

OCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Neighbourhood Development Planning Group

Notes from meeting held on Monday 20 September 2021

Present: OPC - Dick Thomas (Chairman for the meeting),
Barry Thorne
Lesley Fletcher (Clerk for the meeting)
Other members of team - Charles Calvert, Leigh Jones,
Gordon Lee-Steere, Henrietta Senior, Rupert Senior

Apologies: Amanda Barclay, Gill Christie, James Lee-Steere, Jo Page

DT introduced James Garside (NDP planning consultant) to the members of the team.

Future Mole Valley - Draft MV Local Plan 2020-2037 (FMVP)

DT noted that the draft plan had now been published and there were changes in it that may affect the preparation of the NDP.

Meeting with MV Planning Officers

A meeting had been arranged for Thursday 30 September 2021.

DT, HS, CC, LF to attend to discuss statutory matter regarding re-designation of Neighbourhood Area and also how Ockley's plans to fit in with FMVP.

DT stated that he felt that this would be a good opportunity to talk to the planning officers about the Local Plan: shortfall of housing numbers / how they envisage numbers being delivered.

Grant application

DT informed the team that the application had been submitted. Queries had been answered. He may hear by the end of the week as to whether the grant has been approved.

Discussion - Q/A session with JG

FMVP - it was noted that numbers for housing requirements/allocated site numbers differed in the plan for Ockley. This was a change to the previous draft plan. MV had consulted with OPC regarding sites in the first draft of their plan but had not consulted before publication of Reg 19.

Housing requirements for designated Neighbourhood Area:

Ockley Parish - 75 net new dwellings to be delivered through the allocated development sites in the plan and through windfall development.

Allocated sites for Ockley:

Land at Friday Street - 26 dwellings

Land at Elmer's Field - 20 dwellings

Land at Cricketers Close - 6 dwellings

Difference of 23 could be identified in NDP or left for windfall development.

The shortfall in numbers could be challenged through the response to the FMVP as to why 75 dwellings to be delivered but only 52 identified.

Overall MV have cut back on the numbers of houses to be built in the district so there was a risk that the Government Inspector could reject the plan; however to get to the stage of publication of the draft plan MV would be fairly confident that it would be accepted. If the Inspector accepts the allocated sites then the Ockley NDP team would have to accept them. Also the number of dwellings could not be changed, but details can be influenced.

JG stated that to allocate additional sites in the Ockley NDP would mean that the team would have to take into account the additional time/effort and cost needed to produce the plan. Landowners in the parish would have to be contacted in a 'call for sites'. It was noted that in the FMVP 27 sites had been identified but only three chosen. Additional houses could perhaps be built on the rejected sites. DT pointed out that the village envelope had been expanded by 70% in the FMVP. Previously a site at the village hall had been approved for 100% affordable housing - perhaps this site could be re-considered.

Value of NDP for Ockley

Concerns raised as to value of producing a NDP - having to comply with the FMVP. Noted that Ockley NDP would build on the MV Local Plan. If people were happy with the FMVP then there was no need to do a NDP. However, a NDP was more than finding sites for housing. The non-strategic parts of plans meant that Ockley could have additional sections for transport, parking etc. Policies can be put in place regarding type of houses, density. Policies for a village go beyond details shown in the Local Plan. Details in policies can mean challenges for developers. A section in the NDP for these additional subjects need only be short.

Queries raised regarding a local village plan going to review after plan challenged. Costs were being covered by the Local Authority. If a NDP was adopted then the Local Authority adopted it.

Housing land supply

MV has to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, if unable to do so then MV becomes more vulnerable. If site allocations made in a NDP then within 2 years of adoption of the plan the village would have a strong defence to rebut any development. The additional 23 dwellings need to be allocated in the NDP or; an objection could be made to the number of 75.

If Ockley decided to allocate sites then a Strategic Environment Assessment would also have to be done. The assessment is a technical document which developers can challenge so it has to be done properly. This is an additional expectation with added costs but additional funding is available. Concerns raised regarding 'floating 23' but noted that allocation of sites brings additional work / costs for the Team.

Framework for NDP

JG stated that a framework was available on the Government website (Locality). This shows a 'roadmap' with steps that need to be taken to get through the defined process. It was also useful to refer to other NDPs. There is the original plan for Ockley that will be used as a basis for the 'new' plan. MV had taken account of this first draft. Parishioners to be encouraged to attend consultation events and complete survey but there was no specification for numbers required to register interest. DT had circulated suggested format for Ockley NDP.

JG would advise on the process / Ockley to do the main part of the work. However JG could step in to do additional work if needed. He had sent through quote for work that he thought would be required. The quote was flexible - allowing for more/less time if required.

Appointments

Subject to grant being received DT recommended that:

- JG be appointed as consultant (he would send contract)
- LW for SCA be appointed (survey/character appraisal)
note: some of these costs would have to come out of parish council funds so parish council authorisation would be needed
- Prince's Foundation be asked for advice (queries raised as to whether necessary)
Noted that BIMBY LITE toolkit would be used
JG stated he had no experience with BIMBY

In principle all in favour but would have to put on hold if grant not received.

JG asked that team to inform him of any decisions regarding allocation of sites detail in NDP / when processes would start. He advised that a decision regarding allocation of sites be taken sooner rather than later.

Response to FMVP / Ockley survey

Noted that responses had to be submitted in specific format.

Local people may be critical of current proposed sites; some want development in the village, other don't. Survey should collect their views. Survey to be discussed/finalised at next meeting. DT explained setting up of Community Hub team - questions to be added to survey re. hub.

Date of village meeting

Dependent on availability of hall - BT to discuss with bookings officer.