



Watlington Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Kristina Tynan

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 25th APRIL AT 8PM IN THE WEST ROOM

Present:

Councillors: Jeremy Bell (Chairman), Ian Hill (Vice-Chairman), Tom Bindoff, Tony Williamson

In Attendance: Gill Bindoff , Peter Richardson, David Cotterill (Traffic Group), Rob Smith (Traffic Group)

Officer: Rachel Gill

1. Apologies

Terry Jackson, Matt Reid

2. Conflicts of Interest

GB if grant for work with Community 1st Oxfordshire is discussed.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Resolved: That these minutes be agreed as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman

4. Matters Arising

None – all covered in agenda items.

5. Progress of NP Forum

NP Forum Update – GB will prepare this for the next meeting on May 9th.

Traffic Update – David Cotterill

David Cotterill gave the group an update on traffic group progress.

He stated that the group had gathered a lot of information but now needed to pull together the work so far and needed some guidance from the Steering Group.

Key questions:

- How can the assessment criteria list used on options be tightened up?
- How can multiple site selection / schemes be taken into account, rather than just assessing individual sites?
- How can traffic impact assessment be funded and who can do the work?

The dual objectives of the group are:

- Impact of site choice on traffic
- Assessment of a number of traffic management options

The group have prepared 2 reports:

1. Summary of relevant legislation
2. Summary of traffic elements from Consultation 1 and 2.

Workshop Summary

The workshop on the 30th January was used to discuss and get feedback on a number of options.

- 1) Western options – either linking several sites or a larger alternative route.
- 2) One-way Pryton Lane and 1-way Shirburn St and Couching St.
- 3) One-way Pryton Lane (opposite way to option 2) but 2-way through town
- 4) Traffic Management schemes – chicanes on entry/exit routes, smart traffic lights to control flow of vehicles at peak times.
- 5) Focus on pedestrian and cycle routes. This option looks at how access can be improved through pedestrian operated traffic lights at key crossing points plus upgrades to footpaths to allow new cycle routes and all weather surfaces. This may also discourage traffic as there would be several crossings to stop at when driving through.
- 6) Focus on Town Hall / Town Centre. Options such as cobbled crossings, changes to road surfaces, pavements and introduction of loading bays.

Next Steps

Having met with SODC the advice is to work in parallel on 2 assessments:

1. Site Specific
2. Traffic Management Options

DC presented a number of options to model and asked the group for feedback.

Questions

RS asked the group to discuss where they wanted the group to go next ?

PR said that talking with developers was critical to look at whether developers could work together to get the best benefit for the town, not just development with no benefit. **Access to a single site would not work.**

GB said that people were expecting to see an option with some sort of relief road and that must be looked at as an option, as well as options without one. She also stressed the importance of agreement to go ahead with applying for the Locality grant to enable traffic modelling to go ahead. She also noted that the **Traffic** Evaluation criteria would slot in very well with the Sustainability Appraisal work.

TW thanked DC for a clear presentation. He stressed that the public need to be briefed on the work done so far. He asked whether the principle about roads going through a housing estate was a key point? DC said it was a comment made in feedback on options.

GB asked about traffic management options. DC said that some options could be independent of site selection.

TB stressed the importance of getting the Locality Grant Application in as soon as possible so that assessments can get underway. We should also look at traffic management ideas and costs.

IH thanked DC for presenting. He stressed that the most important thing is to complete site selection and that any work should focus on this. Traffic management is not such a priority, although it could support the NP. The priority is to look at the relationship between traffic and sites, especially through traffic. Two options should be assessed – with and without a link road, i.e a multi-site scheme or no new routes. We also need to consider what would happen if WAT8 went ahead as a stand alone site, or if a new route was not suitable for HGVs.

JB thanked the traffic group for a great piece of work. It addressed sites and also separately traffic issues. JB said he was keen to look at traffic management which could reduce HGV movements and make Watlington less attractive to travel through. He also said that the crucial point of number of houses was still critical as a multi-site scheme would need a high number and this **would could** make traffic worse.

PR stated that as SODC no longer have a 5yr land supply developers will be trying to put through sites and we may not have so much say over numbers. The main defence will be ‘demonstrable harm’ to the town. Planning appeals have failed in Chinnor and Benson.

TB said that if the alternative route had extensive traffic calming it may take longer than going through town and not be a useful alternative.

6. Short Term Strategy (land and strategy)

IH There was a joint meeting last week between the NP Steering Group and the NP Forum Coordinating Group to discuss implications and actions in response to the Providence Land WAT8 scheme, and also preparations in dealing with future developer schemes. A public statement is required as the NP need to respond. Material also needs to be prepared for the Parish Annual Meeting on the 19th May. The plan is to prepare a flyer to distribute to all households.

TW expressed concern over whether a WAT8 scheme would be imposed from outside if we state we don’t like it. An alternative to Willow Close is needed. He suggested questioning Providence Land over how they could deliver WAT9, 10 and 12. Could that mean no Locality money was needed as the developers should look at traffic impact? All developers would need to be contacted at the same time. He proposed that the NP consult with developers on WAT 9,10 and 12 and then ask the same questions to other developers.

GB replied that discussions with developers are in the timing plan for the end of May. A small working group is looking at this, specifically where is the 'tipping point' between benefit and demonstrable harm. The group have produced a draft flyer "What Watlington Wants" and have begun drafting communications on current situation with Neighbourhood Planning in general and the situation with appeals. This will be ready for the meeting on the 19th May.

Action JB to review these drafts and email any comments.

It was agreed to continue the meeting for an additional 10 minutes.

JB again returned to the issue of housing numbers and that the purpose of the NP was to stop a "free for all".

PR gave an update on the Car Park Survey and Shopkeepers meeting – there were mixed views on whether an alternative route would be good or bad for the town's economy. He added that there have been 2 meetings with Pryton which have been positive.

Providence Land may put together a scheme which includes WAT7, 8 and 9. Their expectations on traffic are that 60% of through traffic would use an alternative route. This would be around 360 movements per hour at peak. Pryton will also assess this.

TW again stated the need to influence developers ASAP and challenge /ask questions about their schemes.

GB said this could be discussed at the next meeting on the 9th May.

JB asked what steps were required in respect of contact with developers.

IH said the aim of the meetings would be to interrogate developers so an agreed list of questions was needed as well as documenting why we have chosen sites, along the lines of the What Watlington Wants document.

GB asked for the group to agree to proceed with the Locality Application for £9k to be used partly for traffic modelling, traffic modelling strategy and investigating how a road could work running through a housing site.

Proposed : JB

Seconded : TB

Unanimous vote to proceed with the application.

Next Steering Group Meeting 9th May 7:30pm Parish Office

The meeting closed at 10:10pm