**NOTES OF THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING MEETING**

**Tuesday 15th May 2019**

**Present: Cllrs Peal, Perrins, Street, Dodson, Selby, Mags Wylie (Action Hampshire), Nigel Baldwin (Winchester City Council), Javed Ditta (Hastoe)**

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| AP  NB  FS  NB  DS  AP/DS  MW  DS  JP/FS  NB  NB  FS  NB  JP  MW  JP  FS  JD    AP  JP  JD  DS  JD | Opened the meeting and began the discussion by asking why the Verification of Housing Need Report was so difficult to interpret, so apparently ambiguous? It evidently showed there was a need, but for how many? Why couldn’t it have said that there are X people with a local connection, wanting South Wonston, in actual need and able to pay?  Nigel clarified the information sent to the Parish Council in April. 16 households were contacted of which 12 responded and 2 have since been accommodated. He agreed therefore that the housing numbers are 7 rental plus 3 shared ownership, in all 10 households which qualify from the housing register for affordable housing in South Wonston. The report goes into more detail and has been said to be ambiguous information. It was explained that the numbers in the report were the same people broken down into sub sections.  Frank brought up the difference between want and need.  Nigel confirmed that rented was a need and that shared ownership was a want.  David mentioned that at the previous Parish Council meeting a resident raised about the Old Hunstanton versus Hastoe case, which was won by the village. Is this scheme lawful?  Ann asked about the numbers in the village survey. David said that 246 of 640 households said they were in favour of affordable housing, but it wasn’t pinpointed to rent only. A resident said at the last Parish Council meeting that, as private rental can be similar in cost to affordable housing rent, could people in need not rent the house for up for let in the village? Cllr Neville said that some private rentals could not been let to people in receipt of housing benefit as their buy to let mortgage stipulates that they can’t be rented to them. David also commented that as there is affordable housing in Kings Barton couldn’t the families be redirected there?  Mags pointed out that this would be a small rural exception scheme for people with local connections to the village that would help keep the village alive. They are people who want to live in South Wonston, qualify under the rules and are currently on the housing register. Kings Barton will be allocated to those with the greatest need on the housing register which is a different allocation.  David asked how long people live in affordable housing. This question couldn’t be answered.  June said that a need had now been demonstrated and the Parish Council have voted to support the need. People with a local connection with a desire to live in the South Wonston in rented accommodation demonstrated a need. Frank agreed that the need was supported but not a site. Based on this the project has now moved to the next stage.  Nigel said that Winchester City Council Housing Needs Teams write to everyone on the register every 2 years to confirm their history and find out if they still wish to be on the register. His list is as up to date as possible i.e. 2019-20.  Nigel has visited all the sites made available for development.  Frank commented that should the Persimmon field be developed would other land adjoining be developed?  Nigel spoke about SHELAA which has identified 4 plots of land around South Wonston. One of the key problems is access and Hampshire highways have already confirmed that they will not give any access onto Alresford Drove.  June explained that the Goldfinch development couldn’t go any further as it was outside of the boundary, but was left with a walking path behind 3 houses and road access from Goldfinch into the Persimmon field.  Mags contacted owners and visited all the sites in South Wonston and asked owners of land at the top of West Hill Road North could they sell their land for £10K per house built. They were unwilling to sell as it was too cheap than if sold for private development.  June asked if there was now a willingness to go forward or not?  Frank suggested that, based on the new housing numbers, should the scheme be modified?  Javed replied that they would take a cautious approach on how many units to build and agreed that 10 houses would still be viable. He then went on to talk about some local schemes that have been successful. The examples are Harding Close, Wonston, where the Parish Council is now looking at doing a second scheme, and Micheldever.  Ann agreed that one of the next steps would be to contact and visit Wonston and Micheldever and is also keen to ensure that community support is demonstrated.  June asked whether it is wrong to do the scheme because residents adjacent to it are not happy, when you compare the scheme that is nearing completion on Downs Road that seems to have gone up with little objection.  Javed said that so far they have built in 300 villages around the country and once built the objections disappear. The smaller scheme would still be viable due to the cost of houses in the area.  David spoke about the La-Frenaye shared ownership scheme which has shown to have been problematic for some of the owners.  Javed confirmed that HASTOE would look to buy the whole field.  **Way Forward / Next Steps**   1. Javed to check that the land is still available and that the ransom strip has been dealt with. 2. Nigel to produce a briefing paper (to be approved by Julie Pinnock) looking at all available sites and demonstrating which proves most favourable and to answer the email from Cllr Godfrey. 3. Clerk to type up minutes of the meeting to go with the above which are to be checked by attendees before being circulated to the Parish Council and interested parties. 4. It was agreed that at the next Parish Council meeting in June the suitability of the Persimmon Field should be put to the councillors’ vote.   UPDATE: After the meeting recorded above, Nigel Baldwin proposed a consultation reviewing all the original sites, any changes in assessment and any new locations now forward. The Parish Council will consider whether it approves this course of action rather than an immediate vote.  Email From Nigel Baldwin Following the Meeting  Below is a note from a law firm about the Hunstanton case.  It does not appear to be relevant to the South Wonston situation, especially as all the households that were contacted for the Housing Needs Verification had the South Wonston connection not the wider housing need.  Below the paragraph is the assessment from the Briefing note that was sent out.  Perhaps the information could be circulated to other members of the Parish Council for completeness as I am aware that the case was being raised.  Old Hunstanton Parish Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2015] EWHC 1958 (Admin)  The Planning Court has handed down judgment in *Old Hunstanton Parish Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government*[2015] EWHC 1958 (Admin), in which it quashed a planning inspector’s decision to grant permission for 15 affordable homes on a rural exception site adjoining the village of Old Hunstanton in West Norfolk.  Old Hunstanton Parish Council contended that the inspector had misinterpreted the relevant provisions of the West Norfolk Core Strategy. The housing needs register for the area identified 33 households, of which two were located in Old Hunstanton, and 22 were located in a nearby town. It was not lawful, the Parish Council argued, for the inspector to have treated housing need located in the town as justifying development in the village.  The Parish Council also argued that the inspector had failed to give adequate reasons for her interpretation of the relevant local policies.  Lang J upheld the Parish Council’s challenge on both grounds. Properly understood, the relevant policies of the West Norfolk Core Strategy provided policy support for rural exceptions housing only where there was a need for that housing in the immediate rural settlement, or in other small rural communities as defined by the old PPS3, where those rural communities were local to the development site. The judge described the rural exception site policy as “*exceptionally, relaxing planning constraints on development in rural areas so as to meet the needs of small rural communities, not to meet the housing needs of neighbouring towns and larger conurbations.”*  On the reasons challenge, the judge held that the decision letter was inadequate: it was not possible for the Parish Council to know or understand the basis on which the inspector had interpreted the development plan as she did, and this caused substantial prejudice. The judge added that: “*more generally, it seems to me that an Inspector ought to give reasons for his or her conclusions on any fundamental question raised about the proper interpretation of a development plan policy, as this is central to his or her statutory duty, under section 38(6) PCPA 2004, to determine an application for planning permission in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*  From the response to the Goldfinch Way action Group comments on the Briefing Note to Ann and Ward Councillors here is an extract which explains how the case relates to South Wonston   * “In the High Court case it was considered that the Rural Exception Site policy was being misapplied, because it was meeting the housing needs of the town of Hunstanton, not the local needs of Old Hunstanton. * In the case of South Wonston, there is specific reference to the housing need for South Wonston rather than the district and so the outcome of this High Court case would not be relevant” |  |