

Lympsham Affordable Housing Project

It is fitting that a project of this nature is taking place given that the Old English meaning of Lympsham is “**SUITABLE HOME**”

Briefing Audience

Lympsham Parish Council Briefing Paper 8 – Monday 16th October 2017

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Previous Briefing

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Lympsham Affordable Housing Initiative

Land to the West of Becks Farm

Lympsham

Stage 2 – Detailed Site Feasibility Investigations

Funding Grant Award Community Housing

Members have previously approved to accept the grant award of REVENUE funding of up to £30,000 from the SDC Community Housing Fund (“SDC CHF”).

Members approved that the above revenue grant is to be used to carry out feasibility studies associated with the possible construction of twenty homes on land in West Road

Members agreed to approve the EG Carter suite of feasibility works and investigation, along with approving payment with the satisfactory completion of these works (when done).

I confirmed these arrangements in writing, by letter to the PC on 26th July 2017.

The final value of these stage-two investigations came to £31,604.

The Lympsham PC contribution to these works is capped at £30,000, fully utilising the SDC CHF grant. The additional cost associated with these investigations will be absorbed by EG Carter.

I am pleased to report that EG Carter have commissioned the following feasibility investigations, as listed below:

- Preparation of initial design and village character assessment
- Highway and drainage consultation
- Topographical and buried services survey
- Ecological survey
- Arboriculture survey
- Acoustic survey
- Site investigation desk top study
- Traffic count and transport statement
- Landscape design
- Pre-application fees
- Utility searches and water application
- Legal fees for preparation of the Option Agreement
- Option Sum and contribution towards the Vendor’s legal fees

On a positive note, the majority of these investigations have been completed.

Disappointingly, EG Carter are still waiting for final reports from some of the above list.

This slower than anticipated completion of the full suite of these investigations has pushed the project timetable back slightly. This is disappointing.

I have impressed on EG Carter the urgency of completing this exercise in a timely manner.

EG Carter have assured me that they expect that all investigations will be completed by early November 2017.

Once the full suite of investigation reports have been received by EG Carter, copies of these will be made available to Lympsham Parish Council and Sedgemoor DC.

Members Decision Required: Members are asked to note the latest project update

Project Update**Land to the West of Becks Farm****Current Project Proposal**

To date, the information from the above investigations have not unearthed anything which would be considered “project threatening”.

Furthermore, the current proposals remain the same as before. These are listed below:

- 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.

These discussions will be informed by the outcome of the current site investigations.

- 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%.

- Whilst initial discussions with potential end-user housing providers (for the market and affordable homes) have been positive. We have a strong range of housing providers maintaining a close eye on this project.

That said, I am disappointed that we still have not secured a firm commitment from any housing provider to take forward this project.

Along with overseeing the timely completion of feasibility studies, this specific issue is now my primary focus as the project moves closer to becoming a reality.

- 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.
- All homes have same appearance and specification.
- 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.

Member Decision Required: Members may wish to consider working on the wording of the local letting plan over the next few months. I have attached an example of a recent local letting plan recently adopted in Mark for reference.

Revised Possible Project Timetable

July thru to Mid November 2017: EG Carter complete and evaluate the implications associated with the detailed stage-two feasibility exercise on the land to the west of Becks Farm. This milestone has shifted circa six weeks since my previous July briefing paper.

At this stage, I would wish to hold talks with residents (including the current landowner) and those living in closest to the site to discuss emerging proposals and seek their views, reaction and listen to concerns.

January 2018: Lympsham Parish Council presented with a modified and more defined development proposal for site.

Late January 2018: Subject to PC approval, SDC AFHDT facilitate and hold community consultation on the latest development proposals.

Members Decision Required: I would recommend Members agree a firmed date – time – location for this event at this point in time.

March 2018: Possible submission of TCPA planning application to SDC for West Road.

July 2018: Possible commencement of construction of the new homes.

Summer 2019: Possible milestone for new residents to move in.

Members Decision Required: Members are asked to note the latest project timetable.

Potential Local Letting (Sale) Plan for Lympsham Affordable Housing Project

It is important to note that it will not possible to secure a local letting (sale) plan for the open market homes. This letting plan will only apply to the affordable units.

Sitting above the letting plan will be another section detailing what the affordable units can and cannot be used for.

This letting plan will apply to first lets (affordable sales) and all future lets (affordable sales).

Proposed LLP Wording

Not allow or permit the Affordable Housing Units to be occupied otherwise than by Qualifying Persons and of whom has been allocated an Affordable Housing Unit in accordance with the provisions below

Category 1:

An Affordable Housing Unit will only be allocated to a Qualifying Person who has immediately prior to such allocation been ordinarily resident / living within the Parish of Lympsham ("the Parish") for a continuous period of previous FIVE (5) years or they have within the last five (5) years previously resided in the Parish

Category 2:

In the event that Registered Provider is unable to allocate any of the Affordable Housing Units in the manner referred to in Category 1 above within ten (10) Working Days of the Affordable Housing Units becoming available for Occupation the Registered Provider shall allocate any such units to a Qualifying Person who has an immediate family relative (being parents' grandparents or children)

Category 3:

In the event that the Registered Provider is unable to allocate any of the Affordable Housing Units in accordance with the manner referred to in paragraphs Categories 1 and 2 above within a further ten (10) Working Days following the expiration of the time period referred to in paragraph xxxx then the Registered Provider shall allocate any such units to a Qualifying Person who have previously lived in the parish for at least two (2) years during the previous five (5) years

Category 4:

In the event that the Owners are unable to allocate any of the Affordable Housing Units in accordance with either the manner referred to paragraphs Categories 1 to 3 above within a further ten (10) Working Days following the expiration of the time period referred to in paragraph xxxx then the Registered Provider shall allocate the Affordable Housing Units to a Qualifying Person with a member of the Qualifying Persons' household who has permanent employment of at least sixteen (16) hours a week within the Parish and has been in that employment for the previous six (6) months

Category 5:

In the event that the Owners are unable to allocate any of the Affordable Housing Units in accordance with either the manner referred to paragraphs Categories 1 to 4 within a further ten (10) Working Days following the expiration of the time period referred to in paragraph xxxx then the Registered Provider shall allocate the Affordable Housing Units to a Qualifying Person who immediately prior to such allocation meet the criteria of Category 1 but in lieu of the reference therein to the Parish there shall be substituted reference to any of the following neighbouring parishes of [Need instructions as to other parishes]

Category 6:

In the event that the Owners are unable to allocate any of the Affordable Housing Units in accordance with either the manner referred to paragraphs Categories 1 to 5 above the Registered Provider shall allocate the Affordable Housing Units to any other Qualifying Persons (i) to (iv)

Upon the initial allocation of the Affordable Housing Units and upon any subsequent allocations to the Registered Provider will notify the Council in writing (addressed to the Affordable Housing and Development Manager of Strategic and Business Services) within seven (7) Working Days of any Qualifying Persons who have accepted the offer of an Affordable Housing Unit