

Parish Council, 18 March 2015

Notes from Neighbourhood Plan meeting on 2 February 2015

Appendix 5 – Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

- What is neighbourhood planning? - Neighbourhood Planning is a new system which is intended to give local communities more say in planning the development of their area. Neighbourhood planning is voluntary, so that a NP will only be made for a given area if a local council (parish or town) or local group takes the initiative to prepare one.

- Neighbourhood area - A NP covers a neighbourhood area. This is an area designated as such by the local planning authority (LPA). A designation must be initiated by a "relevant body" i.e. a local council. To qualify as a relevant body, a neighbourhood forum must: be established to promote or improve the social, economic or environmental well-being of the area; to open to membership to people who live or work in the area or are elected councillors of a principal local authority which includes the area within its boundaries; have a written constitution, have a minimum of 21 members.

Briefing Notes....

NP Meeting

Steve Morris, Chair - The 'plan' idea was a process that the PC started about 3 years ago as a Parish Plan but the Government changed its policies and now there is a process for a Neighbourhood Plan.

Chairman introduced Andrew Ford, Senior Policy Planner from Wychavon District Council and thanked him for his attendance.

Andrew explained his background. He has worked and been involved in the production of the SWDP and has guided its development up to 2013. He also supports communities in producing NP's.

WHAT are NP's?

He went on to give an un-bias opinion on NP's - There are 1/2 dozen up and running. 1/2 dozen interested parishes. Cleeve Prior and North Claines are at draft plan stage. 2011 the Localism Act was introduced and NP's came about. It is a legal document carrying legal weight as opposed to a Parish Plan which doesn't.

NP - driven by regulations. It is specific to the community. Has to be positively prepared i.e. have a vision, policies, a need for a site for a particular use e.g. a village hall, housing development (over and above the SWDP)

Topic specific re design

Process requires key stages

PC lead

Consultation

Draft plan - 6 weeks

Consultation

Submit to WDC

Independent examiner to decide on referendum.

WHY -

Do you need a plan? What are the pressures?

Birlingham is a 4b category village - so effectively mean WDC would not seek development

Conservation

Environmental issues

Design

Could be more 'topic based'

Housing needs survey - parish council to do

Rural exception site to understand the needs if any

Grants available from Government at least into next financial year WDC to match with £8000

Volunteer's time Birlingham Parish Council March 2015

Could cost up to £15000

Time consuming

Extra funding

Free advice from Planning Aid

Again positively prepared (was reiterated)

2/3 years timescale

Cost comes with getting evidence

Is there an issue (s) to be addressed (said again)

Parish Plan still have actions or evidence

SWDP has a design policy

Residential Design Guide is being reviewed

There was a question and answer session

It was proposed that we could go ahead with a Neighbourhood Plan.

Vote took place - The vote was tied

A further proposal was that we start by conducting a survey of the village to identify our needs.

This was carried with no votes against.

Village survey

SUMMARY:

Pros and Cons summary of undertaking a neighbourhood plan.

Pros

- carries real legal weight as part of Local Plan (SWDP)
- planning applications and appeals determined against it
- certainty re community-led/supported development – fewer objections; speedier action

Cons

- technical, formal process
- time, responsibility, commitment
- uncertainly re available support