

**LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**NDP Working Party, Tuesday 18 February 2019**

**Present:**

Councillors Howells, Morris and Shields (chair). Residents: Nicola Forde, Ian James and Christine Tustin (note taker).

Apologies received from Cllr Harvey, Beverley Kinnaird and Paul Kinnaird, Ann Lumb

**Cllr Shields welcomed David Nicholson, planning consultant, and Carly Tinkler, landscape consultant, to the meeting.**

**1. Notes of the NDP working party meeting held on 22 January 2019**

These had been circulated and were noted, with the following amendment: that landscape impact assessment be substituted for landscape value.

**2. Overall scope of project**

The meeting recognised the need to decide whether to carry out a whole or partial review of the plan. It was noted that if the plan is updated in sections, it will need to go through the adoption process for each section.

A briefing note re the proposed review of the Core Strategy had been circulated for information. This review was likely to take the Core Strategy up to 2041. It was therefore likely that it would identify more housing for Ledbury and it would be important to work with the team carrying out the review. It was anticipated that there would be more information available for NDP teams by early 2021.

The feeling at present was that we should look at the whole plan with particular attention to areas that need more work. Although it was felt that the sections approved by the examiner could be ring-fenced as long as there was cross referencing with any new sections that were drawn up.

The question was raised asking will over supply now be offset against the increased requirement in the revised Core Strategy? This was not clear and reinforced the need to work alongside those who carry out the review. It was possible that given the current Core Strategy specifies 800 new houses, with all the new developments, we may not have to accept more.

Future housing growth is likely be similar to the houseing now with Ledbury remaining a favoured location due to its good connectivity. CT asked if we had evidence of what housing is needed. She suggested trying to find the right developer who would work with the community. We would then be able to follow what is called a landscape led approach.

Mixed use developments were discussed and it was noted that provision of employment land could include hotels and leisure buildings and thinking should not be limited to the more traditional industrial development. Houses, schools, doctors, recreational land etc all need to go into the mix and she suggested using coloured sections on maps to 'zone' the different areas of use.

We need to look at land use options. We know we need sports and medical facilities, and probably schools. We also need to look at how we move around the town. Once we develop a clearer idea on land use, we can start to look at the settlement boundary. CT recommended that we should try to define this by natural boundaries. DN reminded everyone of the need for a strong evidence base for the settlement boundary. He also cautioned that we would need to watch that the existing evidence base does not go out of date. (It was noted that in many ways an NDP is a strategy to curate an evidence base.)

As well as sustainability we need to consider resilience in terms of climate change, e.g. using porous hard surfaces, planting trees in streets to help keep the temperature down during periods of heat wave, etc.

### **3. Key issues from the examination**

Lack of Settlement Boundary:

- Need robust evidence
- Use natural boundaries such as water courses, roads, railway, green spaces/vegetation.
- Identify land use
- Consult widely

Green infrastructure / spaces

- Review of designated green spaces is needed
- Identify what is important and to whom
- Identify views, habitats, etc
- Add in the things that won't change such as listed buildings, SSSIs etc
- Identify brownfield sites which offer some capacity
- Start with highest valued (by residents) land and identify where we want to start protecting – always explaining what is valuable and why it is important.

DN suggested that this could take two to three years, and asked how quickly we could get going. He suggested that the priorities were as follows:

- Landscape capacity assessment (identifying what is important to whom and why)
- Draw up some sort of project document
- Review funding availability e.g. locality money and also Malvern ANOB

**Action:**

NF and IJ agreed to start work on the first two of these bullet points.

PH undertook to start looking at funding.

Ledbury Design Guide

- This needs to be part of the plan rather than an appendix.

It was agreed that Paul Neep, the author of the original document, should be contacted and asked if he would be prepared to help again.

**Action:**

NS to make contact with Paul Neep

Other points:

- Policies deleted by the examiner need to be reviewed.
- All policies will need evidence in their support.

#### **4. Next Steps**

CT advised that she would anticipate 3-4 months for pulling together evidence, then time would be needed for analysis, then there would need to be consultation to check that the work was going in the right direction. This could take three/four months or up to six. The next step would be to identify the settlement boundary. This should become clear as LCA (landscape capacity assessment) is defined. She felt that we could aim for consultation in June/July at a push.

She suggested we speak to local communities who have prepared their own plans ie Wellington Heath, Colwall, Cradley. She believed, the best plans were produced the community take ownership.

Asked if either would be available for consultation DN replied that it would be difficult for him at present and CT that she also is busy. She would not be in a position to start until summer. However being local, she would be able to give some guidance before then. In addition she has already done work on Ledbury South.

#### **5. Timescale and funding**

Wellington Heath had cost in the region of 9/10K but they did a lot of work themselves. Full strategy review could be between 12-18K.

CT suggested we speak to Linda Blake or Clare Lawrence at Malvern Town Council ref Peter Hamilton, locality specialist, to give a steer.

NS thanked CT and DN for their input to the meeting. All agreed that it had been extremely useful. NS thanked those who had volunteered to start work in preparation for the next meeting and urged everyone to bring in anyone who has the appropriate skills and is prepared to help.

**6. Date of next meeting**

Monday 8 April or Tues 16 and Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> were proposed.

**ALL to advise the office of their preference.**