

Warren Farm Development, Ampthill Stakeholder Group

Minutes of Meeting 10: 7th October 2015

Held at : Redborne Upper School, Ampthill

Present

Cllr Paul Duckett (PDt), CBC & ATC (Chair)
Pete Ludington (PL), Resident
Steven Smith (SS), Denison Investments
Tony Kerr (TK), Resident
Martin Kent (MK), Resident
June Hutley (JH), ACSG
Peter Downing (PDg), ACSG
Kelvin Horton (KH), Resident
Stuart Cirket (SC), Resident
Brian Harding (BH), Connolly Homes
Russell Gray (RG), Woods Hardwick Planning
David Joseph (DJ), Bloor Homes
Robert Webb (RW), Bloor Homes
Louise Newcombe (LN), CBC (Development Management)
Donna Lavender (DL), CBC (Development Management)

Apologies received from:

Steve Anson, Redborne Upper School
Jon Balaam, Greensand Trust
Mark Smith, ATC

Circulation

All above, plus

Cllr Mike Blair, CBC
Cllr Paul Downing, CBC

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and Introductions

PDt welcomed the group and introductions were made round the table. LN explained that she would be the Case Officer for the required approvals including 'reserved matters' applications taking over from Jennie Selley, with DL providing support.

BH advised that since the last meeting in June 2012 Connolly Homes has acquired the freehold title of their third of the overall site (the part fronting Flitwick Road) and are now intending to build it themselves.

SS reminded the group that Denison Investments are a promoter and had always intended to sell their two thirds of the site (that fronting onto Abbey Lane), but had committed to ensuring a smooth handover with the eventual purchaser at the earliest possible stage. He expressed his delight at being able to introduce Bloor Homes who are now very close to purchasing the site.

<p>DJ and RW introduced Bloor Homes, explaining they are a Northampton based, privately owned housebuilder, who have undertaken a number of recent developments including in Central Bedfordshire, at Ampthill Heights, Silsoe and Shefford and who are looking forward to working on the Warren Farm site. DJ and RW advised on the respective positions at Bloor Homes relating to planning and land respectively.</p> <p>A query was raised regarding RG's role. It was explained that he had acted as a Planning Consultant for Connolly Homes for the outline application and had undertaken administrative duties for the Stakeholder Group from its first meeting and is now jointly instructed by Bloor Homes and Connolly Homes to co-ordinate the submission of details relating to site wide conditions on the outline planning permission. It was agreed that RG should continue to carry out administrative tasks for the group.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 2 – Stakeholder Group Terms of Reference</p> <p>The existing Terms of Reference for the Group were tabled and reviewed. It was agreed that these need to be updated to reflect the stage of the planning process that has now been reached with the CBC Officers and the developers to do so. A draft is to be issued prior to the next meeting.</p> <p>TK suggested that the Membership section perhaps also needs to be updated as ADAG is no longer really a functioning group. KH confirmed that REVAMP has folded. It was agreed that the membership section should also be updated.</p> <p>DJ queried whether the Stakeholder Group has a fixed membership? PDt confirmed that other organisations could be co-opted, but the group has principally comprised of the same participants</p>	CBC/Developers
<p>Agenda Item 3 – Current planning position and next stages</p> <p>The approved land use parameters plan was tabled and it was explained that with the granting of outline planning permission certain elements of the scheme are now fixed, such as the points of access and the maximum number dwellings (410). LN explained that the development principles are therefore established.</p> <p>DL outlined the next step involving the preparation of a Design Code to establish detailed design principles for the scheme and identify the different character areas across the site. This will be followed by the detailed design stage known as the approval of 'reserved matters'.</p> <p>The relationship between the Design Code and the Council's adopted Design Guide was clarified with DL and LN explaining that because the outline consent was granted prior to the Design Guide being adopted the Council's position is that it would be unreasonable to require complete compliance with the latter.</p> <p>LN advised that CBC would be using Peter Dawson of Essex Place Design to provide design advice and comments on the draft Design Code and detailed plans for the parcels.</p>	

<p>The issue of flooding was raised with TK, PL and MK questioning what would happen to the watercourse to the south of Fallowfield. BH advised that it is a ward drain and that CBC therefore has responsibility for maintaining it. He also confirmed that it would be retained as an open watercourse except for where the pedestrian link to Lammas Way is to be created where it would need to be culverted.</p> <p>Future access to the ditch to allow maintenance was discussed with BH confirming that this would be an important design consideration and that ultimately, CBC and the Internal Drainage Board would need to be satisfied with the detailed surface water drainage strategy for the site.</p> <p>LN confirmed to the group that there are a number of site wide conditions, such as surface and foul water drainage and landscaping that the two developers have agreed to work together on.</p> <p>The tenure mix of the scheme was discussed with it being confirmed that the S106 Agreement requires 35% of the units to be affordable. PD asked about the possibility of an older persons home or sheltered accommodation with LN explaining that the tenure mix is now fixed by the S106 Agreement, but that this includes provision of a proportion of dwellings suitable for habitation by older people.</p> <p>Timescales were discussed, with Bloor Homes indicating that they would like to have the reserved matters approved by the end of March 2016, which would mean the Design Code being agreed by the end of 2015.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 4 – Programme for future Stakeholder Meetings and Public Exhibition</p> <p>It was suggested that the next Stakeholder Group meeting be held once there are detailed plans to table and the Design Code is suitably advanced. BH advised that Connolly Homes anticipate being ready to do so by mid to late November. RG to advise the group in advance.</p> <p>It was confirmed that a public exhibition would be held at an appropriate point, with all agreeing that this should be when the plans are at an advanced stage so that local residents can see the full detail of what is proposed. DJ asked that the developers would be grateful for any advice from stakeholders on venues/format and approach.</p>	<p>RG</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5 – A.O.B.</p> <p>TK explained that whilst local residents had historically been opposed they accept the development is happening and now wish to ensure they get the best scheme possible. He requested that those who are impacted most by the development are taken into account and given due consideration.</p> <p>JH raised the issue of speeding on Abbey Lane and Maulden Lane. SS confirmed that this was the reason the junction design incorporating a change of priority had been put forward and approved.</p>	

PL suggested the design needs to incorporate measures to stop people parking on footpaths and verges as this is a significant problem in Ampthill and is not currently being enforced. CBC also have powers they can use to reduce these problems.

PDg asked how construction traffic would be organised with BH and LN confirming that there would be a Construction Environmental Management Plan agreed for each parcel which would fix construction accesses, site hours of operation, delivery times etc and this enables the Council to control such matters.

PDt mentioned that the tidy tip was being improved and wondered whether these changes would have any impacts on the proposed development. SS indicated that the planned improvements were likely to reduce any impacts due to changes in the management of the site.

PDt thanked everyone for their attendance.