

Hereford Area Plan Reference Group Meeting

Notes of Meeting

Date: 28th February 2018

Time: 16:15

Venue: Hereford City Council Offices, Town Hall, Hereford

Attendees:

Cllr P Price (Chair), Herefordshire Council – (PP)

Cllr M Lloyd-Hayes, Herefordshire Council – (MLH)

Cllr P Andrews, Herefordshire Council – (PA)

Kieran Coultas – Youth Council – (KC)

Martin Koveckis – Youth Council – (MK)

John Jones, HBID – (JJ)

Cllr David Griffiths, Hereford City Council - (DG)

Tracy Morriss, Hereford City Council (Deputy Clerk) and Youth Council - (TM)

Steve Kerry, Hereford City Council – (SK)

Joy Harvey, HVOSS – (JH)

Bill Bloxsome, Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership – (BB)

John Bothamley, Hereford Civic Society – (JB)

John Phipps, Holmer & Shelwick NDP Group – (JP)

David Cooper, Holmer & Shelwick NDP Group – (DC)

Kevin Singleton, Herefordshire Council – (KS)

Siobhan Riddle, Herefordshire Council – (SR)

Victoria Eaton, Herefordshire Council – (VE)

1.0 Welcome, introduction and apologies

1.1 PP particularly welcomed the two representatives from the Youth Council to the meeting.

2.0 Minutes of the previous meeting

2.1 Notes from 17.01.18:

- Amend date typo
- SK please add to notes the comments he made about the closure of Hillside and the need for the adequate provision of intermediate care in the county.
- Para 9: Holmer and Shelwick NDP group would like to be able to join in discussions on housing site options. KS: the site work will be discussed at today's meeting. In addition, he is happy to meet outside the Reference Group to discuss issues in the Holmer and Shelwick area. PP advised that the site work should remain confidential at this time, since the public will be consulted formally in April 2018.

2.2 These amendments to the minutes have been made by VE.

3.0 HAP Site Options Study

3.1 Siobhan Riddle presented an overview of the work carried out so far in the identification of potential sites for housing and employment in the HAP area.

- Review of existing information, site availability and size
- Internal staff consultations (landscape, highways, ecology, built conservation, recreation and development management)
- Approximately 25 new sites have been identified following work done since November's HAP Ref Grp meeting, some are likely to be found unsuitable as potential constraints are considered further. This brings the total number of sites (for a minimum of 10 dwellings) to approximately 60.
- Land Registry searches to determine ownership of potential sites
- Call for brownfield sites
- Preparation of site schedules is underway
- A 6 week public consultation will commence in April 2018

This work will lead to policies being developed which will enable the delivery of these sites. PP emphasised that this was still work in progress and should be considered as confidential at present.

3.2 Once the strategic sites, those in adopted NDPs (e.g. Belmont Golf Course) and those which already have planning permission are counted, there is a residual need for approximately 1,500 new homes in the HAP area.

3.3 Maps showing all the potential site options were displayed, together with an overlay of the A49 to A4103 bypass corridor. Some sites that are inside the route corridor will only be able to be progressed once the precise alignment of the road is known. July 2018 is the anticipated time for clarity on this. The route options are being consulted on at the moment.

3.4 Landscape concerns may restrict some of the areas of land identified and there are ongoing internal discussions with the council's conservation officers.

3.5 SK: queried the potential situation that could arise if the strategic sites do not have planning permission and a developer comes in with proposals on the HAP sites (or potential HAP sites). KS highlighted that there is currently a lack of a 5 year housing land supply and that planning permission may be granted. SK asked if this could result in a lack of a contribution towards infrastructure. A list of needs would help to provide clarity to developers and would help in assessing the viability of the sites. Set standards are required before applications are submitted. KS explained that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan contains the 'shopping list' and that this is also being investigated by officers working on the Site Options report.

3.6 BB asked if the potential benefits (as well as constraints) will be factored into the site options work at this stage. For example the Green Infrastructure Strategy. In particular the potential links that can be made between bypass and existing and new parts of the city and the greening of transport corridors and spaces. SR: Green Infrastructure zones and corridors have been considered and will be tied into the HAP site policies. BB: are there any other broad strategies that could be incorporated such as those relating to walking or cycling. KS: it would be useful to have a highways strategy in addition to the 'package'. The Historic Area Appraisal and the Design SPD will also be useful in identifying the potential for improvements to the city during its future development. BB: certain developments might be

able to improve parts of the city in high deprivation, for example through the provision of play spaces. PP: walking and cycling are important to those living in the city.

3.7 PP it will be interesting to know what people think about new ways of town planning, such as built development happening outside the bypass. This has traditionally not happened much in the past. SR: such sites will be considered, in the same way as others suggested. The precise route alignment will dictate which sites, or parts of sites, are the most appropriate.

3.8 JB: queries why a site would be amongst those being considered if planning permission had been refused and appeals dismissed. KS explained that the site options work and that preparation of the HAP is a formal regulatory process and that such sites should rightly be considered. Should they be found to be non-deliverable then this will be explained as part of the site options work.

3.9 PP: There is a need to plan even further ahead than the end of the Core Strategy/HAP periods (2031). What are the options for doing this? BB: will more housing be planned for than the CS says are to be identified? KS: the Core Strategy provides a minimum figure. Lapse rates will also be factored in to ensure that a minimum of 6,500 new homes are delivered.

3.10 PP: there is a balance to be struck between the shopping list of infrastructure needs and the viability of the schemes proposed if delivery is to happen. BB: if the other facilities are not brought forward through the new housing, how will the infrastructure be delivered? Do we need to identify a new mechanism for this? PP agreed that other funding mechanisms must also be considered. TM asked whether s106 agreements or CIL are used with current planning permissions. PP: s106 agreements are used. KS: In respect of CIL, Government have not yet come to a decision on how CIL will be brought forward or in what form.

3.11 SK: Please can future site options work show the existing strategic sites on the plans.

3.12 SR: there are 11ha of potential sites in the city centre area. However, not all will be developed for housing. There are other competing uses such as the university, multi-storey car park and other commercial uses. SK: asked if the sites identified in the public consultation could also be identified for potential alternative uses to housing. This would achieve a more joined up consultation. Also, the Link Road needs to be mapped.

3.13 MK asked if planners are sure that all the housing proposed will be occupied. The sites could have alternative uses such as student accommodation or facilities. KS outlined how the number of home needed over the plan period are calculated using national population projections, then applying local circumstances, looking particularly at people of working age. In Herefordshire there is an aging population, this would become worse if new homes and employment opportunities were not planned for. The Core Strategy evidence base provides detail on the level of housing need. The difficulty is achieving sufficient homes at prices that can be afforded. It is a difficult process. SK: developers may also get planning permission and then not build the homes. The Government is considering the introduction of measures to prevent such landbanking.

3.14 JH: there needs to be consideration of the type of housing to be delivered. There is a shortfall of affordable three bed semis and too many four beds at the moment. The four beds are just not affordable by local people. There needs to be more employers offering higher

salaries. KS: Housing Market Assessments are used as evidence for negotiation and for viability assessments. PA: there is a demand for quality bungalows, but they are not being built.

3.15 **Employment**

KC said that the HAP sounded like a good plan with some exciting ideas for the future of Hereford. He wondered whether more work is required to consider Hereford's employment opportunities to stop youngsters from moving out of Hereford. SR: the Council's economic development team are looking at planning for another 10ha of employment land, in addition to the strategic sites identified in the Core Strategy. A site in Holmer, a former brickworks, (which is identified in the Site Options work) is being suggested by Holmer & Shlewick NDP group for potential employment allocation. However, this site is included in the bypass corridor. SR: The focus for identification of employment sites is around A roads and the expansion of existing employment land. Good access links are required. The Three Elms sites, near to the Cattle Market is approximately 10ha in size, however it is also affected by the bypass corridor. Access is good. Rotherwas is anticipated to be full by 2024. PP: the plans accompanying the site options work should also include existing employment land. ML-H: There should also be policies to go along with these sites and also a caveat saying that things are fluid and may change. PP: the HAP must be a flexible document and show the public this. TM: the size of the potential employment areas seems to be quite small when compared with the housing sites.

3.16 BB: How will the employment sites be delivered? KS: realistically, these sites will need to come through via public sector contributions towards site infrastructure etc. BB: will the Planning Obligations SPD need to be revised then? KS agreed and that in addition there will need to be a planning policy for new housing, to ensure that it can be delivered.

3.17 BB is there a direct relationship between the university and the quantity of employment land that will be required? PP: yes, there is likely to be a greater demand for employment land to supply the requirements of the university. ML-H: we need to attract high quality businesses. JJ: it is in the Council's interest to promote land for their own financial gain. PP: this point could be made about housing development too. BB: For town centre sites, the NPPF states that these are prime locations for mixed-use development. For the consultation, can we suggest the rough proportion which is expected to come forward for housing? KS: yes, the document will need to set out the reasonable choices for the sites; university, public uses, residential, commercial etc. BB: perhaps a minimum target for the proportion of residential could be set. KS outlined Core Strategy HD2 which promotes mixed-use development in the city centre.

3.18 **Transport/Movement**

PP asked the Youth Council representative how they saw their city develop in the future. MK said that he would like to stay in Hereford. For him, there needs to be improvements in transport around the city, particularly in respect of cycling. There needs to be new cycle paths which link different parts of the city. KC said that both cycling and walking options need to be encouraged in order to decrease traffic and prevent pollution to improve air quality. MK: the new Link Road has helped to make walking and cycling easier in this part of the city.

3.19 SK asked if anything has been heard from the university on its site appraisals. They were expected to be at this meeting. PP: wondered whether, at this stage, there may be confidentiality issues.

3.20 ML-H: Has the Urban Panel Report been completed? KS: A final version has not yet been disseminated. PP: this document would help with the preparation of the HAP policies.

3.21 TM: The policy of the university will be not to allow student cars or parking. Could the HAP also encourage local businesses to take on this ethos too? PP: advised that this is not a planning policy issue. JJ: if the long/short stay parking is sorted out, that will help with traffic management in the city. TM commented on the problems with school traffic and lack of buses. ML-H said that there are a lot of cars parking around Whittern Way and that residents' only parking has been sought. PP said that a no car parking ethos for the staff of colleges would be helpful to the situation. PA pointed out that park and ride is not an option because it is a revenue cost not a revenue earner.

4.0 Actions

4.1 We are now moving towards the Site Options public consultation in April 2018. This work should be presented to the HAP Ref Group prior to it going out to the public.

4.2 The future stages when public consultation will take place will be:

- Site Options
- Draft HAP
- Pre-Submission HAP
- Submission to Secretary of State

4.3 PP: before we go out to consultation on the site options, it will be necessary to speak to the university. There was a need to understand the university emerging plans and their input will feed into the consultation documents. The next HAP Ref Group could be held on 21st March?

4.4 HAP minutes will be posted on the relevant pages of the Herefordshire Council website. ML-H agreed that this would be positive and would increase the transparency to the public. They should go on the website once approved and signed off.

5.0 AOB

5.1 PP thanked MK and KC for attending the meeting and giving their thoughts. Would they like to come again? Both MK and KC said that they found the meeting interesting and useful and they would like to attend again, so long as the time is kept at 16:15hrs

5.2 PP reminded everyone that the Hereford Transport Package and bypass route options are currently out for public consultation.