited. This would be pursued again and it was suggested that a timeline should be set. Advice would be given to the PC Chairman on the appropriate form of words to be used.
13. A second model letter on the website identifying the key points for objection was requested.
14. The PC was recommending that work continued on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and that this should be published to coincide with the consultation period – end May.
15. Those present were urged to make objections to the application for the Old Cheese factory site.
16. To date most activity against the draft Local Plan has been led by the Parish Council, including the public meeting, model letters etc. New members felt that not enough action had been taken to date and that there was a lack of ‘campaign’ visibility in the village. A separate action group had been formed and planned to take the lead in this area. Some concern was expressed by those present that this could lead to a ‘divide and rule’ effect.

### ***Neighbourhood Plan (NP)***

17. The NP is a statutory document and has to be developed under six formal stages:
  - Registration of a Plan ‘area’ – in this case the PC had registered **Brailsford Parish**
  - Consultation with residents
  - Drafting with relevant evidence and taking account of the District Council’s Local Plan (there must be alignment)
  - Formal recognition by the District Council
  - Submission to review by a Planning Inspector

- Confirmation by residents in a local referendum (simple majority of those voting).
18. To date work had been led by the Parish Council with a small group of volunteers. The following had taken place:
- All Parish resident's survey
  - Two public meetings – the second to consider the results of the survey and to identify headline action areas:
    - Housing and Development
    - Highways Issues and Traffic Management
    - Public Green and Open Spaces
    - Retaining the Local Landscape and Wildlife
    - Retaining and Improving Village Services and Amenities
  - Formation of an NP development group and four meetings held
  - Confirmation of a format for the Plan – December meet agreed to adopt the style of the approved Much Wenlock plan
  - Evidence gathering and drafting of relevant sections. To date most of the drafting had been undertaken by Parish Council members with some additional support from members of the Group on landscape, amenities and relevant District Council policies
19. In discussion some members asked that the Plan should be published immediately. The Chairman identified the work that remained to be done including the outcome of the commissioned traffic and highways study. Its findings would be presented to the next parish Council meeting. Completion of the Plan to the proposed timescale would require some further weeks and some additional input.

### ***Next Actions***

20. In order to expedite completion and to share the workload it was agreed that a small action group should be formed to review work to date and advise the PC on improvements/changes; and to assist with the outstanding drafting. Eight potential volunteers were recorded in addition to those PC members (5) who are already directly involved; although two volunteers stressed that they would have limited time available. This new group will be contacted separately.

### **Finance**

21. The Parish Council, which has been leading the campaign to date, has limited funds raised by its precept and these are largely committed to normal Parish business.
22. The need for additional finance – a campaign fund – had been proposed and agreed at the Public Meeting held on 3 March. On recommendation the PC had established a donation mechanism through its website using the recognised Just Giving process. Just Giving has an established protocol which records each donor and the amount committed. The website

clearly states that the monies raised will be used to commission professional support to help the village formulate its objections to the draft Local Plan.

23. The Chairman reported that disappointingly very little additional funding had been raised.
24. Members felt that more publicity needed to be given to the existence of the fund and its purpose.
25. It was anticipated that Doveridge and Hulland Ward would also be raising campaign funding. A formal approach had been made by the PC to the Councils of Doveridge and Hulland Ward for a consideration of joint working but to date no response received.

### **Communication**

26. To date the PC had taken responsibility for all communication, including notes of meetings, the email group, use of the village website, door-to-door leaflets etc. All activity is organised through the Parish Clerk.
27. The email group (which is currently closed to comply with data protection rules) has 43 members who have been identified through public meetings etc. Members are informed of all meetings and receive the notes of meetings and associated communication.
28. It had been suggested that email group becomes an open group so members can communicate with each other – a similar system has been established in Ednaston and is managed by a volunteer. The Parish Clerk has written to each member seeking approval for their contact details to be included in an open group.
29. The speeches given to the Full Council meeting by representatives should be published and information provided about the availability of the recording of the Council meeting.
30. In discussion the following points were made:
  - The PC website is not an appropriate vehicle for this type of campaign
  - Information about the campaign and the NP on the website is not clear or easy to access
  - A separate dedicated website is required with an associated social media campaign
  - Additional provision has to be made for those who do not have access to the internet or use social media
  - The ‘campaign’ needs higher visibility generally – possibly with posters, banners etc.
31. It was recognised by the PC, which uses the tools available to it, that communication to date had not proved adequate. Therefore someone with experience in this area was required and essential to success and a Volunteer(s) was required to take this forward, including the possibility of establishing a dedicated website and social media campaign.