

## Ravensthorpe Village Design Statement Review Group

### Minutes of Meeting #1 : 13 March 2014, New Barns

Present: Nick Ellison Sam Gibson Richard Marsh Apologies: Ruth Rolls Mary Worthington

RM gave **background** : Village Design Statement (VDS) was put together in 1999 and adopted as "Supplementary Planning Guidance" by Daventry District Council. Has carried some weight in planning decisions over the years, but more recently has been criticised by the Planning Officers as being out of date. On the other hand, in a recent planning appeal (Glebe) , the Inspector gave the opinion that the VDS "provided a relevant assessment of existing character, despite the date of its adoption". Since the VDS was put together, there has been relatively little change to the village but the planning framework has changed considerably.

To do a new VDS from scratch would be expensive and would be required to be done by external consultants - a simpler update may be more appropriate.

Group convened to consider an update to VDS, with a view to presenting an outline plan to the PC meeting on 16 April.

#### Discussion

- **Two main aspects** of update: (a) Factual - maps, locations etc - less need for wide consultation, & (b) Subjective - what is valued locally -needs local consultation (last questionnaire 94% households responded)
- **First step** is to understand the required process / "road map" for submitting an update and getting it approved. Tasks and resource requirements will flow from this and not much can be done until this is clarified. How does a VDS fit into the new planning framework? e.g. Is it a "Neighbourhood Plan"?
- **Composition of team** - those present happy for RM to chair team. Consider team numbers required once size of task becomes clear.
- Can we locate a copy of the **original questionnaire**, to serve as starting point? Helen Nottingham may have copy?
- Consider possibility of gathering data on **per person basis** rather than per household basis?
- Possibly use of **online survey** systems (Survey Monkey etc)?
- The previous team held a **workshop day** to get photographs and gather local views. Thought this increased engagement , probably a good idea to repeat. Consider doing this out of school times so that all ages represented
- Previous **publication style** was glossy hard copy - quite expensive. Update could be done more economically as an online PDF download / print on request for those not "on line".
- **Previous questionnaire** was quite long, could it be more "targeted" this time? Can we locate a copy of the original questionnaire, to serve as starting point?
- Given the support given to the existing VDS by the Inspector in the recent appeal, is there a **danger of VDS being diluted** as a result of DDC controlling the adoption of the update? Fallback position would be to continue with existing document.
- A thread running through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is that **wording of local plans at all levels should be positive** i.e. objective evaluation of local needs and then state how these would be achieved, while also achieving the strategic goals of the national and district plans. Update therefore may require rewording of some sections.
- The **overall objective** of the project was to bring the existing VDS up to date and sufficiently reworded to bring the VDS into a form where it is accepted as "up to date and fit for purpose" by DDC .

#### Next Steps

Gather background info on technical requirements . Outline "road map" for processing an update	NE/RM
Approach contacts at Daventry / ACRE etc re advice on what is required	RM
Review previous project documents & produce an outline draft questionnaire as a starting point	SG
All results from actions to be circulated round the group by e-mail as available rather than waiting for next meeting	All

**Next meeting** : Monday 7th April 8pm