

HINGHAM

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

MINUTES OF THE HINGHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP MEETING

Held on Tuesday 10th November 2022 at 7.30pm in the Christian Fellowship Church.

PRESENT

Andrea Long (via Zoom), Rachel Leggett, Sam Coster, Anne List, Steph Amey, Matthew Bradbury, Ali Doe Austen Williams, Rufus Philip, Virginia Twentyman, Paul Roberts and Steve Thompson.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received prior to the meeting from Matthew Bradbury and Laura Handford.

2. ACCURACY OF MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 November 2022 were agreed as correct.

3. AECOM WORK UPDATE AND DISCUSSION

3.1 PARKING STUDY TECHNICAL NOTE

(The first draft of the Parking Technical Note had been received by the steering group on 14 December (via email). Some members of the steering group made comments (via email) highlighting factual errors and points where the report did not accurately represent the points raised in the meeting held with AECOM and Norfolk County Council Highways officers. The comments made were fed back to AECOM by Rachel on 20th December).

A second draft of the parking technical note was received on 09 January 2023. It was generally accepted by the group that the second draft of the Technical Note still contained obvious errors and required corrections and should have been produced to a higher standard. Sam suggested that the group members read the note and send comments to Rachel, copying in everyone to reduce duplication. Steph pointed out that the note made no mention of the original proposal for The Fairland that had been considered by the Town Council years ago. She stated that a referendum about parking held a few years ago had resulted in a land swap with NCC to create a small square area for possible parking but that it was eventually not proceeded with. She believed that this idea needed re-examining as a possible solution. Rachel suggested that the corrections could be undertaken by a few volunteer group members (Steph and

Anne volunteered to undertake this task). Rachel reminded the meeting that the document had two purposes; to influence policy in the Neighbourhood Plan and to be used as a tool by Hingham Town Council. She confirmed that she would co-ordinate comments to send to AECOM after Steph and Anne had discussed the issues. The response should be completed before the next meeting. Anne said that parking had been a major concern raised during the community engagement and there was a need for off road parking in the Plan and that she would like to see the use of maximum numbers for off road spaces in any future development. Ali reminded the group that this was already NCC policy for residential development.

A discussion took place regarding sites put forward in the call for sites highlighting those that held potential for car parking, with reference to defined appropriate distances from a town centre for long and short stay parking. Andrea stated that a site could be designated for other uses, such as for the community, as well as parking. She said that AECOM were close to conducting site visits, but they had completed the desk work. Andrea agreed to arrange a date for the AECOM site visits, including any steering group members wishing to attend.

3.2 DESIGN CODE (VERSION 2)

Rachel said she thought version 2 was better structurally and in plainer language. Steve said that the Steering Group had to take responsibility for some of the errors in data provided to AECOM (within the character appraisal work). The group generally agreed that there was not a clear idea within the design code for new development, such as would be allocated to Hingham through the Local Plan (Greater Norwich Local Plan), and that there was still “jargon” within sentences that was unnecessary and unclear as to its meaning.

Ali said that she had considered how previous new developments had been placed within Hingham, what the overall feel of the approaches to the “built-up environment” of Hingham is, and what good design for new developments could look like.

Ali had produced a document with her thoughts on the Design Code impact and ideas for non-character appraisal areas, as follows:

- Development in Hingham is likely to be most impactful on the town, when it is new developments in areas outside of the defined Character Appraisal areas. This would include land allocated by the GNLP on Norwich Road, and further developments brought about by either, developer making applications and being granted planning permission to develop land and/or housing allocations brought about by reviews of the Local Plan (Greater Norwich Local Plan)
- Likely to be significant development (housing numbers) adjacent to existing housing, it will be built on agricultural land
- Prior to the Hops, previous most recent developments have been Springfield Way, Bell Meadow, Rectory Gardens. These have been ‘tucked away’ behind

existing housing so minimising their visual impact as you drive through or approach town

- The considerations made when permission for The Hops was granted as it would sit in a hollow, shielded by hedges and wouldn't detract from the 'leafy nature' of Hingham or long views of the church. Few houses here are parallel to the B1108 and the main splay of houses at the entrance are set back and at an angle away from Norwich Road
- Current approaches to Hingham are leafy and green with gradual build up e.g. Watton Road sports centre and field is behind a high hedge. Norwich Road Industrial area is fronted by green space and trees. Dereham Road has agricultural land and allotments.
- We also need to consider the impact of potential development of a small scale on land adjacent to one or more existing character areas and development such as a small scale 'windfall' which is situated outside of the character areas and away from the main built area of the parish.
- Things that could potentially be considered to start to build a design code for new development:
 - preservation of long views of the church
 - preservation of leafy green character of Hingham
 - not be visually impactful on approach
 - be visually aesthetically pleasing on passing by the frontage
 - design of dwellings enhance and improve aesthetics of current street scene, not overwhelm it
 - help Hingham retain a traditional feel by avoidance of 'overly modern' design, veering to more traditional designs and could take reference from the heritage styles already within Hingham for materials, design and colour palette
 - development should be designed for Hingham and not be a generic example of the developer's current style preference
 - design which will be accepted and welcomed by the community and will feel integrated into the town as a whole rather than creating a 'stand alone' development feel
 - treatment of landscape views
 - inclusion of pavements on all roads
 - energy efficiency
 - water treatment (use and surface) including grey water recycling

The group welcomed this document and agreed it was a starting point for discussion. Rachel asked if we were looking at a new chapter detailing that new large developments need some of these requirements and the Steering Group agreed it was necessary. It was also agreed that another character description was required for the rural outlying areas of Hingham, as the Neighbourhood Area is defined as the parish boundary and this rural outlying area is not covered by any of the existing character appraisals.

Austen raised concerns that with there being so many different character areas described, much of the design code for these area is the same, making the document unnecessarily repetitive. Rachel suggested that there could be a table of Design Codes to indicate which codes apply to which area. This was agreed.

Sam stated there needed to be variety of designs within development rather than the same type of designs. Rachel suggested and it was agreed that members should visit other housing developments outside the parish on 21 January to look at varieties and find examples of what could work for Hingham. Various locations were suggested including Horsford, Wymondham, Aylsham. This would enable us to inform AECOM of the preferred type of designs that would suit Hingham.

Rachel thanked the group members who had submitted comments on the latest version of the Draft Design Codes and stated that version 3 was required from AECOM by end of February so the corrections need to be submitted by mid-February.

SITE OPTIONS ASSESSMENT: as AECOM had not completed their work this item was not discussed.

4. STEERING GROUP PROGRESS ON:

LOCAL GREEN SPACES: Ali advised that Steve, Steph and herself had completed much of this work, but it had led to questions regarding what areas should be included as green space, what should be classed as green infrastructure and what consultation is required for privately owned land be included as a green space. It was requested that this be given adequate time on the next agenda.

NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS: Sam advised he had not completed any work on this.

VIEWS: No updates given.

These items will be discussed at the next meeting.

Rachel informed the meeting that the timetable had slipped due to delays in receiving and finalising various reports. Funding by Locality after 31 March was as yet unknown due to Government having not decided arrangements for 2023-24. Originally a draft Neighbourhood Plan had been planned for end of March but will now inevitably be later. A six week public consultation on a draft Plan will now occur in mid-May after the local elections (this will avoid the period of 'Purdah' prior to the local elections.)

Ali advised that the Town Council had agreed to fund any shortfall in costs not covered by external grant funding

5. DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN CHAPTERS

this item will be discussed at the next meeting,

6. COMMUNICATION

No communications had been received. It was agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan website should be updated monthly to include the information published in the Parish Magazine.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Steering Group will be on Tues 31st January 2023 at the same venue.

The meeting then closed.