

Minutes of Meeting 17 of Crosthwaite & Lyth Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group 11th February 2020 at 10.00am

Present: Simon Johnson, Alan Gerrard, Dorothy Grace, Graham Paine.
Robert Sykes was away.

1. **Apologies** None.

2. **Approval of Minutes for previous Meeting**

20th January 2020 – approved.

3. **Comments and outcome of 16th December 2019 meeting with LDNP**

Both Louise and Paula added clarifications. However, Paula's comments raised further questions which Simon will raise with her:

- What is the order of priorities with regard to Housing Need when considering planning decisions: the needs of the Neighbourhood Plan or Distinctive Area needs?
- What is the housing need of the Distinctive Area? How is/was it determined and by whom? Are the needs based on the 2016 SLDC survey?

Other constraints would have to be introduced, e.g. threshold for having to include affordable housing.

A wide-ranging discussion took place around Housing needs, and two major issues were identified.

- While it is widely believed that there is a demand for affordable housing for young families, there are also other needs such as houses that are suitable for older residents for down-sizing. These may need to be larger than a typical affordable house specification, and therefore would be outside the 'affordable' designation; however, it is likely that the downsizing process would release equity to allow purchase.
- The initial discussions held with Young Farmers identified that even properties that are built by Housing Associations and sell for around £250k are beyond their means. Self-build is possibly a better option for many young people who want to get on the property ladder.

Neither of these issues was addressed in the last Housing Needs Survey.

Paula advised against setting a boundary envelope, although it would help to prevent creep leading to joining up of settlements, could this lead to more houses being squashed into land within the settlement envelope?

Paula also pointed out in her response to the Steering Group the following:

"We will seek to ensure that new development is adequately supported by infrastructure, and ensure that developments can be made acceptable in the context of conserving and enhancing the Special Qualities and attributes of Outstanding Universal Value. To achieve this we will:

1. Only permit development where:

- a. Adequate infrastructure exists relevant to the development proposed without prejudicing existing users; or
- b. Additional or enhance infrastructure is needed and will be provided either by the development or through a financial contribution to the cost of remedying the infrastructure shortfall."

The notes of the meeting, with the amendments from Louise and Paula, were approved to be released to the PC and the website.

4. Parish Housing Needs Survey

The survey questions, locally derived, from the 2008 HNS could be the basis of a new questionnaire, though the situation 12 years later is somewhat different, and this has to be reflected in any new questionnaire. The SLDC 2016 survey canvassed a much wider geographic area.

A revised, lower quotation has been received from Eden Council to carry out the Housing Need Survey, but would require the SG to do more of the tasks. The revised quote is based on a 40% return rate (typically Eden would expect the return rate to be 30-35%). If the return rate exceeds 40% then the costs of the Survey would be adjusted upwards to reflect the additional postage costs for the returned questionnaires. Eden would receive all the questionnaires and carry out all the analysis on the anonymised returns. All information included in the returns is anonymised for analysis and none is available to the SG or the PC.

Eden advises against members of the SG/PC hand-delivering the questionnaires throughout the Parish as they believe this may compromise people's willingness to respond, as it could raise concerns regarding confidentiality, even though the data are analysed anonymously. However, the SG is unconvinced that this is an issue; if the SG hand-delivered the questionnaires this would allow further cost savings to be made. All returns would go directly to Eden.

Eden recommended that the questionnaire should be primarily a paper document, with the option to complete it online, rather than the other way round.

Using an independent specialist, such as Eden, will add gravitas and substance to the assessment, and the outcomes would be accepted by SLDC and the LDNP planning, whereas a home-grown survey undertaken by the SG would have to gain approval to ensure that it would be recognised by SLDC and LDNP, and could be open to criticism and challenge.

Locality's Technical Consultant, Aecom, would be free of charge to the Parish. However, they would not carry out a survey (i.e. there would not be a questionnaire to households); rather, they would just use the 2011 census data plus the 2016 HNS to draw guidelines on housing need. This is deemed inadequate (and has been rejected by other Planning Authorities during the development of a NDP).

Finance

It was agreed that the HNS rationale and data analysis should both be done professionally. Locality, the grant-awarding body, might agree to a repurposing of some of the grant already awarded to support the HNS.

In addition, Locality, via Aecom, could assist with Technical Support to develop design codes. If this avenue were pursued, it could open up the possibility of more grant funding from Locality. The PC agreed in principle during in the PC meeting on 4th Feb for the SG to investigate this option.

Action: Simon to follow up

It was agreed to suspend work on the questionnaire until the SG has identified funds to undertake the HNS.

Outstanding but not urgent actions

Action: Alan to ask South Lakes Rivers Trust about protecting and improving the biodiversity of the Gilpin and its tributaries: what to avoid and how this all relates to planning.

Action: Simon to contact Cumbria Wildlife Trust with similar questions with respect to this parish. Simon has already spoken with environmental consultant Tony Marshall, who would see if there was anything already prepared regarding biodiversity for this area.

- 5. Date of next meeting**
Tues 10th March 10am