

## Village Design Statement meeting with Andrew Ford, Planning Wychavon DC 29-1-16

John H, Ian Y

### What is a VDS

- A VDS has minimal planning weight. It:
  - Is not just about housing design
  - Also identifies what's important in the village (ie: open spaces, lanes, features, views etc)
  - Shouldn't say anything about where development should or shouldn't go
- Andrew will send a description of the objectives and role of a VDS
- Good examples of VDS are Broadway, Harvington, Flyford Flavell and Lenches. Andrew will send us copies.

### VDS Process

- Parish council should initiate the VDS process, define clear process and timescales
- Then appoint a steering group which should include a couple of PC members plus people with relevant skills (eg: historian, archaeologist, drawing/sketch etc)
- To begin the VDS process there should be a kickoff meeting in the village hall attended by steering group members and interested villagers. Format:
  - Introduction to explain objectives, role of steering group, timescales etc
  - Split attendees into groups and ask each to have a brain storming session to identify what is important in the village. Use Post It notes on white boards to capture the information and group/order it. Encourage individuals in the groups to go out and photograph items they think are important around the village and bring copies of photos to the meeting.
  - Use structure of VDS document as a guide to the brainstorming
  - Capture the results of the photos and brainstorm to guide what is important and use this to define the section on the character of the village.
- Create a draft of the character of the village for feedback and comment.
- Also suggested we look at the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment on the Worcestershire CC website which include Birlingham.
- Then analyse this data and discuss how it could be improved
- From this analysis, define the planning guidance that should be considered in future.
- When all of the above is complete, make the draft available to villagers for further feedback and comment (this could either be by circulating the VDS document or by putting on a display/presentation in the village hall)
- Once finalised the PC then formally adopt the VDS
- A VDS or Parish Plan can then be adopted by Wychavon DC to sit under the design policies of SWDP as a supplementary residential housing policy

## SWDP

- Wychavon hope that the SWDP will be finally adopted in Feb 2016
- Wychavon have “allocated” sites that meet government targets for housing through 2030. An “allocated” site is one which Wychavon agree could be suitable for housing development and on which planning would be granted if an application was made.
- However there is no guarantee that a planning application would be made on an allocated site because potential developers might be unable to agree a purchase price with the owner or economic conditions might make development unattractive (eg: shortage of bricks and skilled labour or mortgage rates unattractive to purchasers). Wychavon have no control over this.
- Wychavon have to show that they have sufficient allocated sites in development to meet at least the next 5 years of housing development in the SWDP. This means they must have sufficient allocated sites where a developer has applied for planning and is therefore likely to start development (although just because developer has applied for planning doesn't guarantee the development will go ahead)
- Wychavon currently have 7 years of sites.
- Once the SWDP is adopted and provided Wychavon continue to have >5yrs of sites then the only development permitted will be on allocated sites or within existing development boundaries.
- If Wychavon dip below the 5yr allocation or if there is a mid-term increase in the requirement then it becomes “open season” again.