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GURNARD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Report on the meeting held with the IW Council at Seaclose Park in Newport on Tuesday 26th November 2013 from 10am.

Present:

Gurnard: Cllrs Paul Fuller & Terry Nolan, **Messrs** Guy Boorman, Greg Malone (& Rusty Adams). **IW Council:** Bill Murphy, Wendy Perera & Peter Griffiths together with IW Cllr Jonathan Bacon.

Purpose of Meeting:

The aim of the meeting was to exchange information, to update on the N/Hood Plan progress and to have some questions answered.

Update

Guy opened with a brief update on where Gurnard was with its Plan progress, referring to:

- The previous meetings with the IW Council on 6th August (progress update) & 29th August (Housing Needs Survey report)
- The adoption of the housing needs survey report
- The Real Time Planning 2 day consultation exercise on 13th & 14th September, and the subsequent analysis (which can now be uploaded to the website)
- The Focus Group work, identifying aims & objectives and working towards policies
- Other community engagement events and contacts made (including landowners)
- Aiming, originally, for a May 2014 referendum

Timescale

What is the IW Council's expectation in terms of the timescale?

Those present understood it would take about 2 years, but it must be sound. Everything must be comprehensively covered especially the evidence to back everything up, but having a programme is a good idea – bearing in mind that HM Government could at any time move the goal posts!

Impact of N/Hood Plan on Determining Planning Applications

It was explained that there is concern over the effectiveness of the Plan and its impact, while it is still being created.

Advice the IW Council has received gives emerging Plans some “weight” but not a lot, and recent comments from Eric Pickles MP at the DCLG about emerging plans has not been helpful! Documents produced “en route” can be used as material considerations, such as our Housing Needs Survey report, and Case Officers are using that now. Local Members on the Planning Committee have also picked upon the “weight issue” of emerging Plans. The IW Council discusses the emerging Plan with applicants and encourages them to liaise, but they cannot be compelled to.

Clarification was sought on the outcome of the Gurnard housing needs report, namely 19 houses in the next 5 years, and how this Place Road application for 99 houses fits into that? The IW Council has to accept submitted planning applications, and then when determining them they work towards balancing the housing need with other evidence provided by the applicant – the Place Road application is complicated, with the site also being on the edge of a key regeneration area which is governed in terms of housing need by the Core Strategy – a much larger need than just on the Gurnard patch. Although the site is in the Gurnard Parish it borders on the Cowes urban sprawl, so hitting a right balance in terms of need becomes the issue for planners.

The Green Gap issues and the risk of settlement coalescence could be fundamental – undermining the individual character of the Gurnard, Northwood & Cowes areas – any evidence held by Gurnard at this stage could be a useful tool to send to IW Council (Guy agreed to check out what we have that is relevant - Coalescence will always be set against need – balance again)

It was suggested that other SHLAA sites in the Parish could be more suitable, supporting small scale development that fits with the housing needs report and better meets the need, especially as some SHLAA sites attracted no comments from residents at all during the Real Time Planning events – if this is the case, the N/Hood Plan must reflect this.

Until the N/Hood Plan is completed, planning applications will continue to be determined on current evidence and policy, but it was pointed out that in the Cowes Sprawl only Gurnard has a housing needs report - there is only an out of date Strategic Housing Marketing Appraisal in place for the area together with a perceived need under the Core Strategy proposals, which would make “proving the need” for large developments such as Place Road extremely difficult.

Action Summary:

- Review coalescence evidence
- Place Road – consider if **some** of the site could be used, without adversely impacting upon coalescence
- Consider how to profile/promote other SHLAA sites in the Parish

Settlement Boundary

It is over a year since the Parish Council selected option 2 for moving the settlement boundary (removing Gurnard completely), but no news of progress has been received.

Placing Gurnard outside the settlement boundary effectively makes the Parish like a Rural Service Centre, and so all future development would be approved on a needs basis. This could impact upon currently identified SHLAA sites that would then no longer be within or adjacent to the boundary, which landowners might object to! The decision to move it or not to move it will not be made until the appraisal of all sites is completed and it can be seen if there is enough provision for development in the “developable” sites without those in Gurnard Parish, whilst still keeping the “big picture need” in view.

The review is still on-going (97 SHLAA sites in the Medina Valley area), and some sites could be dropped – there should be a better understanding early in the New Year 2014.

Action Summary:

- Consider including in the N/Hood Plan what development would be suitable for any SHLAA site on the edge of the Parish that is still adjacent to the Settlement Boundary in terms of type, size and number.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)/Section 106 Payments

Clarification was sought on the IW Council's view of CIL.

It was explained that the IW Council uses S106 now and this is applied on a site by site basis - the funds can be used for infrastructure, education and other varied purposes. CIL imposes charges for all development on a sliding scale, but the funds can only be spent on infrastructure.

Parishes would get a % of the funds, and the recommendation is 25% for those with a N/Hood Plan in place (but could be more if agreed), to be used for mitigating the impact of development - Parishes should ideally have a list of projects drawn up for the funds to be spent upon (some of these may come from the N/Hood Plan itself).

The IW Council hasn't decided whether to adopt CIL or not yet, but it was pointed out that if it doesn't adopt CIL, then it has to say why (such as perhaps making development unviable).

IW Council's View of Neighbourhood Planning

Some discussion followed on the IW Council's view of the Neighbourhood Planning process.

Finally it was asked if there is any comeback for developers who spend funds on preparing a SHLAA site, only to have it eventually excluded. No was the answer, and developers are all warned of this possibility when proposing their site for inclusion.

The meeting closed at 11.30am