

MINUTES
BECKINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
STEERING GROUP MEETING
18 September 2024

Present:

Chair - Sue Shipley (SS)

External Communications - Debs Byrne (DB), Jo Hole (JH), Jennie Tyler (JT)

Project Plan - Mel Usher (MU)

Design Codes/LCA - Paula Fox (PF)

Website - Alex Richards (AR)

Secretary - Ben Richards (BR)

Apologies: Sarah Ball (SB), Laura Parry (LP), Andrew Tyler (AT), Clive Winterbourne (CW)

In attendance: Councillor Adam Boyden (Frome North)

1. Minutes of last meeting

- 14 August 2024 - Approved

2. Actions arising from previous minutes

- Invitations to Cllrs Adam Boyden and Dawn Denton. *Actioned by CW.*
- Publication of Declarations Interest on website. *Actioned by AR.*
- Summary of Memorial Hall (MH) survey responses to MH Committee. *Actioned by BR.*
- Housing, Call for Sites process (see item 3)
- Landscape Character Assessment recommendation (see item 4)
- Engagement with local businesses (see item 5)
- Production of articles for Network magazine re-launch. *Actioned for Sep and Oct issues.*
- Project Plan (see item 8)

3. Housing, Call for Sites Process

- Appointment of Brodie Consulting to conduct Call for Sites.
 - The SG endorsed the out of committee decision to appoint Brodie Consulting (Wendy Hopkins).
 - A working group to coordinate the project had been formed: SS, PF, AT.
 - Wendy Hopkins has visited the Parish and has been introduced to Planning Officers at Somerset Council. She also attended the public meeting on 3 September.
 - The project stages will be: Call for Sites, Site Assessment, Site Allocation, Production of Housing Background Report. The reporting practices and procedures were to be confirmed at a meeting on 20 September.
 - Stuart Todd will continue to advise the SG on housing and the wider plan.

- Outcome of Village meeting on 3 September. The SG welcomed the public meeting arranged by Shannon Brooke. Although not an SG-organised event, it had been an opportunity for engagement and consultation, including the opportunity for residents to speak with Cllr Dawn Denton and hear from Wendy Hopkins. A resident of Rudge indicated they might be willing to join the SG, which was welcomed. **Action: SS to follow up.**
- Feedback and comments from public meeting.
 - Two emails had been received: one from a landowner asking to be consulted during the Call for Sites and one from a resident who had general points she wanted to register with the SG and had not been able to complete the survey. BR has replied to both.
- Action points for the committee. Nothing for now. The WG will coordinate activity and update at the next meeting.

4. **Technical Support**

- Design Codes. Locality has approved the final draft and issued the final document.
- Landscape Character Assessment. PF reported that, following advice from consultants and consideration of survey feedback, the WG was recommending that an LCA is not required for Beckington. In any case, the projected cost of £15K was not covered by the budget allocation. The consultants advise that a Views Assessment (VA) should be conducted instead. The SG agreed this will be undertaken by the consultancy firm Open Plan over a five-day period at a cost of £2,271, with the first draft available by the end of September.
- Depending on the outcome of the VA, further work might be required, including a Heritage Landscape Assessment, Green Infrastructure Assessment, Local Green Space Assessment and a Character Assessment (CA).
- It was noted that Somerset Council may also require a Strategic Environment Assessment if we are allocating a site for development in the NP. This would depend on the number of sites identified and how many houses might be built. The Council would decide once it received the initial draft of the NP.
- Adam Boyden recommended contacting our local planning officers to confirm what Somerset Council requires to be included in the scope of our work.
- Following discussion, it was agreed that any decision on work subsequent to the VA would depend on the outcome of both the VA and the Housing Background Report, taking into account any formal requirements of Somerset Council and advice from our consultants.

5. **Stakeholder Engagement**

- Local Businesses update. To be discussed at next meeting with input from AT.
6. **Communications**
- Article for Network (November edition). **Action: Comms Team to lead, noting the submission deadline of 13 October.**
 - The SG discussed the best way to canvass residents' views once Brodie Consulting has completed the Call for Sites and site assessment. The consensus was to follow NP consultant Stuart Todd's recommendation that an event was preferable to present the results of the site assessment, the shortlisted sites and the selection criteria. It is important that all residents have an opportunity to express their views, so a mechanism to capture the preferences of those unable to attend an event must also be considered. It was agreed that the Comms Group would scope dates for an event at the Memorial Hall (probably on consecutive days) and how it might be conducted. They will also consider other options and wider messaging via our website, Network and social media. **Action: Comms Group**
7. **Finance**
- Grant Application. SS confirmed that the latest grant allocation had been confirmed and received by the Parish Council and was now included in the budget plan.
 - AT had circulated the current spend forecast. SS requested any revisions by 23 September so that a confirmed forecast could be produced, including allocations for the revised technical support and events. **Action: All**
 - SS reminded everyone that VAT receipts are required for all spends and should be submitted promptly to AT.
8. **Project Plan Review**
- MU had circulated Version 1.7
 - The SG agreed that that, now the results of the survey were in and we had gathered evidence from other sources to support the NP, it was time to draft the Vision, Objectives and Priorities of the NP in parallel to the technical support work. BR agreed to start this and discuss with MU. **Action: BR**
 - It was agreed that we need a formal review of the evidence sources collated by AR. SS agreed to follow up. **Action: SS**
9. **AOB**
- Date and venue for next meeting. 7pm, Monday 14 October, Clifford House
 - SS thanked Adam Boyden for attending the meeting and for his expert advice and input.