



SOUTH NEWNHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

NOTES OF MEETING

REF: SNNF-COM-MOM-21-06

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DATE: 13 September 2021

REV: 1

DATE & TIME OF MEETING: -	20 th August 2021, 4.00 p.m.	
WRITTEN BY: -	R. Smith	
PURPOSE OF MEETING:	Meeting with Councillors – The Forum & Neighbourhood Plan	
LOCATION	11 Owlstone Road	
ATTENDEES: -		
Committee: - Jean Glasberg, Andrew Whittaker, Hugh Clough, Roger Smith (RAS), Roger Sewell (RFS), Jean Bevan		
Guest: - Cllr Dr Markus Gehring (Cambridge City – Newnham)		
ITEM	AGENDA	ACTION
1.0	Previous Minutes - No comments received.	
2.0	Markus suggested for discussion two aspects: - a. The Neighbourhood Plan. He was concerned that the Forum were commenting on too many applications, and he would rather see more progress on the NP. b. Forum comments on applications. Markus had received three complaints from applicants and believed the Forum sometimes goes into too much detail and appears too professional when objecting to applications. He was also concerned about the tone, which he thinks can make applicants feel the Forum is against them.	
3.0	Planning Applications a. Jean Glasberg responded on how the Forum deal with reviewing applications Andrew had listed a summary of plans reviewed by the Forum between Nov 2020 to April 2021. b. The summary showed that the Committee do not comment on most plans and where they have objected to application there have also been objections from neighbours. The number of complaints, three, is very low compared with the number of applications commented on.	



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	<p>c. Applications are reviewed against the Cambridge Local Plan and Conservation Area appraisals, and we support the policies in these documents. We consider they do already enable us to respond effectively to planning applications in our area and having a Neighbourhood Plan would make little difference to this.</p> <p>d. It is important for the Forum to cite the relevant planning policies to support all the points we make, as is expected in responses from statutory Consultees.</p> <p>e. Most of the Forum comments have been on applications within the West Cambridge and Newnham Croft Conservation Areas.</p> <p>f. Within the Conservation Areas, when the Forum had objected the application had also been objected to by the Conservation Officer citing the same Local Plan policies.</p> <p>g. Other important documents were the Character Appraisals that have been done by teams of local residents as part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan. 'Responding to character' is an important aspect of LP policies, and these have been useful in helping to identify the key features of individual streets.</p> <p>h. The key planning issues is overdevelopment - new owners often want to expand their homes and it is important that plans respect the character of the Conservation Areas and the amenity of neighbours. Large extensions can have a negative impact and be overlooking, overshadowing, and overbearing in streets of terraced properties with small gardens.</p> <p>i. The Forum is sometimes asked by residents to specifically look at individual planning applications which they fear would adversely affect their own amenity, or the amenity of other residents whose age, health, and disability disadvantages them from protecting their interests when faced by plans for excessive development by neighbours.</p> <p>j. The perception of some applicants seems to be that the Forum has set the policies and is the main authority to decide on planning issues within the area. It was agreed that future objections could have an opening statement to clarify the Forums role in commenting on applications.</p> <p>k. Engaging the community in developing the Neighbourhood Plan could help residents to understand the planning process better and feel they had more 'buy in' to policies. However, completion of this would not prevent newcomers having the</p>	
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	<p>feeling (and fact) that the plan has been made before their arrival and that they were not a party to its construction.</p>	
4.0	<p>Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>a. Jean Bevan summarised the development of the NP (see attached).</p> <p>b. The first draft Neighbourhood Plan was completed in 2017 with the support of around 50 residents.</p> <p>c. The second draft was developed in 2018 with the help of the Consultant Neil Horner.</p> <p>d. He had proposed a radical change to reduce the size of the NP concentrating on the Forums Policies and using another document the Evidence Base as an attachment. This approach was supported by the Cambridge City Liaison, David Roberts.</p> <p>e. He also suggested splitting the area into four separate character areas. This was used, with volunteers, to develop the evidence base.</p> <p>f. This approach highlighted the importance of the “Green Corridor”.</p> <p>g. A redrafted Neighbourhood Plan was issued for comment and discussed at an open meeting.</p> <p>h. Once residents’ feedback was incorporated the 2nd draft was discussed at a meeting with Cambridge Shared Planning (CSP) on the 18 September 2019.</p> <p>i. Comments were received in a 13-page/75 point feedback document in October 2019.</p>	
5.0	<p>Updating the Plan in Line with the October 2019 Comments</p> <p>The Forum had a number of concerns regarding dealing with the Cambridge Shared Planning Comments.</p> <p>a. The CSP comments were not in line with what the Consultant had advised the Forum and what the Committee had previously understood from their Cambridge Planning Liaison officer.</p> <p>b. At the meeting it was advised that two additional documents would be required - the Forum had understood that these were not necessary.</p>	

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	<p>c. The CSP recommendations were against the Consultants advice in keeping the Evidence Base separate for the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>d. The policies were seen as 'restrictive'. While the aim of a this is Neighbourhood Plan is to enable development, this needs to be appropriate, so some restriction is part of the raison d'etre.</p> <p>e. The Consultant believed the proposed CSP changes were unnecessary.</p> <p>f. A revised draft would require a 6-week public consultation which became impossible during the Covid lockdown.</p> <p>g. The formation of the Combined South Cambridge and Cambridge City were currently working on a Combined Local Plan which would make the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan redundant and non-conforming to the new policies.</p> <p>h. The Government proposals being considered were to abolish Neighbourhood Plans.</p> <p>Given these concerns, the committee believed it would not be very useful to proceed with working on a new draft Neighbourhood Plan at that time.</p>	
<p>6.0</p>	<p>Discussion</p> <p>a. Markus was not aware of the 13-page/75 point feedback from CSP.</p> <p>b. He believed the Forum were overestimating the impact of the new combined South Cambs and City Local Plan.</p> <p>c. He suggested updating the current plan and then submitting it, ideally by mid-October, for formal review so that the 6-week consultation period would complete by the end of November.</p> <p>d. After revising the current plan and before submission, Markus suggested that the Committee meet with Niamh Sweeney and Katie Thornburrow, and separately with Stephen Kelly to seek support for a formal submission of the NP.</p> <p>e. Markus suggested that the Committee arrange the meeting with Niamh and Katie for mid-Sept, and he offered to arrange the meeting with Stephen Kelly, also for mid-Sept.</p> <p>f. He would like to target a completed Neighbourhood Plan by May of 2022.</p>	<p>Committee</p> <p>Committee</p> <p>Committee</p>



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	To make the proposed meetings and submission possible, the Committee undertook to revise the NP format and layout to address the points made by Alison Talkington that we think are appropriate and practical. The overall content of the NP would not be revised.	Committee
7.0	Distribution All present + Councillors Niamh Sweeney and Lucy Nethsingha	