

Notes of Meeting held on 5th October 2017 at 8.00 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Pat & David Easthope, Kit Jackson, Kevin Clarke, Terry Smith, Barbara Pointon, Harriet Swinnerton-Dyer, Nigel Moore, Geoff Axe, Paul Earnshaw, Richard Webber, Darren Mullet, David Schneider, Annie Eccles, Tim Holmes, Derek Pinner, Chris Brearley, Uday Phadke, Jane Gough,

Apologies: Sean & Philippa MacGarry, Shirley Wittering, Jean Tomlinson, Martyn corbet, Miles Parkes, William Russell, Hugh Byrne, Annabel Ward, John & Angela Rimmer, David Heinzelmann, Judy Murch, Sue Pinner, Sabrina Melvin

David Easthope welcomed those present, but said that he was somewhat disappointed with the low turn-out as every single household in the parish had been advised of this meeting. He then continued:-

I will start, if I may, with a bit of background information.

The Parish Council started considering the possibility of a Neighbourhood Plan some time ago and invited Jenny Nuttycombe from the District Council to come and explain the implications of a Neighbourhood Plan – what it is – and what it might achieve. This was an open meeting of the parish council and a number of you attended that meeting to hear what Jenny had to say. Subsequently the parish council decided to proceed with the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan and asked me to get things moving. I am joined this evening by Kit Jackson and Kevin Clarke who have helped me greatly in the preparation of what we have done so far. Kit is currently a member of the parish council and Kevin is a past member. I asked them to help me with this because I have a great deal of respect for both their abilities and opinions. I have also asked Pat to take notes of this meeting so that all of the points made can be recorded and passed on to the eventual steering group for their consideration.

It is important that we have a note of attendees this evening and I would therefore please ask that you make sure you have signed the attendance sheet that is being passed round.

Now what is a Neighbourhood Plan? Neighbourhood Plans were introduced under the Localism Act of 2011 and are intended to give communities more of a say in the development of their local area. When prepared the Plan will be used to decide the future of the places where we all live and work and will give local people the opportunity to choose where they want new homes, shops, offices, etc to be built, to have their say on what new buildings should look like and support planning applications for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. I must mention here that this does not give us Carte Blanche to cover all the green sites in the parish with housing, nor does it give us the right to say that nothing should be built. Further, to be acceptable a Neighbourhood Plan must be in conformity with any existing Central Government, County Council and District Council planning policies, and the policies of these authorities will over-ride what we might want if there is any disparity.

I said that the plan has to conform with that prepared by the District Council, however, our District Council are at present in limbo. Their plan for development had to be put before a government inspector for approval before it could come into force. Unfortunately the District Councils' plan did not find favour with the inspector and it was rejected largely on the grounds that insufficient allocation of sites for residential development in South Cambridgeshire were suggested. We are now in a period where the District Council is revising its proposals and I understand these revised proposals will be considered by the inspector during the course of next year. In the meantime, housing developers are putting forward proposals which would not have been acceptable under the Councils' old policies and indeed may not be acceptable under the new policies when they have been approved. At the moment developers are using this window to appeal against refused planning applications, arguing that, if the District Council can't provide the sites necessary to provide the houses that the government wants, they can - and appeals are being won on that basis.

Having decided to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan the first job was to decide what area it would cover. Should it be Triplow village and its immediate surroundings, with Heathfield being considered separately, or the whole parish? After consideration the parish council agreed that our 'Triplow Neighbourhood Area' should be the whole of the Parish of Triplow. The next job was to inform every resident and business in the parish, and our adjacent parishes of Foxton, Fowlmere, Newton & Whittlesford, of our intention to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. This was done via e-mail where possible and by a hand delivered letter to those we don't have e-mail contact with. Under the rules laid down for the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans our designated area had to be approved by the District Council. Our application was submitted on 27th July and was approved by the District Council on 25th August.

Funding – I understand that £9000 will be available from the District Council to help towards the cost of preparing our Neighbourhood Plan. I suspect that the final cost will be more than this. We will need to employ a consultant at some stage, but for the moment everything we can do ourselves will help to keep the costs down.

Now I propose that we divide the meeting into two sections. Firstly an open forum so that anyone can say whatever they want about what they would expect to see in a local plan. I expect a number of you will wish to speak and I wouldn't like to think that we might still be sitting here at midnight. Pat will make a note of your concerns as they are raised so may I make a plea for you to be brief and if someone else has already made the same point that you wish to

make there is no need for you to say it again. When everyone has made their comments these will be passed on to a steering group.

The second part of the meeting will be to determine the composition of a steering group to really get started on the preparation of our Neighbourhood Plan.

The steering group will be a sub-committee of the parish council. I believe that the parish council's involvement in the preparation of the plan might smooth the way in very many other matters. The parish council chairman does not have to be a member of the steering group but is entitled to attend any of its meetings.

Now before I shut up and let you have your say I will just let you know the points that have been made to me by those who cannot attend.

The MacGarry's ask that the steering group considers the Church Street / School Lane junction in order to provide better clarity and more safety here.

The Rimmer's mention the issues of narrow village roads and management of vehicular traffic together with any limitations imposed by the utility services to the village, and they would particularly like to see thought given to provision for pedestrians and cyclists. They make the point that the character of the village is greatly influenced by the open spaces between the groups of development and very much hope that these will be maintained.

We have also had a lengthy e-mail from Uday Phadke which I think sets out succinctly what the steering group should be considering in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and I would like to read this to you.

Firstly Uday suggests that the plan should cover the whole parish and, as you have heard, this is exactly what the parish council thought and what has been approved.

Uday goes on to say.....

- a. *That we should ideally think about a plan over 3 different strategic time frames: 5 yrs, 10 yrs and 15 yrs*
- b. *That we need to engage these other stakeholders (i.e. landowners, businesses) in our deliberations, so that they also understand Parish priorities, **initially over the next 5 years**; we cannot assume that these will automatically be in line with the commercial priorities (say) of all land-owners, or indeed of central govt which has given itself the powers to intervene in local planning matters*
2. *While we will need to understand the **process** of creating a village plan, we need to set out a clear **VISION** for where we want to end up (at least in the **5-yr time frame** set out above): this is critical. Unless we are clear about what we want the Parish to look like in 5 years, we will just end up discussing a series of trade-offs in a vacuum. **We must be clear about our destination** (this will not just emerge from the process-witness the difficulties in the big national issue right now in the absence of this clarity!)*
3. *When I say our destination, I mean clarity on things like: how many houses can we (do we) want to support and where, the impact of the estimated shape and size of the population on local infrastructure, digital and energy infrastructure, traffic volume and speeds, parking, road safety, cars, buses, cycle paths, primary school places, village amenities including the shop, pub, sports facilities, businesses operating in the village, transport links to surrounding conurbations etc. I think **setting out our Vision explicitly** should prevent ending up with some of the ugly sprawls we have seen emerging elsewhere.*
4. *In creating a realistic vision we also **need to recognise the trade-offs required to satisfy the different stakeholders** involved in the parish, including the residents, community interests, commercial interests and private-public groupings. Taking a pro-active approach to this would enable us to achieve the right trade-offs (with negotiation where required) without putting us in the position where we are responding in isolation to individual plans and proposals (for example adding new housing stock can be integrated with better traffic management if we are smart and positive about this. I have attached a draft framework, which identifies some of the Stakeholders and Impact Variables which could be used to map and make explicit our Vision for the village.*

Now it's your turn. Will you please stand up, give your name and say where you live before making your comments , and please can I remind you to ensure your name is on the attendance list.

Kevin Clarke: How valid is our plan if SCDC get their plan approved?

Tim Holmes: We must be practical – a plan will give us much better leverage and with a plan in place we will be better able to defend against developers. Our plan can look at the developments that we are currently faced with (Grain Store & Rectory Farm sites) and these can be incorporated.

Paul Earnshaw: What will our plan look like?

Tim Holmes: Has other neighbourhood plans which he is happy to share. We need our plan as quickly as possible.

Barbara Pointon: We need to protect Thriplow as a village and not end up with a suburb. We must not lose our history or character.

Uday Phadke: We need to set out very clearly what we would like.

David Easthope: This is what I hope the steering group will face up to. Everyone must be involved and all views must be considered by the steering group. At the end of the day we have to have a referendum and will need a majority in favour of the plan for it to go forward for final approval.

Kevin Clarke: An independent inspector will have to look at our plan before the referendum.
David Easthope: said that he understands that the inspector is appointed by the District Council and almost certainly will be a professional planner.

Harriet Swinnerton-Dyer: How much attention do we have to pay to services, etc. and do we have to have landowners on side?

David Easthope: Yes, we need landowners on side and we also need to consider utility services although some things are outside our remit.

Derek Pinner: We are getting bogged down with minutiae. Following the new science park developments it is likely that we will have to accommodate more workers from Cambridge. Sewage, water and other utilities are for others to worry about – what we need to look at is where we would accept development.

Jane Gough: Heathfield is part of our parish and whoever is on the steering group must remember that we are responsible for the whole parish and that Heathfield must be given as much consideration as Thriplow village.

Nigel Moore: We need to set some guiding principles.

Derek Pinner: I do not want to see a 'ribbon' development between Fowlmere and Thriplow – it is important that there is separation between the two villages.

I do not want to see any more development on green open spaces at Heathfield.
I am in favour of developing the grain store site in Lodge Road.

Geoff Axe: Where do the prospective developments now stand?

David Easthope: No planning applications have yet been made. Most of the Rectory Farm site is within the village envelope and we can reasonably expect this to be developed. The Grain Store site is on 'white land' and whilst the parish council cannot make any comment on the actual proposed development until a planning application has been made, it has generally been in favour of developing this site. If, as expected, a future approval for houses on this site is granted this may well count as a contribution to our Neighbourhood Plan.

Barbara Pointon: The Parish Councils' views have, in the past, been over-ruled by the District Council planners. Will having a Neighbourhood Plan in place mean that the District Council will then listen to us?

David Easthope: The presence of a Neighbourhood Plan which is in accordance with Government and Local Authority planning policies should provide a basis for judgement on any future applications.

Chris Brearley: National and District Council guidelines all have to be followed or a sound judgement has to be made as to why they are not being followed.

Tim Holmes: When the grain store site application is submitted we should be able to use the preparation of our Neighbourhood Plan as leverage.

Uday Phadke: Perhaps developers are holding back applications in order to deal with us.

Richard Webber: We need a vision and must start by deciding what we are now and what we like about this. Then we must work out what we need, and why.

Darren Mullett: I live at Heathfield and we also need to identify what we want and work towards it. This may not be more housing but could include other amenities.

Derek Pinner: I would like to think that we consider things other than housing across the whole parish.

David Easthope: Thank you for all the comments which have been noted.

Now we move on to the point where we look to form a steering group. I believe there are a number of people who would like to be involved, some of whom certainly have expertise in planning. However, it is not essential to have planning expertise to be a member of the group. I think it is fair to say that we all have a view, many of which will be different, and we would all like to see our views properly considered in the preparation of the plan.

My view is that we don't want a large steering group which becomes unwieldy and I would suggest a maximum of, say, 8 would be about the right number although you, or the group themselves, may have different views on this. If there are

lots more names put forward than would be a reasonable number then I would suggest that, provided we all agree, those named get together to form their own steering group. I believe that the steering group will need lots of support and that each member will no doubt form their own team of helpers. During the whole of this process we will need to gather lots of information on the people who live in the village, we will need to send out questionnaires, gather in responses and generally distribute information, so there is a great deal to be done and the more people willing to help the easier it will be.

At a meeting in July several people came forward, not necessarily wanting to be on the steering group, but offering general help where needed. I would like to thank them - and particularly Sabrina Melvin who offered to organise deliveries to Heathfield, this has been a great help.

Now, please may I have proposals for people who are prepared to stand as part of the steering group.

Main Steering Group: (volunteers or proposed)

- Darren Mullett
- Kit Jackson
- David Schneider
- Richard Webber
- David Easthope (proposed by Derek Pinner)
- Robert Spriddell (proposed by Tim Holmes)
- Rene van der Merwe (volunteered earlier)
- Kevin Clarke (proposed by David Easthope) KC will think about it

Volunteers who wished to be on a steering group sub-committee:-

- Tim Holmes
- Uday Phadke
- Chris Brearley
- Paul Earnshaw
- Geoff Axe

A meeting has been arranged for Monday 16th October at 7.30 in the village hall meeting room with Mark Deas from Cambridge Acre who will explain to the steering group and other interested parties a bit more about the Neighbourhood process.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.