

## MINUTES OF MEETING OF CRADLEY AND STORRIDGE NDP STEERING COMMITTEE

Held at Cradley Village Hall, Heritage Room on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Present:

Chris Lowder(CL) Tanya Lloyd Jones(TLJ) Alan Eldridge (AE) Sarah Herriot (SH) Jeff White(GW) I C. Tinkler (CT)[ report Author ] and P. Esrich (PE)[ Malvern Hills AONB ]

Apologies: Anne Scarsbrook

Tracey Iwanczuk observed

Purpose of the meeting: This was set out by TLJ prior to the meeting, as follows:-

- Introduction to the Landscape Assessment by CT
- Agreement of date and process for presentation to the village of the findings
- Identification of key recommendations to be taken forward to the NDP

1.0 CL opened by a welcome and statement that we had assembled to review CT's Landscape Assessment [LSA].

2.0 CL stated that the NDP is a Policy Document that has to concur with Herefordshire CC Core Strategy. The LSA is a technical document commissioned by CPC and Malvern Hills AONB to inform the NDP as well as for use by both the AONB and CPC in the consideration of planning applications.

3.0 CT provided an overview of the study and briefly explained the approach, the methodology and the results. CT tabled the key figures within the document as follows:

- Fig. 1 Study Area
- Fig 2 Zones / Zoning
- Fig 3 Baseline Issues detailed in the landscape [ eg Biodiversity ; Habitat ; Flooding etc , etc ] These have been placed on the map
- Fig 4 L/scape Character Map :

CT stated that the information contained within these figures not judgemental – simply a statement of “ What is “ in the landscape .This is very useful when considering any Proposals for Development and provides a useful Baseline .

Fig 5 Visual Amenity:

Visual amenity assesses both places and people but the emphasis being on people as receptors i.e. considering the general inter-visibility within the landscape to and from key viewpoints and locations and how elements in the landscape such as topography will influence and/or mitigate the effect of changes to the landscape. i.e. the more highly valued a particular view/location and the more people who visit it the more sensitive it is likely to be.

CT noted that 100% of Cradley was visible from the Malvern Hills AONB and views Back into the village from e.g. the Ridgeway Cross area are a notable visual feature.

## 4.0 Landscape Assessment

CT emphasised that the assessment is NOT subjective but always Objective based on Set Criteria.

Reference Appendix A in the document which highlights the various criteria that are used for the overall assessment:

- Landscape quality
- Landscape character sensitivity
- Visual sensitivity
- Visual receptor sensitivity
- Landscape value
- Landscape capacity
- Landscape capacity matrix:

## 5.0 Landscape Value

CT explained how the individual parcels of land assessed were assessed for landscape value as follows:

- Using baseline assessments can assess these parcels in landscape terms in order to get the final judgement levels .
- Parcels of land have been considered in terms of function in the wider landscape . eg Parcels are part of the Malvern Hills which in turn are part of a wider landscape still , and so on .
- CT pointed out that Gateways , Lanes , entry points to property , Old orchards etc were examples of function in the landscape
- Buffer Zones are also a part of the mix . eg the area between Cradley and Mathon .
- Some functions are a constraint to development , eg : Steep Lanes [ Gradients greater than 10% ] Although, in Cradley some slopes have been developed so this is not an Absolute constraint .
- Note also that Flooding issues can often be ameliorated.

## 6.0 Landscape Capacity

CT defined Capacity as “ Fully developed parcels [ sic of land ] “ and that further development would be Overdevelopment .

CT stated that Landscape Sensitivity + Functions etc yield Capacity.

The next step was to List all the parcels of land [ In the Study Zone ] and then Rank them according to Capacity . See Appendix B and Summary Tables A1 and A2 in the report and Figure 6 Landscape Capacity Out of a total of 78 sites those with least constraints have been identified. There is one site of High Capacity, three sites of Moderate to High Capacity and five sites of Moderate Capacity. Of the remaining the majority are Low to Moderate Capacity or Low Capacity with 14 sites Very Low to Low Capacity ie. have the least capacity for development. No sites are classified as Very Low Capacity.

7.0 SH questioned the definition of the 'Strategic Gap' as used in the report. CT replied that in terms of the report we define the Strategic Gap as " Land which separates East Cradley from West Cradley " . This overlaps with the VDS definition of the Strategic Gap but extends to include all land between the two settlement areas.

SH commented that the so called Strategic Gap [*ie open fields etc between East and West Cradley* ] could be considered by some as an alternative option to be detrimental to the social cohesion of the village and sense of place

8.0 CT made the following summary recommendations :

- Cross Dyke [ prehistoric ] is the old Cradley to Mathon route . It includes some PROW's .and could be something the NDP could investigate as promoting .
- Tree Survey : CT pointed out that a tree survey of the village would help with baselining for the future and could help control the village environment .
- Green Infrastructure : Another recommendation was to review the Green Infrastructure vis a vis Wildlife Corridors ; Rare plant species logging : also logging protected animal species in the village. efn : Hereford Biological Records Group – A contact point [ privately run ]
- Points in the recommendations can be used to evaluate sites for development.

PE : Pointed out the following :-

- Section 106 /CIL : Liaise with HCC regarding the " spend " agenda for the future and do it ASAP and not after planning events are well advanced . eg Look at linking up pathways , cycleways , hedgerows , allotments etc

9.0 TLJ and CL reported that Cradley has already fulfilled its HCC/Core Strategy/ SHLAA housing allocation upto 2031] and that the NDP must show this is a constraint on further speculative developments .

PE added that the report is a good aid to supporting the case for control of future development .

### **Next Steps [ for NDP steering Group ]**

- Invite CT to present her work to an open village meeting . CT to provide a quotation for that for approval by PC .
- CL reported that the meeting should take place after the May General Election as we will all be in political purdah between early April and the GE .
- It was agreed that such a public meeting be held in Storridge Village Hall.
- PE told the meeting that the NDP should be progressed with all speed in order to control village development in accordance with the villagers' wishes. AE queried if this was still the case to which PE agreed that the urgency had been reduced because unlike other villages we already have in excess of the 58 houses stipulated in the Core Strategy. He advised that the NDP must tie in with the HCC Core Strategy [ soon to be signed off ] .

TLJ added that Gemma Webster of HCC had done all the early paperwork for CPC and was now on maternity leave . TLJ will contact her stand-in and arrange a meeting with the new

Liaison person so we can ascertain the next steps with our NDP. To this end, CL will be tackling the application for new funding [ from HCC ] to finance the preparation of our Draft NDP Plan, in due course .

Meeting Closed at circa 6-50pm

Geoff Fielding (NDP Steering Committee Member)