



## ***Our plan – Our future***

### **Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan**

#### **Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

15th April 2013, 5.00pm to 8.00pm, Guildhall

#### **PRESENT**

#### **REPRESENTING**

##### **Members of the Steering Group**

Tim Coleshaw	Community
Bob May	Community
Charles Teaney	Community
Liz Thomas	Community
Cllr. Lesley Durbin	Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr. Mike Grace (Chair)	Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr. Robert Stuart	Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr. David Turner	Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr. Milner Whiteman	Much Wenlock Town Council

##### **In Attendance**

Mary Jacobs	Community
Faith Smith	Community
Rachel Walmsley	Community
Jake Berriman	Shropshire Council

##### **Minute Taker**

Robert Toft

### **1. Chairman's Welcome**

Mike Grace welcomed those present to the meeting.

### **2. Apologies**

Gill Jones	Shropshire Council
------------	--------------------

### **3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest, Dispensation or Bias**

Tim Coleshaw and Mike Grace noted that, as employees of Natural England, they would not comment on the response to the draft Plan made by Natural England.

(Milner Whiteman, Tim Coleshaw and Rachel Walmsley arrived at the meeting)

#### 4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Item 5 (4th Para under "To consider responses and recommend appropriate changes to the Draft Plan", Line 4), Replace "REF1" with "RES1";

Item 6 (2nd Para, Lines 2-3), Replace "for the period when the Neighbourhood Plan and the Steering Group were dissolved" with "until new committees and sub-committees were formed".

Subject to these points, the minutes of the meeting of 8th April were **approved**.

#### 5. Developing the Scope and Content of the Plan

Mike Grace noted that the meeting needed to consider responses to public comments not considered at the previous meeting, the text of the Plan, the revised map, conformity issues, handover & legacy issues and preparation for assessment.

To consider public comments on the pre-submission Draft Plan

To consider responses and recommend appropriate changes to the Draft Plan

*Comments from Statutory Agencies and Shropshire Council*

(Minute-Takers note: Responses to, and amendments made to the draft Plan in respect of, all comments made will be included in a document which will be made available on the Neighbourhood Plan website. They are thus not all reflected below, except where substantial discussion took place or actions or other issues were involved. References below are to those in the draft Plan.)

(Introduction) Faith Smith noted that Shropshire Council had suggested that "what success looks like" might be included and asked for guidance on this. Jake Berriman thought that this might include what difference would be expected to have been made in 10 years time and how it would be measured e.g. less people on the housing register. Lesley Durbin noted that the Town Council had decided on a review in five years time but no benchmarks had been agreed. Bob May thought that a successful partnership with housing associations which met local housing needs could be a measure of success.

David Turner and Bob May noted that qualitative success targets were easy to devise but not to measure. Jake Berriman noted that they could be turned into more measurable objectives e.g. the number of vacant shop units as a measure of retail viability. Mike Grace noted that progress on the RES1 housing site and development of the employment site might be other possibilities.

(Policy 6.4) Faith Smith noted that DCLG had sought evidence for the policy relating to adequate garden space. Lesley Durbin noted that this came from guidance from the Shropshire Playing Fields Association. Jake Berriman noted that such policies were difficult

to defend at appeal and suggested that requiring the developer to demonstrate that garden space was suitable for the size and type of the property might be better.

Mike Grace suggested that the design brief might be agreed between the Town Council and the developer (rather than Shropshire Council). David Turner thought that this might lead to the design being overly influenced by the developer. Mike Grace noted that the designer's brief needed to be the starting point. Jake Berriman noted that policies should not be so prescriptive as not to meet the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) criteria.

It was **agreed** that the policy should require that the design brief would be developed between the Town Council, Shropshire Council and the developer.

(Policy 7.3) Faith Smith noted that Shropshire Council had asked for criteria to judge planning applications with regard to their effect on open spaces. Tim Coleshaw noted that the revised policy GOS.1 specifically identified four open spaces but that residents had suggested that more could be included including Cutlins Field, the area next to the Gaskell Arms and the churchyard (although it had been agreed that this was already well protected, so no formal listing was required).

Jake Berriman noted that the SAMDev exercise would be encouraging parishes to identify land which they wished to protect as well as for development. He thought it was important to determine criteria for protected land and how it might be treated.

Milner Whiteman wondered what the reason was for designating existing agricultural land and why the parkland was not designated. David Turner thought that the area around Bourton Church might also be included. Lesley Durbin thought that there was a good case for including the Cutlins Field together with the surrounding land. Liz Thomas declared an interest as she lived adjacent to this area.

Bob May thought that inclusion of additional areas was too substantive a change at this stage. Charles Teaney wondered whether a designation might reduce the value of land.

It was **agreed** to leave the areas designated as in revised policy GOS.1 and to ask the Town Council to consider other possible green spaces proposed by residents during consultations on the Plan.

(Robert Stuart took the Chair for discussion of this item)

(Policy 8.3) Faith Smith noted that Natural England had suggested including policy related to biodiversity enhancement and characterisation assessments. Jake Berriman noted that national standards did not need to be reproduced in the Plan.

It was **agreed** to propose that the Town Council should consider looking at this issue.

(Mike Grace resumed the Chair)

(Policy 9.1) Jake Berriman noted that developers could be required to meet but not to exceed energy efficiency standards. Lesley Durbin noted that the residents survey had shown strong backing for energy efficiency in development.

(Mary Jacobs arrived at the meeting)

(Policy 9.2) Faith Smith said that Shropshire Council had noted that the non-inclusion of wind energy proposals would require support. She noted that the residents' survey had not shown support for wind power. Mike Grace noted that the policies did not object to wind power but just did not mention it explicitly. Faith Smith noted that the AONB recommendations on wind turbines were included in the policy rationale.

**Agreed** to ensure that policy was not in conflict with Core Strategy.

Faith Smith noted that the Viability Statement included as an appendix to the Plan had been based on a model from another Neighbourhood Plan.

**ACTION: Faith Smith to circulate draft Viability Statement.**

#### *Comments from the Public*

(Objective 1) In response to comments from Mark Sackett (RPS, representing Wenlock Estates and Persimmon) (referred to as MS (RPS) subsequently in minutes), Bob May noted that the Plan sought to balance market and affordable housing with an emphasis on meeting local need and that, whilst CIL was beneficial, it should not be a determinant on policy. Jake Berriman noted that CIL was intended to meet needs arising from more housing but that less additional housing would engender lesser needs. He added that a recent update from DCLG had suggested that weight would be given to neighbourhood plans in development and that Shropshire Council would be able to include these when this became effective.

Lesley Durbin noted that there was evidence that infill and windfall sites would become available. Charles Teaney noted that some of the claims made were immaterial or inaccurate, e.g. regarding public transport.

(Policy 1.1) In response to comments from MS (RPS), Bob May noted that the Plan did not seek to develop only affordable housing and that the comment about the approach being untested was only true with respect to Much Wenlock. He noted that neighbourhood planning was itself untested and that the policy was in line with community needs. Robert Stuart noted that the proposed approach had been shown to work in other areas. Jake Berriman noted that it was in operation elsewhere in Shropshire.

(Policy 1.3) In response to comments from MS (RPS), Bob May noted that there were no formal monitoring arrangements. Lesley Durbin noted that it had, however, been agreed

that the Town Council would monitor the Plan. Faith Smith noted that reference to monitoring was made in the Introduction.

**Agreed** that explicit reference to monitoring should be included in the Plan.

It was noted that Shropshire Council had advised that a large housing site would not preclude infill development from taking place.

(Policy 1.4) In response to comments from Howard Horsley, Civic Society & James Orves, Bob May noted that it needed to be made clearer in the Plan how this policy had been arrived at, following the residents' survey and consultation events. Mike Grace noted that the size of 25 houses had not been arbitrary but had reflected public consultation.

(Policy 1.6) In response to comments from MS (RPS), it was **agreed** that needs for two and three bedroom houses had been supported by housing needs responses in the residents' survey.

(Policy 2.1) In response to comments from MS (RPS), Bob May noted that the Plan would be reviewed in subsequent years and additional land might then be identified if required. Charles Teaney noted that, if a proposal came forward, further allocation could then be considered. Mike Grace thought that this could be done without mentioning it explicitly in the Plan.

(Policy 2.7) In response to comments from MS (RPS), it was **agreed** to amend this policy to include class B2 and B8 development uses.

(Policy 3.3) In response to comments from the Environment Agency, Robert Stuart noted that issues on foul water had been referred to Shropshire Council Environmental Health and then to Ian Kilby in Planning. Lesley Durbin noted that the IUDMP (Integrated Urban Drainage Management Plan) would not take the risk away.

**Agreed** that Robert Stuart and Faith Smith would agree wording for this policy.

(Policy 5.2) In response to comments from MS (RPS), Mike Grace noted that the Plan did not oppose any proposal on community facilities which came forward. Charles Teaney noted that the specific proposal mentioned by Mr Sackett had been considered.

(Policy 6.2) In response to comments from MS (RPS), Lesley Durbin noted that the Design Guidance had been adopted by the Town Council and the former Bridgnorth District Council (and thus Shropshire Council) as supplementary guidance.

(Objective 9) In response to comments from Glyn Barrett (AONB), it was agreed that comments related to wind turbines would be reflected by including reference to the AONB Management Plan.

Mike Grace asked whether it was agreed that all comments were now reflected in the Plan. Robert Toft **agreed** to check whether comments had been included in the tables of comments. Faith Smith noted that some comments in the Locality health check had not been included fully.

It was **agreed** that Faith Smith be given discretion in reflecting comments in the final version of the Plan.

(Robert Stuart left the meeting)

#### To consider need for SEA and other statutory requirements

Jake Berriman noted that, whilst Shropshire Council would advise that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) be undertaken and that a letter from Andy Mortimer would give further detail, it was ultimately a matter of judgement. He added that a sustainability assessment did not need to take any particular form

### **6. Plan Timetable and Process**

Jake Berriman noted that Shropshire Council were required to allow for a six-week notification period which could begin shortly after the Plan had been received by them. The notification advertisement could appear in the Wenlock Herald. He thought that the Plan could be approved at the Shropshire Council meeting on 29th May and, if approved, could be passed to the assessor at the end of the notification period.

Charles Teaney noted that the documents required for Shropshire Council included the Plan, map, statement of consultation, conformity statement, sustainability statement and SEA (if required).

(Jake Berriman left the meeting)

Charles Teaney noted that it would be necessary to agree the evidence to be provided to the assessor. It was **agreed** that this could be left to a later meeting of the Group.

Mike Grace noted that all documents for the Town Council meeting needed to be ready by lunchtime on 17th April.

It was **agreed** that the paper detailing handover issues for the Town Council (the "legacy paper") should be revised to include comments from David Turner and to suggest that additional proposals for green space should be considered.

**ACTION: Mike Grace to revise legacy issue paper.**

**Agreed** that the statement of community consultation and engagement would be discussed at the next meeting.

**ACTION: Mary Jacobs to circulate draft statement of consultation and outstanding questions.**

**Agreed** that the website should include details of all comments made and how they had been addressed.

## **7. Developing the Scope and Content of the Plan (resumed)**

To consider responses and recommend appropriate changes to the Draft Plan (resumed)

### *Draft Plan*

Mike Grace noted that the introduction had been extended and that the numbering of policies had been changed in line with advice from Locality.

(Liz Thomas left the meeting)

It was agreed:

- i) To delete the second clause of policy EJ.4;
- ii) That references to "Shropshire" in the green leaf sustainability notes for Objective 3 should be changed to "Much Wenlock";
- iii) That the statement on wind power should be prefaced by "As far as wind power is concerned....".

It was **agreed** that Faith Smith would revise the Plan to reflect decisions made at the meeting and would finalise consultation points with Robert Stuart. It could then be sent to the Town Clerk for inclusion in the papers for the Town Council meeting on 25th April.

### *Map*

**Agreed** that green spaces and burgage plots be added to the town map.

**ACTION: Tim Coleshaw to amend town map.**

## **8. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Steering Group was **agreed** to be on 22nd April 2013, starting at 5pm in the Guildhall.

The meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Date \_\_\_\_\_