

Lympsham Affordable Housing Project

This project is trying to increase the supply of affordable-housing for people with a strong local connection with the parish of Lympsham.

Date – Location

Lympsham Parish Council Briefing Paper 6 – Monday 15th May 2017

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Lympsham Affordable Housing Initiative

Discontinued Projects

Land to the South of Becks Farm – refer to SDC PC briefing note 5 (20th March 2017)

Land adjacent to the Boundaries – no recent contact from landowner.

Active Project

Land to the West of Becks Farm – refer to SDC PC briefing note 5 (20th March 2017)

Lympsham PC (20th March 2017 Minute 23/17) “...the PC unanimously agreed for Sedgemoor Affordable Housing Team to instigate a detailed feasibility study on the West Road site...”

Project Update

Land to the West of Becks Farm

This parcel of land sits outside the village development boundary and would ordinarily not secure planning permission for housing. However, this parcel of land could come forward by exception in order to deliver affordable housing.

The Proposal

- The development proposals for the parcel of land would see 20 new homes built
- The land owner has indicated that the land in West Road is available, subject to an acceptable final form of development.
- The extent of land to be developed, and the broad form of development is unlikely to change significantly. The detailed plotting of the units, open space and so on will be subject to further refinement and discussion (work in progress).
- A desk top assessment of the development has highlighted issues associated with this proposal. These issues include matters such as drainage, which are not considered to be insurmountable. This initial assessment suggests that the project is achievable
- Assuming 20 were to be built, a total of 8 new affordable-homes (“AH”). This quantum of AH would equate to a policy compliant 40%.

SDC are exploring the possibility of increasing the AH numbers to 60%. Initial discussions with potential end-user housing providers have been positive. It is too early to say whether this can be realised.

- The affordable housing units will be provided on-site.
- The initial layout would see the AH being well integrated with the open market homes.
- The AH will be provided free from public sector investment.
- The AH tenure split has yet to be finalised, but would be broadly in line with the HNA.
- The AH units will be undistinguishable in appearance and specification from the open market units on the site.
- The TCPA s106 agreement must include a local letting (sale) plan for the allocation (sale) of the affordable housing units. This LLP will prioritise local people seeking an affordable home will have first refusal for new and future vacancies.

Recent Activity

- Further positive pre-application discussions with the SDC planners in late March 2017.
- SDC Executive (12th April 2017) approved revenue funding grant of up to £30k to carry detailed stage-two feasibility study from its award from the DCLG’s Community Housing Fund.

Note: a detailed schedule of feasibility works, at a total cost of £22,603 has been drawn up by the contractor (EG Carter) to complete the stage-two feasibility work. This matter is discussed later in this briefing paper.

- SDC Executive (12th April 2017) approved capital funding grant of up to £70k to support the delivery of an enhanced affordable-housing package at West Road.
- We have met with the residents living at the Old Chapel to discuss the proposals and to listen to their concerns. We have committed to keeping the communication channels open with these residents and with others in West Road.

Revised Possible Project Timetable

Late May – August 2017

Establish West Road Housing Project Steering Group.

Instigate and complete detailed stage-two feasibility stage-two study.

October 2017

Establish a refined and detailed housing project and indicative layout – feedback to PC.

November 2017

Subject to PC approval, community consultation re proposed development proposals.

January 2018

Subject to PC approval, submission of TCPA planning application to SDC.

May 2018

Anticipated commencement of construction of the new homes.

Spring 2019

New homes ready for occupation.

Actions and Decisions Required from the PC

1. Note and endorse the latest West Road project timetable

Lympsham

Community Housing Fund Grant

Refer to Appendix 1 for further details of this funding stream

The Grant Award - Lympsham Affordable Housing Project

Approved by SDC Executive on 12th April 2017

Community Lead for Project – Lympsham Parish Council

Revenue funding support of up to **£30,000** from the SDC CHF allocation on behalf of Lympsham Parish Council to carry out feasibility studies and assistance with cost associated with a future TCPA planning application costs for a 20 housing unit project on land in West Road, including 8 affordable homes (40% of the scheme).

Note: a detailed schedule of feasibility works, at a total cost of £22,603.50 has been drawn up by the contractor (EG Carter) to complete the stage-two feasibility work. This matter is discussed later in this briefing paper.

Capital grant of up to **£70,000** to increase the affordable housing provision associated with a future P4 TCPA application, from policy compliant 40% to an above policy 60%. Effectively increasing the affordable housing provision from 8 to 12.

Actions and Decisions Required from the PC – Specifically for the Revenue Grant

2. Confirmation that they wish to accept the award of the above grants.
3. Approval of the EG Carter full suite of feasibility works (See Appendix 1 on Page 3)
4. Confirmation that they are prepared to sign-off the satisfactory completion of the full suite of feasibility works and provide authorisation to pay EG Carter £22,603.50.
5. Subject to action 2 (above) confirmation on which grant payment option they would prefer (See Appendix 1 on Page 4)

Actions and Decisions Required from the PC – Specifically for the Capital Grant

6. To note the grant award. No decision is required (at this stage) concerning this grant.

Establishment of the Lympsham West Road Housing Steering Group

Members are asked to give consideration to the creation of a local steering group to oversee the future day-to-day work on the West Road Affordable Housing Project.

A draft terms-of-reference (“TOR”) for the practical proposals (including reporting lines to Lympsham Parish Council) for this group are described in appendix 2 of this briefing paper.

Actions and Decisions Required from the PC – Specifically for the Capital Grant

7. To approve (or not) the formation of the Lympsham West Road Housing Steering Group.
8. If required, to approve the group’s terms-of-reference.

Appendix 1

Community Housing Fund

Background

Background Information

The DCLG has allocated the first £60m of its Community Housing Fund (“CHF”) with further phases of £60m to be allocated in each of the next few years.

In a nutshell, the stated purpose of the CHF is to enable capital investment, technical support and revenue to be provided to make more affordable housing schemes viable and significantly increase community groups’ current delivery pipelines.

A key priority for Lympsham Parish Council is to increase the supply of affordable housing specifically to help local people who have a strong connection with the parish.

SDC has been allocated £485,174 from the CHF in this first year.

A crucial requirement of the CHF allocation is that the community must be integrally involved throughout the process in key decisions (what, where, for who). They don’t necessarily have to initiate and manage the development process, or build the homes themselves, though some may do.

Eligible Capital Investment Options

- Traditional grant funding to support new build housing at circa £45k per unit
- Land banking
- The provision of serviced plots for self-builders
- An equity loan fund

Eligible Technical Support & Revenue Support Options

- Increasing or retention on-the-ground enabling staffing capacity
- Revenue support to community groups’ feasibility and planning costs
- A budget for community groups’ legal start-up costs to create formalised CLT’s
- The appointment of specialist advisers for specific projects

Community-led housing is about local people playing a leading and lasting role in solving local housing problems, creating genuinely affordable homes and strong communities in ways that are difficult to achieve through mainstream housing.

The definition of community group is wide ranging and can include formal community group’s such as Community Led Trust (“CLT”), possibly Neighbourhood Planning Groups and-or the Parish Council.

Proposed Schedule of Stage Two Feasibility Works

Architect Design Fees

Engineering Technical Input

Topographical & Buried Services Survey

Ecology Habitat Survey

Arboriculture Survey

Site Investigations

Transport Assessment and Traffic Count

Transport Statement

Landscape Design

TCPA Pre-Planning Application Fee

Acoustic survey

Utilities, including water related investigations

Payment for Stage Two Feasibility Works

Option 1: SDC transfer £30k grant to Lympsham Parish Council (“LPC”) to hold.

LPC to commission their own feasibility works separately.

LPC would make the necessary payments directly to those doing the works.

Any unspent monies from the £30k grant (following the completion of feasibility works) to be returned to SDC.

Option 2: SDC transfer £30k grant to Lympsham Parish Council (“LPC”) to hold.

LPC to approve schedule of works directly to EG Carter.

LPC would make the necessary payments directly to EG Carter.

Any unspent monies from the £30k grant (following the completion of feasibility works) to be returned to SDC.

Option 3: SDC hold the £30k grant on behalf of Lympsham Parish Council (“LPC”).

LPC provide written confirmation to SDC that they approve schedule of works proposed by EG Carter. SDC will subsequently advise EG Carter to carry out the feasibility works.

On completion of the feasibility works, LPC to provide written confirmation to SDC that the approved schedule of works proposed by EG Carter have been completed and that they are happy for SDC to release payment to EG Carter.

SDC would make the necessary payments (with LPC approval) directly to EG Carter.

Appendix 2

Establishment of the Lympsham West Road Housing Steering Group

Draft Terms of Reference
May 2017

Lympsham West Road Housing Steering Group

Name

The name of the group shall be **Becks Farm (West Rd) Housing Steering Group** (“SG”)

Background

Lympsham Parish Council (“LPC”) have agreed to investigate the possibility of new housing, including affordable housing on land in West Road.

Purpose

The purpose of the Steering Group shall be to support the Parish Council to carry out the following tasks:

- To develop a project plan and consultation plan for the West Road Housing Project.
- To keep the parish council informed of any changes in the project plan or delivery timetable.
- To be responsible for ensuring links between the parish council, the community & others involved are maintained.
- Provide a positive environment for discussion and debate amongst the project partners.
- Help ensure that the housing proposals for West Road achieve a high profile across the local area and Lympsham community.
- Maintaining the energy and enthusiasm to ensure that whatever needs to be done, will be accomplished.
- Identifying ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many individuals, groups and organisations in the community as possible.
- Determine the types of survey and information gathering to be used.
- Co-coordinating the collation and analysis of the consultation feedback in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
- Prioritising actions, using the findings from the consultation process and information from other sources.
- Establishing the necessary skills required to progress the West Road project.
- Regularly report back to and receive endorsement from the parish council on progress, issues arising and outcomes throughout the project.

- Identify sources of project funding.

Membership

The CORE membership of the SG Steering Group will include:

- A minimum of 2 nominated members from Lympham Parish Council
- Sedgemoor District Council's Affordable Housing Policy & Development Manager
- Sedgemoor District Council's Affordable Housing Development Officer
- A minimum of 1 representative from the contractor (EG Carter)
- A minimum of 1 representative from the housing end user (TBC)
- The Landowner.
- Others individuals or organisations can be co-opted as required and as agreed by the SG.
- The SG will not be open to members of the public, unless otherwise agreed by the SG.

Chairing & Administration

Unless otherwise agreed by the Steering Group, the Chair will be the SDC Affordable Housing Policy and Development Manager.

Unless otherwise agreed by the Steering Group, the Vice Chair will be the SDC Affordable Development Officer.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall chair meetings.

The Chair in conjunction with the Vice Chair will be responsible for:

- Organising meetings
- Drafting and circulating the agenda at least 2 working days prior to the meeting
- keeping a record of meetings
- These notes will form of the basis of formal Steering Group Briefing Papers, which will be circulated to Steering Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion

The Steering Group's briefing notes will be published on the SDC website.

Parish Council insurance will cover the previously agreed activities of the Steering Group and volunteers, but Steering Group members, in liaison with the Parish Clerk, need to ensure that terms of the insurance are not breached.

The elected members on the Steering Group will act as a Bridging Coordinator between the Steering Group and the Parish Council.

The make-up and purpose of Steering Group will be reviewed by the full Steering Group.

It is expected that all Steering Group members abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest.

Dissolving the Steering Group

At the conclusion of the West Road Housing Project, the Parish Council and Steering Group should discuss the future working of the Steering Group.

If the Steering Group wishes to dissolve it must notify the Parish Council.