

Notes of Marshfield Parish CLT Meeting

Date: 18th March, 2016

Venue: Tolzey Hall, 10.30am

Attending: Simon Turner; David Rutherford; Oliver Shirley; Ian Jones; David Dodd; Ian Dawes, Mike Krohn; Peter Frankland; Jeremy Warren; Janet Aitken; Colin Trask; Jim Brookes; Dawn Brooks; Felix Page; Alison Ward (WCLTP); Steve Watson (WCLTP)

Apologies: Robin Eastman, Christine Eden, Sue Smith, Steve Reade, Ben Stokes

1. Welcome - apologies and introductions

2. Notes of the land meeting

- amendments – Janet Aitken’s name had been missed off the list of apologies.
- matters arising not on the agenda – The CLT will have a broad constitution, most CLTs are interested in other assets as well as housing – this will be addressed in more detail in the forthcoming meeting focussing on setting up the CLT.

3. Marshfield CLT project plan

This is to be a standard item on the agenda. SW will update for each meeting.

4. The housing project

- Other affordable housing initiatives in the parish - implications for the CLT project.

DB presented on the affordable housing initiative which she has initiated following the controversy about the First Step Homes proposal. Responding to a need for affordable housing in the village, a proposal has been developed for 7 affordable and 7 market homes on a site in St Martin’s Lane. A housing association had been approached but had been unwilling to lead the project because of the withdrawal, in November, of state subsidy for rented homes. A developer - Piper Homes - had been identified with experience in Hillesley, Gloucestershire, of affordable homes for local people cross-subsidised by market homes. The open market homes could also have priority for local people. As in Hillesley, the proposal would be for English Rural Housing Association to own and manage the affordable homes. The owner of the proposed site has suggested that the community could buy the remainder of the land to protect it from additional development. None of this is set in stone yet and DB has withdrawn from leadership of the project to allow Piper Homes to take the lead. Piper Homes has approached the Parish Council for support.

It was recognised that this proposal is quite advanced. The CLT initiative, on the other hand, is just getting underway and, if previous good practice is followed (as reported by WCLTP), a thorough evaluation of all possible sites will need to take place before a preferred site is identified and recommended to the wider community. Experience of other successful CLT projects indicates that this evaluation of sites must be seen to be objectively undertaken by the CLT (as a body representing a broad cross-section of the community), and that any decision about how to deliver the affordable homes (development partners, funding through grants or cross-subsidy, land ownership, balance of tenure and property types etc) should also be determined by the CLT. It was therefore accepted that, in order not to compromise the work carried out by the DB, the two projects should be seen as separate, unless and until the CLT

might independently identify St Martin's Lane as its preferred site and an integrated approach be negotiated.

It was reiterated that the essential difference between a CLT-led approach and one that is privately led, is that the CLT approach vests control of all key decisions (e.g. site, scale, tenure, house-types, design, lettings criteria) entirely in the hands of a democratically accountable organisation. The CLT also has permanent freehold ownership of the affordable homes, receiving a ground rent from its partner housing association and, most importantly, being a party to the legal agreement (the Section 106 Agreement) which governs the long-term prioritisation of the homes for local people.

It was recognised that, if the CLT is to credibly recommend a site to the wider community, it must be seen to have evaluated the options as objectively as possible. In anticipation of this key moment in the CLT process, DB and DR generously offered to step down from the steering group in order to reduce any perception of bias either towards the site in St Martin's Lane or against any sites in the Green Belt. These offers were accepted by a majority vote. Both would be welcome to return to the steering group once the site selection process had been completed.

5. Funding

WCLTP reported that, as part of the recent Budget, £60m had been allocated to community-led affordable housing projects: *The government will provide £60 million to enable community-led housing developments in rural and coastal communities, including through Community Land Trusts, where the impact of second homes is particularly acute. The South West will receive around £20 million of this funding.* This announcement might re-open the door to a grant-subsidised scheme and reduce or eliminate any reliance on cross-subsidy; WCLTP will be in discussion with the government and report at future meetings.

6. Communications with the wider community

The group felt that it does need to feed something back to the community at this point, possibly through the website and facebook group. This will be a simple message can be delivered about what has been done so far. Oliver agreed to write something and circulate it now.

7. Next Steps

Doodlepoll to be circulated, daytime fine, Alison to liaise with Lin who takes the bookings of the Tolzey Hall.