

Notes of Meetings with Developers

Present NP Panel:- Ian Hill (SC), Gill Bindoff (NPCoG), Jeremy Bell (SC), Norman Perry (NPCoG), Tony Powell (NPCoG); Rachel Gill (NP Admin)

Note taking: Tom Bindoff & Terry Jackson

Sound recording: Peter Richardson

26th May 2016 - Jonathan Harbottle, Director of Providence Land; Jeremy Emmerson, Director of Providence Land; Robert Wickham, Planning Consultant; Tom Hutchinson, Director of Providence Land – Wat 8 and Wat 9

Following an introduction where it was explained the objective of the meeting was to update developers/agents on the progress of the NP and to give them an opportunity to demonstrate how 'their' site/sites can meet the aims and objectives of the NP and it was made clear that the meetings are not part of the site selection process'. What Watlington Wants and What Watlington doesn't Want were listed, explaining that we are attempting to discover the 'tipping point' of what level of development would be acceptable and what would not be acceptable to local residents, there was some discussion about the 'wants' and 'don't wants' of Watlington.

Tony Powel went through the 3 stages involved in listing site preferences:

- 1. Listing all possible sites starting with those suggested by SODC Listing*
- 2. Arriving at Potential Criteria, against which to objectively evaluate sites.*
- 3. Arriving at which sites are available, which are not available and which are unknown or not currently available but could be in future.*

This was all done in communication with SODC and the list of criteria have also been justified deriving mainly from Consultation 2

There followed some discussion on housing numbers which remain a problem as we await clear indication from SODC but we are aware of what is happening and are not naive.

We also made it clear that although we have to include Wat 8 as one of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment identified sites in our assessments but then we cannot allocate it as it is not within our Neighbourhood Plan boundary but will be covered by the Pyrton Neighbourhood Plan. If it was developed it would count towards our housing allocation but not CIL or Council Tax.

Jonathan H then went on to say they have been listening and watching consultations and their exhibition came on the back of these. He said it is a dilemma that Wat 8 is not included in Watlington's NP and that Pyrton do not want housing on the site but if Watlington want the road resolution it can offer they can put a planning application in to resolve this. He talked about the board at their exhibition that was dealing with Willow Close. The Marlbrook residents did not want a link through Willow Close and most people wanted a minimum of houses but Jonathan said that the residents seemed less concerned about the overall total number of homes if it meant moving the alternative route away from Willow Close, so they have now moved the road to Wat 10. He feels that if that addressed the NP moving in that direction 200 homes could deliver a road. He said they were in discussion with Wat 10.

Gill B asked to clarify if there's a strategic agreement with Wat 10 to which Jonathan responded no, they are in discussion. Gill B said the road needs to be put against the number of houses and we need to consult on this. Ian Hill added concerns that if this doesn't happen all at once, Pyrton Lane is barely adequate to handle two way traffic and lacks pedestrian access. Robert agreed that to push extra traffic on to Pyrton Lane would not be acceptable as a long term permanent solution. He said it is key to ensure that there is adequate funding for present and future infrastructure if development is in phases (for which there is merit). Gill B expressed an interest in what is a priority and linkage. Jonathan said Wat 8 was a least worst choice which a planning application would resolve, with the problem with Pyrton. They are not dogmatic but flexible..

Gill then asked for an update on Wat 9. Jonathan showed us the map and plans and Tony P enquired about specs. Jonathan replied that the road would be a link road which allows regular traffic and buses and houses would be served onto the road. Ian H asked if there was an example they could give that we could show to residents. They couldn't think of one of their own designs nearby but Robert said he would try to find a similar example. Gill mentioned the need to be of rural character and consideration of AONB recommendations about such things as lighting for example. We were told the road would be 6.75 in width but could drop to 6 to provide narrow points for crossing.

Gill said we need to avoid a new route that would facilitate traffic such that it increased traffic. Jeremy added that although evidence suggests that a development would probably not in itself increase traffic because the problem is with through traffic but would such a link road reduce traffic? Have you done any modelling? Jonathan H explained that it would not attract new trips - look at the catchment - sat navs will take you through Watlington, if a road is a bit quicker, by say 2 minutes, those drivers other than locals, planning wider journeys would not be persuaded to act differently as a result of the alternative route, as it is only a very small part of the journey for many drivers in the catchment. The number crunching will take out some out of the centre but will be low. The numbers need to be

tested. Taking point on board respondents of Consultation Two desired something to deal with traffic, they will put it to their engineers and are modelling but expressed that likely it will relieve some but not all through traffic.

Robert pointed out that the road would be 6.7m width with 2m path and green areas on either side to avoid street canyon effect.

When Jeremy B enquired what comfort they could give regarding link road needing many more houses they said that the housing on the smaller site, Wat 9, 2.5 hectares, offered no scope for more than 60 units.

Wat 10: possibly 38 looking at 25 per hectare but not within their control so cannot comment.

Wat 8: 100 in 6 hectare which would include a car park and the ability to take buses from Cuxham to the schools if this was desired. That's 20-25 per hectare plus parkland which they could possibly offer to Pyrton or put into a permanent Trust so it would be protected.

Jonathan suggested that a few 'headline' properties could be large houses in spacious plots. These would be projecting as high end and not mass market.

Tony P asked if they would be submitting detailed plans. Jonathan responded that no it would be outline planning or possibly enhanced outline planning.

Tony then asked where they thought the market would come from and where would the people buying these homes work? Jonathan did not have specific data on potential purchasers.

Gill B suggested we need to ensure there is a good range to meet needs identified by the housing needs survey such as affordable, home workers and start-ups. Jonathan then said that they had worked with a company 'Village Foundations' in smaller places in Oxfordshire doing terraced and clustered starter homes. He said this could be incorporated in the mix but that another way to get over the affordability problem would be to consider exception housing in part of Wat 8 segregating a portion with its own planning strategy. Rachel G mentioned that the survey revealed a reasonable quantity of families who cannot afford to live/ remain/ return to Watlington so we need truly low cost housing. Robert asked if there were any housing associations in Watlington. Gill informed them that SOHA and Sovereign have a presence.

Norman then enquired what 'Enhanced Outline' Planning was.

Jonathan explained that rather than having a code for the builders it would document a design framework and all matters would be reserved so builders tied within a framework but more work and ability for them to engage.

Peter Richardson asked if they'd had any discussion with the schools. Robert said there had been discussions with the schools for example about 3G pitches. Jeremy Emmerson said that although the plans are not currently showing a 3G pitch it is open for discussion as would be a swimming pool which could be linked to the school and perhaps include a small gym. Gill

B mentioned that there is a newly formed working group looking at swimming pool options as it is a perennial request by residents but has consequences.

Robert stated that there is no settled request. They would respond to a settled request.

Gill B then asked if they could please share their assessment on Heritage Sites and Landscape report.