

Dore Neighbourhood Forum

Note of the meeting held on 21st March 2018 (King Egbert School)

Preamble.

1. There were 49 DVS members present, including many who were representing partners who were also DVS members.
2. Each person present was given an agenda, a briefing note about the Forum and the preparation of the draft Plan, a summary of the Consultations carried out, a statement of the revised Vision and Aims for Dore Neighbourhood, a Digest of the Policies contained within the Plan (which had also been circulated with the last edition of Dore to Door), a copy of the slides to be used during the evening, together with a copy of the Map showing the designated Area of the Forum.
3. A large version of the Map showing the designated Area of the Dore Neighbourhood Forum was displayed, which Map highlighted in colours the key areas within that designated Area.
4. The presentations during the evening would be highlighted by the PowerPoint slides; and these slides would be attached to and form part of the formal minutes of the meeting. Accordingly the narrative on those slides would not be repeated in these Minutes.

Introduction

5. Keith Shaw (KS), as the chairman of the DVS, welcomed those present and began by noting that the first, inaugural, meeting of the Forum in November 2015 had approved the recommended approach for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Dore, focussed on the 7 key topics explained to that meeting, together with the initial membership of the Steering Group, the role of which was to lead and coordinate the whole process.
6. KS noted the work that had gone into the preparation of this Plan, the extensive consultations carried out, with two major exhibitions held, and all the residents of Dore consulted via email, Dore to Door, and questionnaires.
7. The purpose of this meeting was to approve the draft Plan and authorise the Steering Group to take the process forward, including with the authority to make non-critical changes to the Plan during this process.
8. KS noted that as the presentations proceeded during the evening, illustrated by the PowerPoint slides, questions would be sought at suitable points.
9. Any initial questions were invited now but there were none.

The Challenges we have faced.

10. Cristopher Pennell (CP), as chairman of the Steering Group, commenced by emphasising that we are limited in what we can incorporate within the Plan. It is essentially a development planning document. His initial presentation encompassed slides 3 to 8.
11. He emphasised the key importance of upholding the principle of sustainable development, together with general conformity to the strategic planning policies of our two local authorities. In this context he noted that the Sheffield's consultation document "Citywide Options for Growth to 2034" envisaged the need for 43,000 new homes in Sheffield; and although many of these were scheduled for the city centre, there was a residual number which could be needed in our area. Hence our attempt to be creative in our Policies on the Green Belt, as we cannot simply propose that no development should be allowed.
12. CP noted that after delaying our work in order to wait for the new Sheffield City Council's (SCC) Local Plan, the repeated delays in this being produced had eventually led the Steering Group to decide that we should proceed with our Neighbourhood Plan based on current SCC Policies, whilst also reflecting our understanding of how SCC were likely to proceed.
13. CP then used slides 9 and 10 to outline the work that had been carried out and the purpose of this evening's meeting.
14. He also noted that there have been a number of non-planning ideas discussed; and these are incorporated within the document as Aspirations — matters which we would seek to have implemented but which are not ones we can insist on ourselves.
15. The layout of the Plan itself was then outlined (slide 11).
16. At this point members were asked if there were any questions. There were none at this stage.

Introducing the Plan.

17. David Crosby (DC) commenced by noting that the last meeting of the Forum had agreed Vision and Aims as the basis for the draft Plan, although these had been somewhat adjusted as a result of our better understanding of the neighbourhood planning process and in order better to reflect the benefits of the Plan's policies to the whole of the City of Sheffield.
18. The Vision & Aims now underlying the draft Plan were as circulated to members this evening.
19. He then drew attention to the large displayed Map of the designated Neighbourhood Area, pointing out how the key areas within the whole were coloured to show their location.

The Policies.

20. **Open Access Land.** DC first addressed Policy DN1, Open Access Land: the large area coloured blue on the Area Map. He enlarged upon the bullet points on slide 14, stressing the restriction on development on open access land.
21. At this point members were asked if there were any questions. There were none.
22. **Green Belt.** DC then spoke about the three Policies relating to the Green Belt — Policies DN2, DN3 and DN4. (slides 15,16 and 17). The Green Belt was coloured green on the Area Map.
23. He noted that the SCC currently acknowledged that this area was very sensitive. We wished to emphasise this, not least because it was so close to the National Park and so, we argue, acquires extra importance for protection.
24. We are particularly keen to ensure that the “substantially developed road frontage” on Long Line has a clear definition something which it currently lacks. At this point questions were invited.
25. In answer to the first question, DC confirmed that we had consulted all owners of land on the road frontage, although not owners on other areas of the Green Belt. CP commented that we knew that the SCC had invited land owners and developers to express any interest they had in developing any areas of the Green Belt; and we already knew that a significant number had done so in respect of land parcels between Dore Village and the National Park boundary.
26. A member questioned why we had the phrase “except in very special circumstances” in Policy DN2. DC illustrated what would be encompassed within that (the conversion of a redundant farm building) and observed that such a phrase was normal in planning laws.
27. The state of the old sports pavilion on Cross Lane was raised as being an eyesore. DC agreed; and he stated that the land owner (who retained hopes of the development of the land being permitted) had been told that it was the intention to seek its demolition.
28. In the context of that sports pavilion land, a questioner referred to the earlier comment that the Forum needed to show how it was assisting in the need for more homes; and asked what the Steering Group thought about that. DC replied that the Steering Group thought that all Green Belt should be protected. And he observed that development of that site would in any event be difficult to justify, because the policies of the SCC required all development to be sustainable and that this included being close to adequate established public transport routes, hence the focus of the SCC's Options for Growth document.
29. **Housing.** DC then moved on to the Policies relating to Housing: DN5 and DN6 (slides 18, 19 and 20). He pointed out that this was the area coloured pink on the Area Plan. He stressed that we were seeking to protect the distinctive nature of the housing areas and noted that Government guidance was that planning authorities should consider the case for making rules against inappropriate development of residential gardens.
30. He also noted that the SCC's current plans did not identify any brownfield sites in Dore or any remaining allocated housing sites.
31. A question was raised about what was perceived as inappropriate development along Dore Road, including within Ryecroft Glen. So how would these Policies work? DC noted that the DVS had objected to those developments but had been overruled, with the developments taking place despite being in conflict with the current planning rules of the SCC. KS noted that if our Neighbourhood Plan was accepted, then it became part of planning law and would have to be recognised.
32. In answer to a question about the scarcity of bungalows in Dore, DC commented that there was no way within planning law to stop such bungalows being bought and then extended.
33. **Open Spaces.** Policy DN7 (slide 21). DC stressed that we wished both to protect and improve these Local Green Spaces and identified the factors surrounding any such designation.

34. A question was raised as to why the School playing field was not so identified. DC said that this was the responsibility of the School and, as such, it could not be designated as a Local Green Space. Thus it would not have the same level of protection (witness the old Mercia site), although any future residential development of this site looked extremely unlikely indeed.
35. The approval of a planning application for homes on part of the Abbeydale Sports Ground was raised. DC agreed that this was most unfortunate and was something that the DVS had argued against.
36. DC clarified that it was the football pitch adjacent to the Recreation Ground that was owned by the Old School Trust.
37. **Village Centre.** This was addressed in Policies DN8, DN9 and DN10 (slides 22, 23). DC noted we were seeking to protect retail uses, following the loss of several shops over recent years.
38. In answer to a question about planners allowing a change of use, DC explained the quite lengthy procedure before this would be allowed.
39. Another member expressed concern about the long term future of the newsagent: Planning policies could not be used to protect a specific shop. The community needed to use it!
40. DC noted that following the DWELL survey, it would be welcome to have improved pedestrian areas in the village.
41. **Conservation and Archaeology.** Policies DN11, DN12, DN13 and DN14 (slides 24, 25 and 26). DC outlined the approach as set out on the slides, noting that the conservation area was under threat all the time and needed adequate protection.
42. He also noted that for a Local List to be prepared, there would need to further consultation.
43. There were no questions concerning this section.
44. **Sustainable Transport.** Policies DN15 and DN16 (slide 27). DC expressed the concern of the Steering Group that the park-and-ride facility served such a large area and that the resultant overspill parking impacted so heavily on local residents. He also noted the desire to encourage non-car journeys.
45. A question was raised about double yellow lines on lower Dore Road. This was noted as a possibility but there was concern about the displacement parking elsewhere on Dore Road that would result. Councillor Colin Ross informed the meeting that the cabinet member for transport and the highway engineer were arranging to meet local residents to discuss proposals for this issue.

The Next Steps

46. CP outlined the process from here onwards, as summarised on slide 28. The completion of the pre-submission stage, including all the required further consultations, was expected to take about 10 weeks. We would then be in the position of making the formal submission of our Neighbourhood Plan.
47. At that point it is out of our hands, as the SCC and the Peak District Park Authority consider it. Those bodies will have specific questions to consider, particularly concerning whether they consider that the Plan meets the Basic Conditions, especially in respect of sustainable development. Indeed, they would have to mount a further public consultation to answer the specific question whether consultees thought that the Dore Plan met the Basic Conditions. When the Plan is then sent to the Examiner, this will also be his main concern.
48. It is then the responsibility of the SCC to arrange a local referendum. Clearly all these remaining stages will take quite some time; and a concern of the Steering Group is that it is possible that the SCC will produce their long delayed Local Plan in the middle of this process.
49. In response to a question about the referendum, it was stated that it would be a simple question of either voting yes or no to the Plan.
50. A question was asked about the situation if the SCC new Local Plan proposed development in the Green Belt. DC noted that there would be an extended process over this, including a public enquiry and the DVS would strenuously object to such development. Judgements would have to be made as to whether the Neighbourhood Plan Policies would be sufficient to resist this.
51. DC also gave the opinion that the Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan, if approved before the issuing of a new SCC Plan, should transfer into that new Local Plan.
52. DC also responded to say that we would be seeking to have the "area of special character" status in the lower Dore Road and Abbeydale Road area uplifted to full Conservation Area status, in view of the fact that the area of special character status is likely to be dropped.

53. In response to a further question, it was noted that the life of the agreed Neighbourhood Plan would be to 2034, the same period that the new SCC Local Plan was intended to cover.
54. Questions were asked about the life of the Forum. DC noted that there was a lack of clarity about this and that the Government's thoughts kept changing. Although it may appear that a Forum may have a fixed life, there was the matter of the Community Infrastructure Levy, any funds from which involved the Forum; and so an extended life seemed to be likely.
55. CP noted that there is an obligation on a local authority to provide reasonable help and advice to bodies preparing Neighbourhood Plans; and we were aware of some who had been provided with significant advice and assistance. We had received only modest assistance (and we are aware that this is a new responsibility for the SCC). However, it would have been incumbent on the SCC to advise us if they knew that their emerging Policies were likely to be in conflict with what we are proposing.

The Forum Vote.

56. The members at the meeting were asked: "Do you agree that the draft Plan should go forward to the next stages?" All members voted in favour (no-one against and no abstentions).
57. The members were then asked: "Do you authorise the Steering Group to take the Plan through its next stages and to negotiate any further reasonable changes arising out of consultation." All members voted in favour (no-one against and no abstentions).

Closing Remarks.

58. KS thanked everyone who had contributed to the process to date, either assisting with the Working Groups or providing comments or ideas. He also emphasised the enormous amount of work undertaken by the Steering Group and the contributions of each of its members.
59. During the future stages, members will be kept informed on progress via the DVS website and noticeboards and in Dore to Door. Further comments could always be made via dnp@dorevillage.co.uk.
60. CP recorded his thanks to members of the Steering Group who had put in so much work; much more work had been involved than anyone originally anticipated.
61. KS noted that the Minutes of this meeting would be placed on the DVS website and a report would appear on the next edition of Dore to Door.
62. KS declared the meeting closed.

David Bearpark
22/03/18