

LDP Focus Group Meeting

20/07/2015

Notes of Meeting

Councillor Attendees:

Cllr D. Carter (Chair) - Chair of the Planning Committee
Cllr W David - Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee
Cllr N George - Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services
Cllr D Havard - representative of the Sustainable Development Advisory Panel
Cllr B Jones - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Cllr C Mann - Leader of the Majority Opposition
Cllr D Poole - Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing
Cllr D Rees - A nominated member representing the Independents
Cllr J Taylor - A nominated member of the Majority Opposition
Cllr T Williams - Cabinet Member for Highways, Transportation & Engineering

Officer Attendees:

P Cooke - Team Leader, Sustainable Development & Living Environment
S Couzens - Head of Housing Services
R Hartshorne - Head of Public Protection
T Shaw - Head of Engineering Services
T Stephens - Development Manager, Planning
M S Williams - Head of Community & Leisure Services
R Kyte - Team Leader, Strategic & Development Plans, Planning

Apologies:

Cllr K Reynolds - Leader
Cllr K James - Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Sustainable
Cllr R Passmore - Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning
R Crane - Principal Solicitor for Planning, Land and Highways
P Elliott - Head of Regeneration & Planning
B Hopkins - Assistant Director Our Schools Our Future
L Jones - Acting Head of Information, Communications & Technology

1. Introduction and Apologies

Cllr Carter kindly offered to chair the meeting as Cllr James was unable to attend.

Apologies as above.

2. Notes of meeting – 29 April 2014

Notes of last meeting approved with no amendments.

3. Update on Review

RK informed Members on the progress of the Replacement LDP Plan (up to 2031). Formal public consultation occurred in February/March 2015 on the Preferred Strategy. As part of this consultation, the Candidate Sites Register was released to indicate those sites that had been submitted to the Council for consideration. Comments on specific sites were invited from Members, stakeholders and interested parties.

The LDP Team is currently in the process of compiling a Report of Consultation, which will be reported to Council in the new year alongside the Replacement Deposit LDP.

Member drop in sessions were held in May 2015, along with bus tours to the sites that have proved to be the most controversial during public consultation.

Members should be aware that should stakeholders wish to participate at the Examination into the Replacement LDP, representations would need to be made at the deposit stage next year.

The LDP team would like to thank the relevant service areas across the Council for their input into the review of the plan to date, as well as the Elected Members for their continued input into the process.

Members will note that there has been some slippage with regards to the Delivery Agreement Timetable. This will need to be consulted on in due course with Welsh Government.

4. Ward Member Presentations

Elected Members were invited to present to the group to speak on specific sites that officers are recommending for inclusion in the Replacement LDP. After all presentations were delivered, the Focus Group voted on each site individually. For ease of reference, the resolution of the Focus Group is noted at the end of each site discussion, and not at the end of the paper. Chair to have casting vote if required.

PEY013 – Land at Abertridwr Road, adj to Cae Caradog. (Cllr J Roberts)

Key issues raised:

- Not the biggest site in the Aber Valley, but cumulatively there are a number of developments identified in the existing LDP that will exacerbate the congestion on the highway network in the Aber Valley.
- 1 road in and out. School time is critical.
- Object to access directly from the main road, on highway safety grounds.

Discussion

- T Shaw agreed the site is small. This site would only add 3% more traffic onto the network. An overarching Transport Impact Assessment for the whole of the Caerphilly Basin is being undertaken, to look at options to remedy the congestion.

Improvements to the Trecenydd Roundabout have helped ease congestion, however it was not going to solve all problems in the area.

- Cllr Taylor raised concerns regarding access onto the main road as this is a known problematic area.
- R Kyte advised that the site had been left outside of settlement limits in the past due to access concerns.
- Options moving forward. Three options were discussed
 - Include the site within settlement limits and allow it to come forward as a planning application
 - Leave site outside of settlement limits as per the Adopted LDP
 - Allocate site for housing.

Vote taken:

- Delete part of site to bring it in settlement boundary and leave unallocated = 7
- Site should not be allocated or within settlement limits = 2

Recommendation: Recommend to Council that the settlement boundary be amended to round off the existing settlement but not allocate the site for housing.

PLF006 - Ty Pontllanfraith– (Cllr Dix)

Key issues raised:

- Cllr Dix accepted the development of the footprint of the building (the carpark and building itself) but not the additional field as indicated in PLF006.
- There are concerns that the site and the whole field behind it could be developed. It was argued that the site should be kept as a green space, as it is near a SSSI and more housing could impact on the SSSI itself.
- Allowing the site to be wholly redeveloped would mean there would be little leisure land left in the area for current residents.

Discussion:

- R Kyte explained that there are two maps – the initial candidate site submission from Property Services, and the wider site defined by Council Officers as the most suitable, logical and defensible boundary for a new housing site at this location.
- The acceptability or otherwise of the whole area was questioned. Inclusion of the War Memorial and Playground was also queried. Cllr Poole mentioned that a more logical boundary would exclude the children’s play area and the field.
- Cllr Mann noted that the field area has increased its biodiversity value due to the active management of the field as a meadow in recent years.

- R Kyte outlined work currently being undertaken on a development brief for the site, which seeks to address the concerns raised by members in respect of ecology, leisure and heritage (amongst other things). That work is looking at the whole site and not just the footprint of the building and is part of the rationalisation process for the MTFP.
- It was agreed that a decision should be deferred until the development brief was prepared to see what could be achieved on site, as ecological leisure and other factors will need to be taken into account as an integral part of that work. It was also noted that the British Legion would be a key consultee in this work.

Recommendation: Defer recommendation to Council pending the preparation of the site development brief.

BLA003 – Land at Cwmgelli Farm, Blackwood *(Cllr Dix)*

- Site is a green wedge between Markham and Argoed.
- Access onto the main road would be problematic.
- There are new houses being developed in Blackwood, and brownfield sites being put forward too (such as Pontllanfraith School and Pontllanfraith Civic), but this is one of the last green areas left in the north of town.

Discussion:

- RK provided a brief history in respect of the site, as is it currently subject to a live planning application. The site itself has listed buildings on it, and abuts the Maes Manor – both heritage assets will need to be taken into account in the design and layout of the site. The site was previously allocated for housing in the Draft UDP.
- T Shaw noted that Highway Engineers have responded to the current planning application and have requested more details.

Vote taken:

- Include site in Replacement LDP – 5
- Exclude site in replacement LDP – 4

Recommendation: Recommend to Council that the site be allocated as a housing site in the Replacement Deposit LDP.

STM005 – Former Ness Tar Plant and adj. land, Caerphilly *(Cllr Fussell)*

- The site is part contaminated, and part farmland, and incorporates a SINC. Site is also under a biodiversity plan that allows fields to go fallow.
- The release of this site will put pressure on the Golf Club to be developed.

- The surrounding infrastructure will not be updated (i.e. main roads to Cardiff) so with the additional housing proposed for by Cardiff's LDP, this will push the bottleneck further down Mountain Road.
- Local Primary and Secondary Schools unable to cope with additional pupils such development will bring.
- The By-pass is not needed to improve the AQMA – it is anticipated that the pollution levels will only fall by 5 so it is not justifiable on these grounds.
- The fields are an informal leisure facility – there is nothing nearby that could replace this.
- Tar plant should be redeveloped, however the greenfield land should be maintained as such.

Discussion:

- T Shaw - the bypass will benefit the whole of the Caerphilly basin. The area is currently being reviewed as part of a wider traffic impact assessment. It is important to note that the by-pass will benefit the wider community.
- R Hartshorn re-iterated that AQ modelling show that the AQMA will benefit from the by-pass, however it will not alleviate the situation.
- Questions were raised as to whether Cefn Cernau Lane could be reopened instead. T Shaw believes work that is needed to bring this route back into beneficial use, with improvements, would be far too expensive.

Vote Taken

- Motion raised to include **only** Brownfield part of site as a Candidate Site (including Pesci's).
 - Only brownfield & Pesci's = 2
 - Against proposal = 7
- To include STM005 PLUS Pesci's site as a mixed use site in the Replacement Deposit LDP.
 - Yes = 7
 - No = 2

Recommendation: Recommend to Council that the site together with the adjacent scrap yard be allocated as a housing site in the Replacement Deposit LDP.

Wyllie Sites: YNY006 Land north west of Pen y Cwarel Road, YNY007 Land adjacent to Pen y Cwarel Road, PLF005 Land at Heolddu, Pontllanfraith, MAE004 Bryn Meadow Golf Club, Maesycwmmmer (Cllr J Jones)

- Access roads in and around Wyllie inadequate for the additional number of dwellings proposed. YNY006 & 7 would bring in an additional 100 dwellings. Traffic around the Avenue difficult as cars parked on either side.
- Allowing the village to expand would be detrimental to surrounding area. YNY007 – Already allocated in the LDP, however is subject to an ecology and traffic impact assessment. Would like a cap put on the number of dwellings (suggest 20) to be built in the area.
- With regards to MAE004 PLF005 – request that no access to the site from Wyllie due to inadequate road infrastructure. Request that ~~the~~ land between Wyllie and the two sites to be identified as a green wedge.

Discussion:

- There was a general consensus that Wyllie should not be expanded to include YNY006 , however YNY007 should continue to be allocated as per the Adopted LDP.
- Concerns regarding the potential additional traffic that could would be generated from the Candidate Site in Wyllie and Strategic Site at Maesycwmmmer was duly noted.

Vote Taken:

- YNY006 – Expand Wyllie to include YNY006
 - **Yes = 0**
 - No = 9
- YNY007 – consider site for inclusion in Replacement LDP?
 - **Yes = 9**
 - No = 0

Recommendation: Recommend to Council that site YNY007 be allocated as a housing site in the Replacement Deposit LDP.

BTM009 -Land off Pandy Road– (obo Cllr Gale)

Due to Cllr Gale being absent, RK was asked by Elected Members to brief them on the key concerns.

- Site is subject to a current live planning application – which is larger than the Candidate site submitted.
- Site is an extension to Bedwas, and access will be via Pandy Road/Bedwas Industrial Estate
- General opposition to the loss of agricultural land, the development of a greenfield site and concerns regarding the impact of the development on the highway network given existing levels of congestion in the area.

Discussion:

- T Shaw – the TIA submitted with the Planning Application has been independently verified and this indicates that with some upgrades to the surrounding network together with travel incentives, such as bus tickets for residents, the development can be accommodated.
- Cllr Havard noted that this additional housing will add to overall problems in the Caerphilly basin. Further traffic would need to access the site through the industrial estate as Pandy Road is narrow, and traffic to Newport is also heavy.
- It was noted that the Waterloo site is still being remediated, and the need for this site and Waterloo was queried. RK explained that the Waterloo site is needed to meet needs up to 2021 as part of the Adopted LDP, the Pandy Road Site is being considered to meet needs up to 2031 as part of the Replacement LDP.
- Vote Taken :
- Do not include within the Replacement LDP?
 - Yes (exclude) = 6
 - No (include) - 3

Recommendation: Recommend to Council that site BTM009 not be allocated as a housing site in the Replacement Deposit LDP

RSW006 –Land at Brooklands, Brookland Road, Risca (Cllr Rees)

- Not against developing the Brookland site, subject to the youth club being relocated to avoid conflict of uses.

Discussion.

- The opportunity to relocate the youth centre to be explored and defer the decision on Brooklands further to the completion of this work. RK to set up site visit with ward members.

The Chair thanked all attendees and the meeting closed at 12.20pm

LDP Focus Group Meeting

22/10/2015

Notes of Meeting

Councillor Attendees:

Cllr K Reynolds- Leader

Cllr K James - Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Sustainable

Cllr W David- Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee

Cllr N George - Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services

Cllr D Havard- representative of the Sustainable Development Advisory Panel

Cllr C Mann- Leader of the Majority Opposition

Cllr D Poole- Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing

Cllr T Williams- Cabinet Member for Highways, Transportation & Engineering

Apologies:

Cllr D. Carter (Chair) - Chair of the Planning Committee

Cllr B Jones- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Cllr R Passmore - Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Cllr D Rees- A nominated member representing the Independents

Cllr J Taylor- A nominated member of the Majority Opposition

Officer Attendees:

P Elliott- Head of Regeneration & Planning

G Williams, Acting Head of Legal Services

R Kyte- Team Leader, Strategic & Development Plans, Planning

5. Introduction and Apologies

Apologies as above.

6. Notes of meeting – 20 July 2015

Notes of last meeting approved with no amendments.

7. Member Training Session

Further to the meeting of 20 July 2015, RK had been instructed by the Chief Executive to run a training session for the LDP Focus Group, in order to clarify the primary purpose of the group.

The Revised Terms of Reference (July 2013) were circulated in advance of the meeting, which outline the Objectives of the Group and provide clarity in respect of the mandate of the group.

GW gave the group advice in respect of probity in planning and on the issue of grouping on planning. It is quite clear that Members cannot group on Planning Applications, however policy matters can be subject of discussion at group.

GW also advised Members on the need to declare an interest where the issues being discussed would have a personal or pecuniary benefit for them or close family member. Where members are involved with any campaigning in respect of a particular site then that would preclude them from participating in the decision making process.

Members sought to clarify when declarations of interest may be appropriate through a series of questions to GW. GW indicated if that if anyone needed any further advice they could contact her.

RK thanked GW for her input.

8. Matters arising from the Meeting Notes of 20 July 2015 and Update on the Review Matters Arising

PLF006- TY Pontllanfraith

At the meeting of 20 July 2015 Members deferred the recommendation on the above site pending the preparation of the site development brief. An Illustrative Development Framework Plan, which has been prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners was circulated for Members to consider. Further to consideration of the development framework the LDP Focus Group recommended that the site as indicated in the plan should be incorporated within the Replacement LDP for consideration by Council.

RSW 006 Land at Brooklands, Brookland Road, Risca

RK advised the group that the opportunity to relocate the youth centre has been discussed with Property Services. The Brookland Site currently accommodates Social Services and Community Education. The ongoing use of these buildings is under review, however there does not appear to be an appetite to relocate the Youth Centre at the present time. Whilst the site would have development potential if the whole area was cleared, it would be inappropriate to allocate only part of the site for development. The Focus Group recommended that the site should remain unallocated.

BTM009 Land off Pandy Road, Bedwas

At the meeting on the 20 July the Focus Group recommended that the land at Pandy Road should not be allocated for housing. Since that time a planning application has been considered by the Planning Committee and the proposed scheme was refused. The applicant has now lodged a planning appeal with the Planning Inspectorate. The appeal is likely to be determined in the new year and has the potential to be published at approximately the time the Deposit Replacement LDP is available for public consultation. If the site is approved by a Planning Inspector, it would follow that the site should be properly indicated as a housing site in the LDP. If the appeal is dismissed then the settlement boundary and SLA at this location would remain as currently indicated in the Adopted LDP. A decision is required in terms of how to address this situation through the consultation exercise. Officers are of the view that the site should be shown as a housing site pending the appeal decision. This would enable residents to make representations to the plan and log their opposition to housing at this location. If the site is not shown for housing, residents could well be misled as they would assume that housing will not be permitted at this location, and until such time as the Inspector's decision is received, the Council will not be in a position to state that this is the case.

The Focus Group shared officers concerns and it was recommended that the site be shown for housing and that the decision of the Inspector be reflected at the appropriate time. That is if the site is refused then the site is withdrawn from the plan, if approved then the housing site is retained.

Update

The LDP Team is currently in the process of compiling a Report of Consultation, which will be reported to Council in January alongside the Deposit Replacement LDP. If approved by Council the Deposit Replacement LDP will be subject of a six week public consultation exercise in February and March 2016. Members should be aware that should stakeholders wish to participate at the Examination into the Replacement LDP, representations would need to be made at the Deposit Stage.

A Member drop in sessions has been arranged for Saturday, 24 October 2015 at Tredomen Business & technology Centre, to enable all elected members to view the Draft Proposals Map and discuss any issues with the Strategic & Development Plan Team.

9. Reserve Sites

Cllr Wynne David – declared an interest in respect of the Land at Rhos Farm, Penpedairheol.

RK tabled 8 sites for consideration by members and indicated to Members that two of those are now recommended for inclusion in the Deposit Replacement LDP, namely Land south of Tir y Berth Farm (housing), Penpedairheol and Land East of Mornington Meadows (mixed use), Caerphilly.

Cllr Wynne David raised concerns regarding the land south of Tir y Berth Farm as its inclusion would serve to erode the green wedge at this location. Cllr David's concerns were noted.

The remainder of the sites are those that are proposed by officers for housing if any sites currently recommended for allocation prove to be unacceptable to either the Council, or the Planning Inspector in due course.

These are listed in order of preference as follows:

- 1 Land at Pencoed Fawr Farm (eastern extension)
- 2 Land at Pencoed Fawr Farm (northern extension)
- 3 Land at Rhos Farm, Penpedirheol
- 4 Land South of Coed y Brain Farm, Aberbargoed and
- 6 Land at Glanbryner Farm, Pontllanfraith.