

Community Meeting in Raglan
Notes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 6th August 2013
at the Beaufort Hotel at
7.30pm
Regarding Monmouthshire LDP.
The inclusion of a Brookland Farm site at Chepstow Road.

Present

Mrs Christina Harrhy

Cllr Bob Greenland MCC

Mr George Ashworth MCC Officer

Cllr Sylvia Price RCC

Cllr Trevor Philips RCC

Cllr Dennis Brown RCC

Cllr Helen Williams RCC

Adrian Edwards Clerk to RCC

In attendance

46 residents from the village of Raglan

Mrs Harrhy welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. She felt it's important that everyone has the opportunity to consider the inclusion of the greenfield site known as Brooks Holdings at Chepstow Road, Raglan.

She explained it would be best if the meeting could be split into two parts. This would give Mr Ashworth an opportunity to provide everyone with an understanding of the background to the reason why this greenfield site was reinstated into the Local Development Plan (LDP).

Mrs Harrhy invited everyone to introduce themselves so everyone will have an understanding of the representation.

Mr Ashworth gave members of the public a brief on this site. He explained he has worked for MCC since the seventies and he has been involved in the forward planning in Monmouthshire for many years. He explained that this site was included in one of the early draft plans when it was Monmouth District Council in the early 1990s. At that time the site was taken out of the Development Plan and the site in Prince Charles Close was the preferred site for development.

This site was included again in the proposed LDP in 2008 and the first draft was published in 2009. Mr Ashworth explained that the LDP will replace the existing Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which run out in 2011 but the Council still consider it when determining planning applications. Mr Ashworth explained about the Council's planning meeting in 2011 where the Council members considered all the preferred sites. He referred to this meeting as the longest meeting the Council has ever held. In this meeting this site *CS/0247 Land at Chepstow Road* was taken out of the draft LDP by the Council members.

He explained that the draft plan was submitted to the Planning Inspector where the plan will be examined by an independent Inspector appointed by the Welsh Government (WG). He explained that the Inspector has held a number of hearing sessions in May and June this year and the Inspector will be reconvening the examination again on the 1st October 2013. He explained that the Inspector published an interim report. The Inspector found the Council did

not have sufficient houses in the draft plan. He explained the Inspector recommended that Monmouthshire needed more houses in the county.

Mr Ashworth explained that the WG Inspector recommended a further 600 houses be included in the UDP. He explained that this plan had 4,000 houses included in this draft LDP but the Inspector is recommending that a further 450 plus a further 450 to give the Council flexibility making the housing allocation up to 4,900 dwellings by 2021. He would consider that Raglan as a community was able to consider further development as the village has a Main Street with a mixture of shops and other businesses, a local school and Doctors surgery. He explained that Raglan has had no development over a number of years. He along with his colleagues recommended that the site *CS/0247 Land at Chepstow Road* be reinstated into the draft plan.

He explained that MCC held a meeting on the 27th June where members considered the proposals to include the extra housing and a number of sites were debated. He explained that he has attended a number of meetings around the county explaining the reason why the sites have been reallocated into the draft LDP.

He explained the process which will take place regarding the observations made by local communities and residents. All the correspondence will be forwarded to the Inspector for her consideration. The Council will not be making any officer reports.

He explained that any observations should indicate if the plan is sound in its strategy. He would think the Inspector would like to have one observation from one person making the observation on behalf of a group. It was also stated that any site would need to apply for planning consent to include the following:

- Traffic Management
- Environmental schemes
- Land drainage schemes
- Easements
- Capacity of the site
- Housing density
- Overlooking other properties
- Any access agreements
- Section 106 agreements

Mrs Harry thanked Mr Ashworth for the briefing and invited Cllr Greenland to address the meeting.

He explained about the role that elected members have in this process. Members don't have complete control over the housing allocation. He explained that this will be set by the Inspector on behalf of the WG. He stated that MCC members can only consider where the housing is sited.

He explained that the majority of MCC members were of the view the site should be removed from the deposit plan. He stated that the Council are in a position where the WG are telling them the Council will provide further housing and if the Council doesn't provide further allocation the WG will decide the numbers and allocate the sites. This is why the Council have considered placing this site back into the deposit plan. He told the meeting that the land has been surveyed by consultants regarding the feasibility including the Highway and services. He stated that the local member has placed considerable opposition to this site.

Cllr Greenland informed the meeting that he is not the cabinet member with this portfolio, but due to the input he has had in the LDP he agreed to attend the meeting.

He told the meeting that the Council has received a number of consultant's reports, one which takes into account the highways and the impact of the traffic on the community and the village. It was explained the traffic movement will be very small in relation to the overall traffic movements. He told the meeting that the traffic movements on Chepstow Road are around 3,000 movements a year.

One member of the audience challenged Cllr Greenland on the figures of 3,000 movements a year. Cllr Greenland changed the amount from 3,000 per year to per day. He explained that the consultants have anticipated that there will be a total of 270 additional traffic movements per day. He thought that it would be expected that some of the traffic will travel east towards Chepstow, some traffic will turn right along Monmouth Road and the remainder will go through the village.

He explained that in highway terms the figures are acceptable and there would be an increase of 5% plus in the overall traffic movement in the village.

One member at the meeting asked Cllr Greenland if the increase in traffic from the market has been taken into account within the projected figures. Cllr Greenland stated that all the traffic movement figures would have been known at the time of the report.

He explained that he understands the feeling of communities where housing development is proposed as he has attended a number of meetings over the years. He stated that homelessness is a problem in Monmouthshire and there are a lot of young people and families looking for housing in rural communities in the county due to the house prices. He explained that this site will be allocated only for affordable housing. He explained that 35% of the houses will be open market homes and the other 65% will be mixed tenure homes and there will be benefits for the community through s106 agreements.

One person asked if he could guarantee that.

Cllr Greenland was informed by the officer that it would be 65% open market and 35% affordable homes. He explained that different sites in Monmouthshire have different market splits.

He told the meeting if he lived close to the site he would not be happy with this location. He explained that if you have two sites in one village you will come up with different opposition to the proposals. It was explained that MCC members will have no input into the process but they would be able to attend the inquiry hearings and give evidence to the Inspector but the WG Inspector will make all the decisions not MCC members or officers.

Q A member asked why was this site was preferred in favour of the other site in this community.

Cllr Greenland explained that this site was the preferred site and officers were asked to consider all the candidate sites in the county and the sites which were in the larger communities. The officers were asked to look at the rural housing need and officers came up with this site.

- Q** A number of people asked Cllr Greenland how was this site selected as the preferred site from the three other sites in the community.

Mr Ashworth explained that a number of sites were not considered for one reason or another. Mr Ashworth explained that the Councils preferred site was the Brooks Farm site.

- Q** A member at the meeting explained that one of the sites *CS/0137 Usk Road and Prince Charles Drive* was the preferred site by MCC when the sites were considered at the start of the draft plan proposals.

It was stated that this site was the preferred site due to the ease of access onto a trunk road and less congestion in the village.

Mr Ashworth stated this site is close to the village centre and the school and Doctors. He explained it was felt that this site *CS/0247 Land at Chepstow Road* can be classed as rounding off of the settlement.

Mr Ashworth felt the site on the other side of the village *CS/0137 Usk Road and Prince Charles Drive* could be classed as an extension to the settlement. Mr Ashworth believed that most people would access the village on foot. He was unaware of the land ownership before the land was considered for inclusion for development.

- Q** A member of the meeting asked about the school and the over capacity if this site goes ahead.

Mr Ashworth explained that he was aware that some children from the outlying areas pass Raglan School to go to other schools in the county but the school at present is not over capacity and he provided projected figures:

- 2014 – 189 Pupils
- 2015 – 198 Pupils
- 2016 – 201 Pupils
- 2017 – 180 Pupils
- 2018 – 185 Pupils

He agreed that the figures may not be accurate but can be classed as forecasted figures for planning systems.

- Q** A member at the meeting asked why MCC took this site out of the draft proposals, when *CS/0137 Usk Road and Prince Charles Drive* was the officers preferred site.

Mr Ashworth explained officers make the recommendation in report form and elected members make the final decision. Members decided in this case not to consider *CS/0137 Usk Road and Prince Charles Drive* but retained *CS/0247 Land at Chepstow Road*

- Q** A member at the meeting asked about the housing need in Monmouthshire including the housing need in Raglan.

Mr Ashworth stated that the WG Inspector believes MCC does not have sufficient housing in the LDP. He was asked why this decision is taking place now when the housing need should have been considered at the meeting in 2009. It was explained

the preferred site was *CS/0137 Usk Road and Prince Charles Drive* but it would seem MCC have changed their mind about the preferred site and this site is not providing any more houses.

Mr Ashworth believed MCC members considered at the start of the LDP process not to put any new development in Raglan.

He explained that *CS/0137 Usk Road and Prince Charles Drive* was offered of inclusion and MCC members asked officers to go-away and consider the options. He explained that since the WG Inspector has told MCC the housing allocation is not sufficient, officers and the Council have revisited the site allocation, and he believes with other officers this site *CS/0247 Land at Chepstow Road* is a good site for development. MCC members voted to accept it for inclusion.

Q A number of members at the meeting challenged his view on this site. A number of members explained that they have no objections to houses being built in Raglan but to this site location.

A member asked a question about the preferred site and he stated that it's the officers preferred site not the elected members. The MCC members excluded the site first time and members of MCC and the Community Council believed the site *CS/0137 Usk Road and Prince Charles Drive* was the more favourable site.

Q Cllr Greenland was asked if the traffic count was done at Brooks Farm or was it done at the junction to Chepstow Road and Monmouth Road. It was felt if the count was done at Monmouth Road it would not represent a true count. It was felt that Farye-Oaks and Castory Avenue can be classed as an in village by-pass with the number of vehicles using it at present.

A further question was asked about further traffic movements on the other sites.

Cllr Greenland explained the report from the Highways Department regarding the traffic movements confirmed it would be satisfactory for the highways to take additional traffic. Cllr Greenland agreed that if the development was on the other side of the village more traffic would use the village by-pass and not enter the village.

He explained that he and the other members who attended the meeting concluded the *CS/0247 Land at Chepstow Road* should be the favoured site. He explained in planning terms it makes more sense to round off communities not elongate a community. He told the meeting that this may be the last time MCC will consider the LDP as the WG are looking to set up a Regional Planning forum which will look at planning and MCC will be in the minority.

Q One member stated that residents are not interested in rounding off the village; they are just interested in the community. It was explained that not many people would object to further housing, most people understand communities need to develop. It was also explained that Ethley Drive has been developed to take further expansion on that side of the village.

Q It was explained that a traffic movement count has taken place at the junction of Monmouth Road and Chepstow Road and the traffic is far more that the estimated figures highlighted this evening.

- Q** A question was asked about the number of dwellings which will be built on the land due to the flooding and the forecasted 100 years flooding.

Mr Ashworth explained that no dwelling was built in the flood plain on Ethley Drive, but the gardens to a number of the houses are within the flood plain. He explained that no dwelling will be constructed within the flood plain at *CS/0247 Land at Chepstow Road* but some of the gardens will be in the flood plain.

- Q** A question was asked about the deflection of the water and the impact it will have on other parts of the community. It was explained that it is a possibility that Chepstow Road will be under water for a considerable amount of time during the winter months if the projected weather forecasting can be believed. Concern was expressed that Councils are constructing houses on flood plains without regard to home owners.

Mr Ashworth explained about the standard practise in England and Wales. New housing sites will have a greenfield run off to compensate for the extra hard landscape due to the development. This would also take into account rainwater harvesting.

- Q** One of the members read out part of the appraisal assessment. It stated that an area of land was identified by MCC and the area has mid to low capacity for housing due to the flood plain and water course and the separation from the settlement.

Mr Ashworth explained that he doesn't have the document to answer the question in full. He would think it relates to areas within the flood plain.

- Q** A question was asked about the flooding on Ethley Drive and it was explained when that site was developed flooding would only occur once in a hundred years. The person explained that the area has been flooded to a gate in the area twice in their life time.

Mr Ashworth explained about the flood plain maps and the Natural Resource Wales (NRW), the former Environment Agency have expanded the projection to a one in a thousand years.

A number of the attendees contested this figure and the time line.

Mrs Harrhy thanked both Cllr Greenland and Mr Ashworth for attending and adjourned the meeting for ten minutes at 8.25pm so everyone was able to take a comfort break.

The meeting recommenced at 8.35pm

Mrs Harrhy explained about the process and the soundness of the plan. She explained about the process the local authority will need to follow. She gave members of the meeting a power point presentation showing some examples.

The points raised from the presentation:

1. This site is classified as C/2 therefore there should be no highly vulnerable development.

(NRW) (Used to indicate that only less vulnerable development should be considered subject to application of justification test, including acceptability of consequences. Emergency services and highly vulnerable development should not be considered).

2. Flood Consequences Assessment.

No assessment has been carried out to assess the risk and to determine the consequences post development.



3. TAN 15 Mitigation measures should not pass flooding further downstream. It was explained that MCC will not consider development on the flood plain but only consider this area as garden area; this will involve the site being fragmented due to the flooding and services on or crossing the site.
4. There is no FCA so no proof therefore not proven that proposal is deliverable and should not be included in LDP.
5. The need to mitigate and not develop on the C/2 area will lead to a fragmented form of development.
6. The alternative site **ASN044** CS/0137 Usk Road and Prince Charles Drive is less likely to flood.
7. Development of this site will completely change its landscape character given the constraints of the site. It will not form a rounding off opportunity and will create a fragmented extension to the urban area, due to site constraints detrimental to landscape character of the area.
8. Characteristic of the existing barns surrounded by fields reinforce the open countryside setting of the site. Flood risk to the south and utilities crossing the site will restrict developable area creating a fragmented form of development, unsympathetic to the character of the existing urban form. It is not considered that 45 houses can be achieved due to the constraints so the required flexibility cannot be achieved.
9. Alternative sites should be looked at where flexibility is going to be achieved.

10. Development will be intrusive within the total land-map character area and will significantly impact on that character area by severing the character area. There will be significant landscape impact through Urbanisation of this area

HIGHWAY ISSUES:

11. Any potential access would be located near to the outside of a bend where the approach speeds are estimated to be 50mph. (and the road floods) The Council acknowledge that vehicular speed is an issue fronting the site. Due to traffic speeds being in excess of 38mph Design Manual for road and bridge visibility splay requirements should apply. They are 4.5m x 160m in both directions from the center line of any access. These splays cannot be achieved in land that can be controlled by the site owner. The Council refers to a traffic calming scheme fronting the site however such a proposal would require public consultation and there would be no guarantee that such a scheme would go ahead.

Furthermore traffic calming and associated signing and lining would be unsympathetic to the rural landscape setting. Traffic calming would only reduce the **85th percentile** speed by about 3 to 5 mph. It is therefore unlikely that speed will be reduced enough to consider a safe access fronting the site. There is an intervening strip of land between the site boundary and the adopted highway that is not in the control of the site owner therefore this site could not be delivered. There are no footways linking this site to the built up area.

CONCLUSION:

12. The site is not deliverable due to the three main issues.

- Flood Risk.
- High/medium landscape sensitivity and outstanding cultural landscape.
- Highway issues and inability to access the site.

IF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCEEDS THERE WILL BE :-

- A series of road humps at 40 metre intervals on the approach to the village.
- White lining and arrow white markings associated with the humps.
- Upgraded lighting and the associated light pollution.
- Changing unidentified flood risk.
- Significant change in landscape character.

County Councillor Jones explained that she has concerns over this inclusion but she was not the local member when the LDP process started. She explained that she has been unable to find the changes to include this site in the LDP. She explained that she will continue to work to remove this site and if anyone would like to send any correspondence as evidence that would

be a great help.

Mr Nic Ramsey was invited to address the meeting. He thanked Mrs HARRY for the presentation and the information included within it. He doesn't think anyone in the village would be against further houses in the village, but this site is not the right site for further development. He explained that the former Council member was able to get this site removed and an alternative site included.

He explained that the WG will be introducing a new planning process and he will be using this process as an example where a local member and the Council removed a site 12 or 13 months before the LA reintroduce the site into the LDP. He will be asking the WG about the allocation of housing in Monmouthshire and if Monmouthshire is being targeted for other reasons. He explained that he had concern over the procedure and why this site was considered over other sites in the Raglan when this site was removed by Council members only twelve months earlier.

It was agreed that a small working group to meet next Wednesday evening at 8pm at the Beaufort Hotel to formulate a draft reply and a response.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm