

Duddington with Fineshade Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee Meeting
15 July 2020
Via Zoom 19.30

1 In attendance:

Sandie Parsons – Chair (SP), Shenagh Hackett- Secretary (SH), Gary Kirk - *Yourlocale* (GK), Derek Doran – (DD) *Yourlocale*, Paul Hackett (PH), Barrie Galpin(BG), Sandy Scott (SS), Peter Kerr (PK), James Hurst (JH) – representing Lucy Hurst

Apologies for absence: Lucy Hurst

Members of the Parish Council:

Maggie Scott (MS), Rae Spencer Jones (RJ), James Maunder Taylor (JT), James Waldock (JW), Rick Holder (RH), Dee George (DG)

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no expressions of interest declared.

3 Minutes of Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th July 2019 were proposed as a true record by BG and seconded by SP.

4 Site Allocations – Presented by Gary Kirk and Derek Doran

a) The reasons and the importance of identifying sites for development for homes were explained. East Northants Council has to demonstrate that they have sufficient housing to meet the needs over a five year period. This is set out in their Local Plan. If their Plan were to fail there would be no protection against inappropriate development in the neighbourhood. However if this occurs our Neighbourhood Plan would remain in place offering protection to the area.

Another major reason to support a neighbourhood plan is that there will soon be a new unitary authority and having a plan in place will demonstrate a degree of certainty to the people of the area.

b) Site selection: In January 2019 a letter was sent out to stakeholders/landowners to identify any sites they control that they may like to develop. One site in Fineshade and five sites in Duddington were identified.

c) Sustainable sites: National planning guidance provides the criteria for a sustainable site e.g. near to a facility such as a shop/school, the centre of the settlement.

d) A scoring matrix was developed from the National Planning Guidance with 25 criteria applicable to the Village.

Of the six sites, two stood out as inappropriate for development - Stocks Hill and the Fineshade site which is in open countryside.

The field at Fineshade had to be assessed because of the impending application and was assessed as a high red scoring site meaning that significant mitigations would be required by the developer.

Stocks Hill could accommodate 26 units which was considered to be an over-development for the Village.

The Water Mill was discounted as a site as work had already begun.

Barns Farm was a green high scoring site showing that there would be no major restraints on residential development. However the owners confirmed they were not

interested in developing the site in the near future as they were happy with the tenants. Therefore it was not allocated for development.

Manor Farm had to be assessed six times. Initially assessed as green, when information was submitted by nearby residents it was moved it from a green site to a red site. However no site visit was carried out for the re-assessment.

The redundant builders' yard was intended for development by the owners however the original application to ENC had been rejected as four five/four bedroom houses were not considered to be required for Duddington (too big).

Manor Farm and the Builders' yard had recently been visited by Derek Doran accompanied by Sandie Parsons and Shenagh Hackett and had then been reassessed.

- 5 Process of selecting sites:** In addition to a presentation to residents, Community events had been held, April 2017 where the process of a neighbourhood plan was explained and November 2018 where there was a range of information available for the Community.

The open event asked general questions and it was explained by GK that at this stage it was not usual to ask technical questions as to benefits and disadvantages although a range of information boards were in place showing the Vision statement and the reasons why a neighbourhood plan would be beneficial.

Following the open event a standard process had been followed. An advisory group had been set up with two different theme groups at Environmental and Housing.

These groups engaged in procedures guided by planning law to identify sites for protection and to identify the least environmentally damaged sites for possible development.

It was explained to the meeting that although the Plan is at an advanced stage there are still key primary consultations to take place, Regulation 14 consultation where everyone in the neighbourhood area will be able to comment on the Plan and then following any amendments arising from comments, Regulation 16 consultation where ENC will be commenting on housing allocation. It was stressed that any proposals will need to be checked with the ENC and the Conservation Officer first.

- 6 Questions:**

Manor Farm site – Why wasn't anyone else invited to the recent "meeting" with Derek Doran and were the other sites also rescored? This was not a formal meeting and both the Builders' Yard and Manor Farm had been revisited by Derek to more critically review the scoring in light of information received from residents. Both SP and SH wanted to update themselves to ensure that all additional information received from local residents was reviewed.

Why is it only the Village and Fineshade and not the surrounding area that has been considered for development? The boundary follows the Parish boundary and the six sites were taken from stakeholders' engagement with only two stakeholders engaging.

Why does the number of units per site keep changing?

Limits to development are the single most important element of a neighbourhood plan and It is possible for Duddington to allocate two small sites. The ENC Local Plan states that a total of around 11-20 units are required. The number of sites we propose is our negotiating offer and ten could be considered more acceptable to the community. Eight may be considered a minimal requirement and if this is acceptable to the Parish Council this number may be in the range that the planning authority is

looking at. If sites are not allocated and limits are kept tightly bound there would be the possibility that the Neighbourhood Plan Examiner could reject the plan altogether as it will be seen as stopping any future development.

Inconsistency of Scoring – The inconsistency of scoring the slope at Fineshade and that of Manor Farm was queried. Fineshade is a much greater slope than Manor Farm.

Amendment: The Fineshade assessment (4) to be reworded to indicate that this is a much steeper slope.

It was noted that site specific conditions can be made part of the Plan. We can set our own conditions on the type and size of housing for the allocated sites. In this way our own decisions can control development.

Do we need affordable housing? ENC may rule that it would not be a strategic fit with their policies if there were no affordable housing.

There was a concern that builders would not build using stone/slate roofing etc and there was little confidence in the ENC planners to uphold this. It was agreed to welcome affordable housing provided it met the building criteria of the Village. It would be down to the developer to meet the building conditions.

Is high quality affordable housing possible? What percentage of affordable housing would need to be looked at? There are ways to build quality housing that is affordable to the end user for example through shared ownership or apartments in one building. The design criteria for the Village would remain the same and conditions would be negotiated with the owner to ensure it meets the local requirements.

Probably around 40% of new developments would be affordable.

7 **Amendments to site assessments where required**

Water Mill: No further work required

Barns Farm: Nothing to change as the owners are not going to proceed.

Stocks Hill: It was confirmed that the Estate do eventually want to develop Stocks Hill. However it is the Parish Council's decision as to what goes into the Neighbourhood Plan and scoring all sites against National Planning Criteria is a method of demonstrating due diligence.

The possibility of Stocks Hill being classified as an open green space was discussed. An open green space is land that is protected by countryside policies and there are specific criteria within the National Planning Policy Framework. Guided by *Your* locale BG and SS have carried out assessments of all open areas in the neighbourhood using a rigorous and transparent scoring system. Initially Stocks Hill did not score highly enough to qualify for Local Green Space. In particular it was found impossible to show that it is "demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular local significance" as required by the NPPF. The field and assessment criteria have been revisited several times reinforcing the belief that there is no actual or legal public access to the field.

New local information was presented verbally at the meeting and this could have an impact on the designation of this and other proposed areas of Local Green Space.

This will be discussed in greater depth at the next meeting.

SSA criteria (13) Change this to be within the conservation area.

SSA criteria (16) There is no public access from Mill Street however there is access from Highfields. Wording to be changed

SSA criteria (17) Centre of Village Sites are all measured from the same point; the phone box was used as the central point.

There was still concern over potential development of this site and it was explained that where a neighbourhood plan is in place developers and the planning authority generally will not consider a site which had not been identified as an area for development. Both sites that have been selected can meet the housing requirements and so the other sites fall away and would not be accepted as requirements would have been met. The Plan proposed gives the strongest possible control over the development of Stocks Hill.

Builders' Yard: This is now completely redundant. It was agreed that this area does require development. It was pointed out that Burghley Estate own the ransom strip that provides access to the property.

It was noted that JT and JW were not happy with any affordable housing either there or Manor Farm because of a lack of confidence in the ENC planners to uphold the high standards of building within the conservation area given the costs associated with Collyweston slate and stone.

Manor Farm: The derelict buildings are additional buildings and there is a specific planning condition to redevelop redundant buildings.

A further query was raised on the rating for Manor Farm which had gone from red back to green. It was explained that in the first assessment it was rated as green 3 however additional unchecked information had been provided from local people had changed the score. It was pointed out that the site had been changed three times. It was stressed these had only been a desk based assessments. When reassessed again during a site visit and information factually on the ground, amendments were made again.

It was confirmed that Manor Farm was classed as a brownfield site as there were hard standing buildings and it was also noted that there were five listed buildings in the vicinity.

Access to Manor Farm SSA criteria (16) from the high street was discussed and measurements for access routes had been taken by Derek Doran. The back lane in theory could be used for access to the development however this was felt to be unrealistic in practice due to costs that may be involved. The Council own a ransom strip and costs could be prohibitive.

The issue of cars coming out onto the High Street was raised and it was pointed out that the Builders' yard has a similar problem therefore the same problem occurs at each end of the Village. The access route (16) at Manor Farm had been regraded as amber after an assessment on Friday when measurements were taken of access points.

A comparison was made regarding (18) for Manor Farm and Fineshade concerning the public footpath. It was pointed out that hundreds of people use the path at Fineshade compared with residents/walkers within the Village.

It was confirmed that the Village's conservation area map is readily available on the ENC website

(12) Change the number of listed buildings within the vicinity to five.

- 8 Parish Councillors JT, JW and JH were not happy going ahead with the sites and felt that Local Green Spaces and the allocated sites need to be discussed together and another meeting should be held. However as the draft plan had been developed over

12 months ago timescales for completion were drifting and it was felt that it would be more effective if the opinion of ENC planners on the current proposals was then compared to what the Village would like to see and discussed at the next.

It was agreed that:

- ENC should now be approached to get a general view on each of the sites. It was stressed that a final decision was not yet ready to be made.
- It should be noted that JT and JW were not in agreement with this resolution
- GK to produce for the next meeting a report on Local Green Spaces together with a re-assessment of Stocks Hill as a local green space.

A proposal was put forward to hold an open meeting of all residents in the Neighbourhood area to be held by Zoom and it was noted that the Village Hall would be available. As previously discussed there would be the opportunity for the residents to comment on the development sites and the draft plan at the next consultation stage. It was pointed out that as part of the examiner's audit of the Plan every comment received from an individual had to be recorded and reviewed against the planning criteria and that it would be preferential to wait until the sites and green spaces had been agreed before going out to residents.

Within the current situation an open event in the Hall may not yet be possible and it was proposed that if required an executive summary would be produced and delivered to every household. When possible the next open event would follow the same format as the previous one where refreshments, children's drawing activities available and the opportunity to learn how to use the defibrillator and to carry out CPR were provided. The importance of support from the Parish Councillors was also stressed as very few attended the last event.

9 Date of next meeting: 12th August. 7.30.

Before confirming how it is to be held, note should be taken of the latest information from NALC concerning the criteria for holding an in-person meeting.