

Warwick District Council

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Minutes of the meeting of the Warwick District SHLAA Partnership to be held on 15 February 2013 at 2pm at the Council Offices, Riverside House, Milverton Hill, Leamington Spa

Present:

Sally Jones (Warwick District Council – Planning)
Stephen Hay (Warwick District Council – Planning)
Mike Hill (Bromford Housing)
Reuben Bellamy (Cala Homes)

(The WDC Housing Development Officer post was vacant at the time)

1. Welcome & Introductions

SJ welcomed the partners and thanked them for their time in attending the meetings which was very much appreciated.

2. Declarations of Interest

Reuban Bellamy declared that Cala Homes are currently promoting a site in the Burton Green area.

3 Local Plan Timetable

SJ outlined the latest Local Plan timetable. It was hoped that the draft Local Plan would be considered by full Council in May 2013 and submitted to the Secretary of State in September 2013. This could potentially lead to an Examination of the Plan in January 2014 and adoption in Spring 2014.

4 Purpose of the SHLAA Update

The update would include new sites arising from the Local Plan Preferred Options consultation and sites arising from discussions with Parish Councils on the rural allocations. The next steps would be to complete the site assessments and then publish an Addendum. This was not a Review of the SHLAA as the sites already in the report would not be reviewed again at this stage.

SH outlined the approach to work on the rural housing policies. A settlement hierarchy would be established which would help inform the extent to which villages were able to grow. Informal discussions with Parish Councils had taken place to identify potential sites and, where these met certain criteria (size and relationship to the existing settlement) these would be assessed in the SHLAA.

5 Consideration of Sites

Site by site discussions were held on the following sites:

Sites at Burton Green

SW of Westwood Heath Road & Land off Cromwell Lane (sports ground).

There was an access issue here and third party land would be required. Ransom strips can cost 20-30% over and above market value so can add significantly to costs

for a small site. It was considered that housebuilders would not want to develop sites north of the line of the proposed HS2.

South of New Farm, Red Lane

The site could deliver community facilities such as a village hall but this may impact on viability in terms of delivering affordable housing as well.

Site R/O 390 Cromwell Lane

It was considered that the site was an awkward shape and there was doubt as to whether the site was big enough to fund the purchase of third party land for the access to the site.

Land at Peeping Tom PH, Cromwell Lane

If the PH was still trading there would be issues over securing the land and possibly costs involved which may impact on viability.

Sites at Hatton Station – *North of Hatton Station; West of Hatton Station; Former Storage Depot, Oakdene Crescent; Land S of 113 Shrewley Common*

Members felt there were sustainable issues about building new homes in rural areas with few facilities, employment opportunities and limited public transport, particularly for affordable housing. There would not be a marketing issue for market homes, although whilst noise from the railway was not considered to be a problem, noise from the motorway would be.

Sites at Norton Lindsey – *Curliu Lane and Land at Playing Fields*

SH explained that the Parish Council would like to encourage limited development so that financial contributions could be obtained to improve the playing field facilities. They had suggested a small site on the playing fields fronting Wolverton Road. It was felt that this site would not be sufficient in size to support contributions to improve facilities although both sites might be sufficient. The meeting discussed different ways in which funds for sporting facilities can be managed, for example the use of sinking funds or the creation of Trust Funds.

The meeting discussed the issue of good design. It was felt that better values could be achieved by building well designed homes using quality materials.

Sites at Kingswood/ Lapworth – *Swallowfield Stud, Rising Lane; East of Lenson, Warwick Road; Land fronting Old Warwick Road.*

Partners were of the view that the site at Swallowfield Stud was of an awkward configuration and development of more than 1 dwelling would lead to issues of overlooking.

The site East of Lenson was a good site in general but there were concerns whether or not a satisfactory access could be provided.

The garage site at Old Warwick Road was constrained by the watercourse – 8m either side of the opened up watercourse would be required to be retained as open land.

Sites at Cubbington – *Allotment Gardens, Rugby Road; Land off Coventry Road.*

The general view was that the location of sites was good but that a larger site would be required in order to facilitate the improvements to the allotments. The timing of development where allotments are involved is always difficult as it needs to link in with the planting season. The site at Coventry Road would need to include the whole field.

Site at Hampton Magna – *Playground Site, Montgomery Road*

This site had an awkward configuration and it would be difficult to achieve a satisfactory layout.

6 General Discussion

The meeting discussed rural affordable housing issues. In terms of tenure, it was suggested that shared ownership should preferably be limited to 80% although the buy

back clause in the S106 can be an issue as it restricts the ability to raise funding. Social rented works well in rural areas in terms of meeting need and discounted market sales can meet some needs for housing for older people. There was a discussion around the cascade element of the Lettings Policy – whether this is just cascaded around neighbouring parishes, the District as a whole or, failing that, neighbouring Districts.

Phasing issues were discussed. It was suggested that some sites lent themselves more to phasing than others. If contributions for community facilities were part of the S106 agreement, a phasing of the scheme would delay the full payments and so the delivery of the facilities would also be delayed.