

NORMANDY PARISH COUNCIL

LOCAL PLAN MEETING NOTES

22 June 2016

Present:

Cllr A Cheesman – NPC Chairman
Cllr P Palmer – Local Plan Chairman
Jonathan Lord – MP
Cllr Keith Witham – SCC
Cllr David Bilbe – GBC Councillor

Cllr Al Lawson – NPC Councillor
Cllr V Cheesman – NPC Councillor
Cllr V Clarke – NPC Councillor
Cllr D Simmons – NPC Councillor

In Attendance

Lt Col LG Clarke
Mrs A Beuden

Parish Clerk
Assistant Parish Clerk

Alan Cheesman – Welcomed all those present & introduced the panel members. A Working Party has been set up to discuss the Local Plan, chaired by Peter Palmer. The meeting has been arranged to discuss the Local Plan information that has been presented to date and to make sure people present have their say as the views of Villagers will assist the Parish Council in forming their observations on their response to the Draft Plan. Information will be put on the website.

Keith Witham – 3 main areas of concern with Local Plan:

- Secondary school
- Highways/roads
- Environmental issues

Secondary school – If permission for a secondary school is granted, it will lead to many houses being built. It should be rejected as it is not needed. Wants to know why GBC has not surveyed residents whether a school is needed or not? The birth rate is low. An empty school is not sustainable, it will be costly, i.e. staff salaries, etc. GBC need to demonstrate that there is a need for a school and how it will be financed. If not, then the school proposal should be rejected.

Roads & Transport – Railway station is only a partial benefit to more housing. The two roads bordering site A46 in Normandy are country lanes and cannot cope with increase in traffic with a secondary school and housing. There are access issues to resolve. The negative impact would be far too great.

Environmental – Protected areas around this area of Surrey. Vitally important habitats and protected species of animals are in danger. SCC is proud to be the “creator of the Green Belt” and feels very strongly about the protection of green belt land and the needs and wishes of residents who are concerned about the environment in Surrey.

Residents need to respond to the Draft Plan with individual letters in their own words, stating their issues and concerns as this will help more rather than copy a standard letter.

David Bilbe – Thanked residents for attending. Approximately 300 people present from approx 2,300 residents in Normandy, which shows how important this meeting is and people's views on the Local Plan are. Local Plan is a very complex process, there are many technical terms to understand, planning law jargon to come to terms with. He does not underestimate the gravity and serious nature of the situation. A need for affordable housing in Surrey is very high profile in the news. All applications will still be subject to approval which takes time. The housing need involves increased traffic and sustainability. Safeguarding green belt land is not safe guarded only not developed within the term of the current plan, not for the future. If the decision process is agreed that site 46 will be withdrawn due to the school not being needed then this will be due to sound technical reasons

.Jonathan Lord – Keith Witham and David Bilbe are very knowledgeable, effective Councillors and are at the top of their brief. He encourages villagers to retain their sense of shock and disappointment on the Local Plan. But to channel it positively. Have valid reasons why the plan should be rejected. Normandy has effective local representatives who support their needs. Normandy's voice needs to be heard loud and clear. David Bilbe avoided telling residents how to put forward their rejection points of view if the school not needed. It is not black and white. NAG continue to put their arguments together for residents. If you write a letter in response to the Local Plan, you need to have a personal objection to assist in the quality of the argument, use your own words. If you have additional concerns or a legal perspective/issue then that needs to be addressed in your letters too. It is inexcusable for more houses to be built in Normandy and it should be stopped.

Floor

Comment – In addition to the environmental needs and wildlife in the area, there are many Grade 2 listed houses in Normandy and they need to be protected too.

Comment – Can't understand why the Planning department consider it appropriate to build in Normandy. No consideration has been given to the environment or to extra traffic in the area which is shocking.

Comment – There is a stream on Manor Fruit Farm which runs through the middle of the proposed development. The stream floods anyway and Glaziers Lane will be further blocked and flooded. The traffic in the area is already unduly heavy and when there is traffic it has to go somewhere and will cause further problems. Cannot see how the development will succeed with the extra traffic in Normandy.

Comment – There has been no consideration to the residents of Normandy on any level on the Plan.

Comment – The playing field behind their house gets very wet already,

Question – Will the A47 remain as a potential plot?

Answer – David Bilbe – It's not an all or nothing situation but not sure of the answer.

Question – Why so many houses are being proposed? Why can't there be a smaller amount of about 40-50 houses?

Answer – Keith Witham – It would be fairer to spread the housing needs across the Borough (organic growth) but the Planning Department want 1,000 houses because it's an "easier" situation in the long run to deal with a single developer rather than several smaller developers.

David Bilbe – The Planning Department looks at the future need and backlog of other housing issues. Big things are easier to get done effectively, if it doesn't, the Government will grant the go-ahead anyway. Unfortunately it is too late to start that idea now, the timing is terrible.

Jonathan Lord – A challenge in other local areas - Pirbright is protected and cannot be built on, so new housing cannot go there.

Question – How can it be too late in the process? The Plan is still under consideration. Thinking of the Plan as a whole, if the school proposal is withdrawn what contingency Plan does GBC have?

Answer – David Bilbe –. Yes there are other sites but development has to go somewhere.

Question – Why are the housing targets from GBC so high compared to other Councils?

Answer – Jonathan Lord – GBC targets are substantially higher due to the shortfall of houses, they need to catch up.

Question – Why is there a need for a secondary school? There is a lack of young people (20 years) in and around Normandy so who would go to the school?

Answer – Jonathan Lord – That is a good question. The SCC Chairman and officials declare a need for a new school in the area but need to look at the statistics. Even if there is one needed it doesn't mean it has to go in Normandy.

Comment – Works at Kings School which is under subscribed. It could be a good school if more children went there. The proposed Plan is to improve the roads/traffic – where is the money for that coming from?

Question – Why do the residents have to have a Plan? What is the need for a Local Plan?

Answer – Jonathan Lord – if you have a Plan you know where you stand. You will see that Green Belt land has been and continues to be protected.

Question – Do we need to help pay for a lawyer to get legal advice?

Answer – Peter Palmer – Not now.

Question – GBC want big sites like Normandy to put in social housing. There are 6,000 people waiting for houses. Why is everything coming west? (Nothing east or south)

Answer – David Bilbe – The policy is in place that 40% of housing is built as affordable. This is not just "Council housing". The East cannot be developed on as it is the Surrey Hills which is an AONB. There is no bias against the West that he knows. The proposal is balanced and developments are not all coming this way.

Jonathan Lord – Affordable housing equates to 80% market rent. The Council decide the balance number of "affordable housing".

Question – Is there any decision for Local Plan to change the railway bridges on Westwood Lane and Glaziers Lane?

Answer – Keith Witham – There is no proposal to change the railways. The developer will have to pay for the roads but £3m is not enough.

Comment – No obvious increase of youth in Normandy so why is there a need for housing?

Comment – Can't understand why a school is needed. There aren't any youngsters in Normandy, it is an ageing population. The school would be a 7 form entry system with only 1 formal entry from Normandy itself. GBC don't know how many children will attend from Normandy, they will come from Park Barn and other places via the station. The children cannot cycle to school as the roads are dangerous. Which will come first, the houses or the school? If it's houses first, then the children will go to another school before this one is built. The school is not needed and so housing is not needed.

Question – Who will hear our comments? Do they count? What influence will Jonathan Lord have?

Answer – Keith Witham – SCC will be consulted and can give responses on the Plan. They will forward the comments to the relevant SCC Officers and so it will become an official response from SCC.

David Bilbe – There are many more points to consider, not just traffic or the school. The Local Plan will flounder if other issues are to be considered too.

Jonathan Lord – Anything relevant residents say will be considered and are important. If there are any relevant points, the Planning Department make a note of them. It is all noted down. GBC are the decision makers, he cannot badger them as it won't help. He is not allowed to as the Government cannot get involved now. He has to wait until the final Plan has been finalised.

Question – Glaziers Lane has problems with flooding already. If there are 1,000 more houses, there will be more sewage and the risk of flooding will increase.

Answer – Jonathan Lord – If you have any flooding issues, NPC have a Flood Forum who meet six monthly, the next meeting being on Friday at 12.30 at Emmanuel Church. GBC engineers, technical employees and the environment agency attend meetings and help to identify flooding issues and try to resolve them.

Question – What will happen to the healthcare of the village if housing increases? Fairlands will not be able to take new patients and Glaziers Lane surgery certainly won't be able to cope, the capacity will be too big.

Answer – Keith Witham – no consideration has been given to the future healthcare needs of the residents.

Question – There is a planning application for a developer to build a secondary school at Rokers in Worplesdon which will generate 380 houses. Did GBC consider this in their Local Plan?

Answer – Keith Witham – Private developers can apply individually for planning applications, there is nothing to stop them. This site has better infrastructure (A323 and Worplesdon to Woking road) But right now, none of them have become applications just proposals.

Question to Jonathan Lord – Does the increase in immigration have an impact on the housing needed in Normandy?

Answer – Jonathan Lord – Yes, this is taken into account in the housing need.

Comment – Be positive in stating your needs and your objections. There are examples of requirements being met locally. So you must make your comments known and heard as it might make a difference as it did in the Ash/Tongham case where a railway crossing was replaced by a bridge.

Question – With the housing crisis and immigration needs we do require more housing? Young people also need to get on the property ladder somehow. Is there going to be affordable housing for young people?

Answer – Jonathan Lord – There is a need for affordable housing for young people. The Government has a duty to provide housing for young people and so there has to be somewhere to put these houses.

Question –. His children took the train to Guildford to go to school, never needed a local school. The flooding issue is immense – their drive sometimes is under water. There is limited car parking at the moment at Wanborough train station, so the increase of car parking will have to go somewhere but where? There are houses and businesses on one side and a station on the other, there is no room. He wanted to live in a rural area like Normandy, not a Council estate. Traffic is already worse than it was.

Answer – Keith Witham – We do not need a secondary school. There are schools like Kings and Ash Manor. Ash Manor say they will take more children. But we shouldn't fixate on the school issue, we need to look at all issues because the planners will take notice of everything you say.

Question – Where will there be more information for tonight's meeting? Where can we get more information?

Answer – Peter Palmer – speak to your Councillors and look at the website.

Comment – NAG has produced a leaflet for the residents of Normandy. It has all the information needed, looks at Normandy as a whole and has all the Local Plan information and policies in it. Also, there is information on how to object to the issues in the Plan.

Comment – David Bilbe – Your comments are important, strength of opinion is great and there is a provision to hold another local consultation.

Peter Palmer – Thanked all for coming and the Councillors for attending.

Jonathan Lord – Thanked NPC for the meeting and to NAG for continuing to provide information. Go to the websites for more information. There will be a draft letter created you can copy if you don't feel you can write your own. Thanked all residents for coming and for a well-mannered meeting.