

Minutes of the meeting of Hungerford 2036 project team held on Wednesday 18th January 2023 at 7pm in the Fire Station Community Room, Hungerford

Present – Denise Gaines (DG), Chris Scorey (CS), Cllr Richard Hudson (RH), Jon Shatford (JS), Steve Bickell (SB), Cllr Helen Simpson (HS), Cllr Jerry Keates (KC), Town Clerk (TC) and John Ryder (JR). Chris Bowden (CB) Navigus Planning joined by Zoom.

1. **Note apologies** –, Cllr Claire Winser (CW), Cllr Keith Carlson (KC), Cllr Ellie Yakar-Wells (EYW), Cllr Alistair Fyfe (AF),
2. **Agree minutes of 4th January 2023** – JK proposed the minutes, subject to correction of date, seconded by RH.
3. **Update on actions from last meeting -**
A letter has been sent to John Downe thank him. Navigus Planning has been sent a letter of appointment along with a copy of the responses received from the second call for sites.
4. **Update from recent call with WBC – Umrah.** WBC are starting regulation 19 (last stage of consultation) on their Local Plan Review on 20th Jan. They are very short staffed and may not be able to carry out any site assessment work. If they can they have a short window in April when it may be possible. Clarification is awaited from Bryan Lyttle of WBC.
WBC has advised there is no statutory requirement for them to complete the site assessment and we can appoint our own consultant or carry out the site assessments ourselves.
ACTION: Obtain the above in writing.
CB advised it is fine for the site assessments not to be done by WBC provided they are robust assessments and completed on a consistent basis. WBC previously carried out the assessments on a high level and these were looked at in more detail by Navigus. CB has carried out many site assessments for NDPs which have been successful at referendum.
It was noted although our brand is Hungerford 2036 the NDP will run to 2039 because of the delay in the Local Plan. It was suggested we let WBC lead with the information on the timetable delay.
5. **Navigus Consultation Work -** CB advised the brief gives potential to gather secondary evidence but not primary. Navigus will assemble the information and look at the policies required. Until we know which sites are being included we can't finish the plan however we know the numbers to allocate and can work alongside the site work to compile the rest of the plan. CB recommended advancing the plan as far as possible to identify any work that is still required.
CB requires access to all the info/evidence for the NDP. A lot of which is on our website.
ACTION: CS will forward him the word documents on the previous town plan and refresh.
6. **Outcome of second call for sites –**
ACTION: Provide update to public on progress with NDP.
ACTION: Advise applicants of our plans for the sites assessments.
CB confirmed that any submissions on brownfield sites if allocated could contribute to the housing number. Development of sites reliant on other factors could be argued as having no certainty. The town boundary can be redrawn to include settlements right on the boundary.
ACTION: Forward any previous applications to CB that were too late to be considered in the last call for sites.
ACTION: Obtain a quotation from Navigus for carrying out initial HELAA site assessments and also more in-depth assessments using our criteria.
TC suggested we may wish to apply to Locality for funding however the applications and expenditure should be within the financial year. CB advised Locality can be flexible with application deadlines and sometimes extend them by a month.
7. **Review timeline** – RH asked if CB thought the timeline was realistic as it is quite optimistic. CB advised we are in a difficult position running ahead of the WBC Local Plan timetable. It was noted that a lot of detail has been deleted in the LPR and also a consultation on changes

to the NPPF came out before Christmas. It was asked if we can still align with WBC housing mix. CB advised developers would have a problem challenging it as the problem of lack of affordable housing is nationwide and particularly bad in the Southeast, CB advised the timeline is challenging but not impossible. CB left the meeting.

8. **High Street and industrial areas** – HTC, particularly E&P committee members, has voiced a concern that many properties are changing from commercial to residential use, particularly in Bridge Street. It was suggested the NDP needs to have a policy to strongly oppose COU in a designated area.

JK will put this question to the Town Centre Strategy meeting tomorrow evening. It was questioned how this can be enforced and queried if it is better for a premises to be left empty rather than lived in. WBC currently has defined the high street as being very long.

ACTION: JK will feed back to next NDP meeting, the response from the Town Strategy meeting.

9. **Any other correspondence** – JS is stepping down from his position as co-chair due to business commitments. However, he will remain on the H2036 team.

HS proposed DG and RH as co-chairs, seconded by CS. AIF.

JK proposed a vote of thanks to JS.

JR asked if there was any initiative for starter/enterprise units in the town. His interest was welcomed, and he was asked if he would like to put a presentation together as he has experience in this area. It was suggested that there may be an opportunity for units at Charnham Park.

10. **Next Meeting Date** – 7pm Wed 22nd Feb 2023 Fire Station Community Room (booking TBC)

Meeting closed 8.30pm.