

## CONGLETON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2015

### MINUTES OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE HOUSING GROUP HELD AT PLUS DANE CONGLETON ON WEDNESDAY 01 APRIL 2015 AT 09:30AM

#### 1. **Present:**

Jenny Unsworth (JU) – Chairman  
Amanda Martin (AM)  
Glyn Roberts (GR)  
Laura Tilston (LT)  
Gordon Baxendale (GB)  
Chris Tyrer (CT)  
Mike Watson (MW)  
Gillian Kaloyeropoulos (GK)

#### 2. **Apologies:**

David Brown (DB)

#### 3. **Previous minutes:**

Agreed as an accurate record of the last meeting.

#### 4. **Matters arising:**

##### 4.1. Affordable Housing

The meeting with Stephen Knowles of CEC is still out-standing.  
MW thought that Stephen Knowles might be on sick leave.  
**Action:** JU to raise issue with DB

##### 4.2. Housing Numbers

JU proposed that the group keeps an eye on the off-plan development proposals contained in list within 18 March minutes as these threaten to soak up virtually all spare green land in the town. GR suggested that we propose to CEC to ask the Planning Inspectorate to amalgamate all the off-plan proposals for resolution en-bloc during/following local plan examination. LT stated that this would not be possible as Padgbury Lane at appeal next week. GR still thinks that Inquiries, other than those already determined, should be amalgamated. JU asked whether GB or LT had seen any evidence of Waggs Road decision being taken to Judicial Review – neither had, but LT agreed to make enquiries.

#### 5. **Reports from:**

##### 5.1 Cross Boundary Issues

CEC have yet to approve Somerford NP area request - GR thought CEC may have good reason to refuse. Eaton PC have agreed to work with us but want to ensure that the town and parish are kept separate. An inter-parish meeting is to take place next week. A debate about Settlement Zone Lines followed.

**Action:** JU to check with Adrian Fisher/Tom Evans as to which other parishes have had their NP areas designated.

## 5.2 Steering Group Meeting:

GR reported back that no Town Councillors had been present. However, a presentation had been given by Architect, Jo Martin which he had wished to give to the Town Council.

The presentation included proposals for developments in the following localities:

(1) Banks Place (Tall Ash to Tommy's Lane). This scheme involves one of the smaller small housing associations. Proposals are for a mix of different types of housing including flats and OAP accommodation. Access is tricky on Buxton Road. There would be a linear walkway along the river. The site is effectively a strip between existing built-up area and the River Dane and the proposal is for 250 dwellings to include 90 affordable. This is on top of the proposal for 300 at Tall Ash Farm. AM thought that access might be achievable through Bath Vale.

(2) Broadhurst Lane proposal - both GR and GB think that access is a major issue – which could be overcome by a Right only into the development and Left out. CEC Highways generally oppose left/right turn only access points though if the proposals were developed the highway issue involves only a 50M diversion. The proposal is for 60 dwellings or a mix including a Retirement Village.

(3) Town Centre Scheme : Fairground site including the current library, proposal being for mixed use focused on a Lidl store. GR advised that a number of ideas are being floated for the site. He is sceptical especially as a large supermarket will not want to come into the town centre and have to compete with 2 x Aldi and 1 x Lidl. GB said that until the Morrisons/Scarborough deal is resolved nothing will happen. All parties, CEC, Marrisons and Scarborough are stalling. GB likened this to Macclesfield's current problems.

As a matter of process, in future the clerk will bring approaches to the Town Council by developers to the attention of the Steering Group.

A process for developing policies was discussed at the meeting and the (high level) questionnaire was floated. The Steering Group intend to keep the questions high level and GK no longer required to do Action under 10.1 of 18 March minutes. It was felt in our meeting that the NP process was still a bit rudderless.

## 5.3 Congleton Neighbourhood Plan Vision:

AT had taken the ideas put forward at the workshop and had amalgamated these into the final statement. The Housing group discussed this and should like to see amendments as follows:

First sentence – delete “vibrant”.

Second sentence delete “celebrated” and replace with “promoted”.

AT to be requested to tweak it to allow for social sustainability to be included in the vision statement. The specifics of the sentence relating to town congestion in 2010 was queried. JU advised that Peter Minshull and Peter Aston might have put this forward on sustainability grounds based on census information. It was suggested that we could ask AT to tweak last sentence to qualify that the traffic congestion should be no worse than in 2010 **despite planned growth.**

#### 5.4 NP Workshop in Macclesfield

JU & GR had attended this. Tom Evans CEC and a representative (not a planning expert) from DCLG, together with the people who had led the Tattenhall NP provided lots of information. CEC have engaged consultants for the Master Planning exercise who are looking at details of sites. GR thinks it might be sensible for there to be some engagement by these consultants with NP groups. GB suspects that Congleton's numbers will not change significantly although LT and GR think that we should have a buffer because they think that Congleton is capable of taking greater numbers.

**Action:** JU to speak to DB on this matter.

There was some information about funding streams which might be helpful.

Tattenhall, which provides an exemplar in Neighbourhood Planning, is currently reviewing their plan in response to a numbers shortfall created by CWAC's failure to keep their housing supply numbers at the requisite level. Tattenhall had been pro-active in promoting the kind of housing they wanted so that their NP was very definitely not just about keeping housing developments down. GB suspects that Congleton's numbers will not change significantly although LT and GR think that we should have a buffer because they think that Congleton is capable of taking greater numbers.

#### 6 **Invitations:**

The chairs of the other groups had expressed a willingness to share information with us. It was suggested that some of them should be invited to next Housing Group meeting.

**Action:** JU to invite

#### 7 **Vision Statement for Housing:**

GR & LT still tweaking this, although the general vision has been agreed.

#### 8 **Housing Policy Objectives:** GR & LT still working on this

#### 9 **Next Steps:** Examination Library

CEC have £30K for our NP. GR wonders if one of the things they could be asked to do is set up an evidence library for us in preparation for the examination. MW said we need to create a Project Plan for our group. Cheshire Action OCIS have produced data we may be able to use. We have collected large quantities of information already but this needs to be properly stored in an accessible location.

**Action:** AM will start with an index of work she has already done and GK to try and find some NP Project Plan templates.

JU will investigate a Cloud type of evidence library for our group and LT will help with this as required.

JU will ask Tom Evans to meet with AM and to carry out a side-by-side analysis of the housing numbers data collected so far.

#### 10 **Any Other Business**

Windfall report from LT. Group were advised that CEC monitor all planning permissions coming forward for less than 10 dwellings and those are treated as windfalls. If for example 100 come forward in years 1-3 it would be anticipated that in years 4-5 only 66 would come

forward. This formula has not been examined. AM stated that according to her figures 181 dwellings have come forward in the last 5 years.

GR also mentioned his questionnaire for estate agents and developers. LT thought that developers may not provide any useful information and CT concurred that developers would give responses to suit their own financial/operating preferences.

- 11 **The Next Meeting** will be at 09:30 on Thursday 16 April at Plus Dane, Worrall Street, Congleton.