

Workshop output - Developing a Vision and Objectives for your Neighbourhood Area

Desborough, 30 August 2014 11 am to 14:30

Attendees:

Desborough Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group: David Soans, Ben King, Belinda Humfrey, Hilary Connelly, Terry James, Gil Holmes, Paula Holmes, June Derbyshire, Allan Matthews

Planning Aid England: Daphne Mair (volunteer), Glen Baker (volunteer) and Rachel Hogger (staff)

Aims of the workshop:

- To help the group define their vision for the neighbourhood area; and
- To identify a series of objectives to help them deliver the vision.

Structure of the workshop:

1. Rachel gave a presentation on what a vision and objectives are and why their importance/relevance to plan making. The group were reminded of the relevance of the basic conditions to this stage of plan making.
2. The group identified the following to be important sources of key issues shared by the Community:
 - 2014 community consultation feedback. Each attendee was given a print out of an analysis of the May 29 consultation. Two whole sets were also provided (one for each workshop group). Paula had also brought along the results of the Desborough Town Plan carnival day.
 - Community feedback into Kettering site allocations document (consulted on twice and due for a third consultation to be confirmed)
 - The 2004 Urban Design Framework; its findings as well as the identification of community priorities etc.
3. 11:45 – 12: 30 Map based activity/ workshop 1. Break out into groups - (45 minutes) To address:
 - 1.What are the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing the area?
 - 2.What needs to be done to protect what is good, realise opportunities and deal with the not so good?
4. Feedback to group – 12: 30 to 12: 45pm

Page 2 – 4 show the results of Group 1 (Ben, June, Gil, Terry and Paula (facilitated by Rachel))

| Strength | Details |
|---|---|
| Railway | Opportunity |
| Strong Sense of Community | People are passionate albeit not yet organised |
| Access to other centres without too much travelling | Access by car to Kettering, Market Harborough, Corby |
| Strong sense of place | Distinguishing features (Town Cross) as well as distinguishing history (e.g.weaving and shoe making industry) |
| Independent shops/community uses and amenities on the High Street (Heritage Centre, DCDDT shop, butchers) | |
| Good Thursday Market | |

| Weakness | Details |
|---|---|
| No town centre as such | Station Road provides main amenities |
| Poor shopping | |
| Lack of parking for shoppers and visitors and those using facilities | |
| Barriers including the A6, the railway line and High Street (not Station Road) which currently break up the community | |
| Doctors and poor experience securing appointments | Need to follow this up with further work with the healthcare providers (Clinical Commissioning Group) to ascertain and plans for expansion or whether the GPs consider themselves to be at capacity or over capacity. |
| Shortage of facilities for young adults/older children | Facilities have been proposed but residents have in the past opposed to provision of some play facilities. |

| Threats | Details |
|--|--|
| Derelict Sites | For example Old Diary, Lawrence Factory Site, Buckwell Close |
| Kettering determining the future of Desborough sites without input from Desborough community | |
| Gasification Plant | NB: if this already has planning permission then it is outside the scope of the NP to resist this. |

| Opportunity | Details |
|---|---|
| Developments: Old diary, Lawrence Factory site, Buckwell Close and Hawthorns. | Opportunity if developments incorporate needed community uses as well as housing etc. And also if development serve to improve profile and access to town centre. |
| Capturing community benefit from new development e.g. improved pedestrian and cycleway through new development to overcome barriers | The agreed footbridge is a good example of this but needs to be complemented with further improvements. Such opportunities to be articulated in the NP?? |

What can we do to protect what is good?

| Good | What can we do to protect this? |
|--|--|
| Existing strong sense of community | Ensure that when new housing developments are built the development and the infrastructure surrounding it is designed so as to allow new residents to be well integrated with existing residents (e.g. overcoming existing barriers such as A6, improving pedestrian and cycle networks, and raising the profile of facilities on Station Road and the town market). |
| Independent shops and community facilities | Protect existing shops, Thursday Market and support growth and increase in choice along Station Road |
| Existing defining characteristics | Making the most of existing defining assets (.e.g The Town Cross) |

What can we do to realise opportunities?

| Opportunity | Suggested solution |
|---|---|
| Developments: Old diary, Lawrence Factory site, Buckwell Close and Hawthorns. | Grange: improve links from Grange to Desborough. The footbridge across the railway is (we understand) already secured through S106 agreement but continued needed improvements could be set out in NP as well as protection and maintenance of footbridge once established. |
| Improve access to the town centre | Buckwell Street/Market and George Junction. Reconfigure these spaces so as to raise profile of station road or the Desborough heart, provide an improved space for the Market and to improve road safety at the George junction. |

What can we do to deal with the not so good?

| Not so good | What can we do? |
|--|--|
| Empty sites | Ensure policies in place (through the NP or Kettering site allocations??) to address empty sites |
| No town centre as such | Improve public realm in town centre to raise its attraction to visitors |
| Lack of parking for shoppers and visitors and those using facilities | Improve parking provision for shoppers and other users of town centre |
| Lack of facilities for young adults/older children | Identify what it is that they would benefit from and seek solutions through the NP. |

Page 5 – 4 show the results of Group 2 (David Soans, Hilary Connelly, Belinda Humfrey, Allan Matthews (facilitated by Daphne and Glen))

| Strengths | Details |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Excellent Schools | Havelock and Loatland |
| Market | |
| The Ritz | Possible Asset |
| Strong sense of community | |
| Good natural Environment | |
| 9 years plus housing supply | |

| Weaknesses | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Poor infrastructure in particular the roads | Quality of road surfaces and parking |
| Town Centre parking | |
| Supermarket | |

| Opportunities | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Lawrence site is a mixed use site | |
| Developing retail uses | |
| Hawthorns site | |
| Small pockets of derelict land | |
| Old diary yard | Could be used as off street parking |

| Threats | |
|--|--|
| Developers catch on and apply for development as soon as possible. | |

12:45 - 13:15 Lunch

13:15 – 13:30 PAE presentation provided on planning issues and non planning issues followed by discussion.

13:30 – 14:00. The group then discussed key issues which the NP could not address and issues that must be addressed by the NP. Each participant was given an opportunity to provide their input. The following items were highlighted.

PAE Must Address

1. Attracting the right retail facilities to the town centre
2. Directing growth to the most appropriate areas
3. Promoting mixed use development in the town centre areas
4. Improving accessible green space
5. Protection of historic environment (NB there is a statutory list (these can be viewed here: http://www.kettering.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=2029&fileID=3875)
6. Development of the Lawrence site
 - Strong preference for a community facility
7. Addressing parking issues
8. Provision of improved cycling facilities (racks, lanes and connectivity)
9. Support doctors surgery if they want to expand
 - Site allocation?
 - NB: action – work with clinical commissioning group and health and wellbeing board in order to do some initial fact finding.

PAE could not address

1. The group acknowledged that overall housing numbers for Desborough would be driven at the more strategic level (Kettering and North Northamptonshire) so the NP is limited in addressing an overall community concern about **level** of new housing.

14:00 – 14:30 The Group were then asked to identify what the overall strategy of the Neighbourhood Plan should be? As one of the basic conditions would be to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development. The group were asked to identify key aspects which could fit under the three broad headings of economic goals, social goals and environmental goals. The following were identified by the group.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE DESBOROUGH DRAFT VISION

By 2031,..... Desborough will have a thriving and attractive town centre offering facilities for all ages, providing choice. Desborough will have improved its employment offer and

improved facilities will have been provided to support small businesses including home workers. ¹

ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF A DRAFT VISION FOR THE DESBOROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

By 2031, there will be an integrated network of pathways and cycleways providing access to town centre services as well as access to the countryside surrounding Desborough. Desborough itself will be surrounded by attractive countryside. Any localised flooding issues taking place up to 2014 will have been addressed ensuring effective stormwater management being put in place during the plan period. ²

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF A DRAFT VISION FOR THE DESBOROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

By 2031, Desborough's distinctive sense of place and civic pride will be maintained and will be reasserted/enhanced through an attractive and highly visible town centre. There will be a variety of activities for all ages including young adults and Desborough will be a place where young people choose to stay when they grow up.

14:30 – 15:00 What next?

The group identified the following key actions:

- Familiarise yourselves with the Urban Design Framework as there is material in there which will be very relevant to NP. (Vision, Objectives and mapping work). Discuss/Identify any content that should be reviewed for the NP.
- Familiarise yourselves with the Visions in other Neighbourhood Plans. Suggested examples include:
 - Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan. http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/Cuckfield_Neighbourhood_Plan_June14.pdf See vision on page 16
 - Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans/woodcote-neighbourhood> . See Section 3 (Goals and objectives)
 - Tattenhall Neighbourhood Plan http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your_council/policies_and_performance/council_plans_and_strategies/planning_policy/neighbourhood_planning/tattenhall_and_district_neighb.aspx . See Vision and Objectives on page 8, Strategy on page 11 and Policy 1 Housing Growth on page 13
 - Arundel Neighbourhood Plan http://www.arun.gov.uk/mediaFiles/downloads/87375917/Arundel_NP_post_examination_v2_DDA.pdf .

¹ This second sentence was introduced in the last part of the workshop although it had not come up as an issue under the earlier SWOT analysis and Key Issues facing the Town.

² As discussed the localised flooding issue needs to be looked into. Also, this is probably a bit too specific for the vision at this stage. Should wait until further fact finding has been undertaken.

- Vision (page 21) and Policy 2: A Spatial Plan for the Parish (page 25)
 - Ascot Neighbourhood Plan http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_ascot_np.htm
- Work closely with Kettering in order to resolve how the Desborough sites will be dealt with (through the NP or the Kettering emerging site allocations document). To this end, David Soans confirmed that a Kettering Councillor is attending the next steering group meeting and acknowledged that it would be good to work closely with planning officers at Kettering as well.
- Steering group members to commit themselves to fact finding exercises under the priority themes identified during the Vision and Objectives session. These include:
- Establishing from health providers what their view is (and what their figures say) in terms of existing and future needs in the town
 - Establishing with education providers what their view is (and what their figures say) in terms of existing and future needs in the town will be (Schools Plan)
 - Establishing what the issues are in terms of localised flooding in Desborough (this is first step before establishing whether this is relevant to NP). Rachel (PAE) suggested the first step would be to enquire from the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) covering Desborough what their understanding of localised flooding issues are. The LLFA is Northampton County Council and the relevant information can be found here <http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Environ/flood/Pages/responsibilities-FWMA.aspx> As an LLFA, Northampton County Council produce the Northamptonshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (which they will have consulted the Town Council on). See <http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/enviro/flood/pages/strategy.aspx> . It also maintains a record of Flood Investigation Reports across the Council. Check whether any Desborough events recorded here or whether they ought to be recorded here. <http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/enviro/flood/pages/flood-investigations.aspx>
 - Producing a Community Engagement Strategy in order to manage the next round of consultation and maximise its effectiveness. Rachel will send a template engagement strategy for Desborough to use if they wish.